

Reaching Out

Issue #68

Welcome to Reaching Out,

a different kind of magazine

to serve the community.

*Our goal is to offer Biblical solutions
to the problems facing our society today.*

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Air Evac

—Clay Zimmerman

We hear the chop, chop of the blades beating the air as the helicopter flies overhead. Someone must be hurting and being airlifted in for emergency care, or being transferred to a larger hospital. Since we live in the path between our town's hospital and the route to the city we frequently hear and see the activity of air flight. Last summer there was a road accident near a field of ours. The chopper touched down, the fence was cut, and the man was whisked off for emergency medical care. What's the rush? To save lives!

As a society we have invested millions of dollars in medical science and facilities to alleviate suffering and to keep us breathing as long as possible. That way when something happens, we are prepared. It's nice to know it's there when you need it.

But let's not forget the next step.

There will come a day when life will not go on as before. All the helicopters, doctors, and medical facilities in the world will not be able to keep my life in this body. *"There is no man that hath power over the spirit to retain the spirit; neither hath he power in the day of death"*

(Ecclesiastes 8:8).

It is not a matter of *if* this will happen, but a matter of *when*.

When I face death, I am going to need more than Air Evac. I am going to need God to be on my side and lift me out. Just as with our medical facilities, these things need to be prepared ahead of time. If I want Jesus on my side at the end, I am going to need to be on His side now.

"Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting" (Galatians 6:7, 8).

Some people possess and display the Air Evac sticker on their vehicle. They are telling the world that they have made prior arrangements for future services. I need to do the same. I need to make prior arrangements with God. I need the sticker of God's approval on my life.

"[Jesus said] therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock" (Matthew 7:24).

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or do you know of a friend who might?
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THE BIBLE AND SCIENCE

—Elvin Stauffer

Harmony and Cooperation in Creation

“Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they?” (Matthew 6:26)

God is the author of righteousness, justice, peace, and order, which is the outworking of His love to us. *“Thou wilt have a desire to the work of thine hands”* (Job 14:15). The turmoil of destruction and death we see in our world today and the fear, pain, and suffering it brings is a result of rejecting our Creator. These contrasts of harmony and life, or conflict and death are opposites also found in nature.

Contrasting Morality in Life

Our understanding of the world is strongly influenced by our experience and perspective in life. A child born into a loving, disciplined, Christian home where peace rules will see problems solved, needs met, and a productive, happy lifestyle. These people find purpose and fulfillment in life.

On the other hand, a child raised in a refugee camp, supported by aid with no work to do or loving discipline will experience conflict, disrespect for life, and selfish destruction. In some cultures the rich and powerful take all the wives, under the guise of religion. The rest are told to look for an afterlife (“heaven”) of sensual indulgence. The communities where there are individuals who are so destitute they have “nothing to lose” become seedbeds for suicide bombers.

Opposing Principles in Nature

We also observe opposing principles at work in the natural world. These are understood differently in the beliefs of creation or evolution. Are the biological organisms of our world

improving through battle and death causing the strongest (fittest) to survive in an upward evolutionary trend? Or is there a miraculous harmony and cooperation in nature that reveals the good will and humor of a loving designer. *“He hath made every thing beautiful in his time”* (Ecclesiastes 3:11).

A careful look reveals an amazing harmony and cooperation that facilitates life despite a decay principle (entropy) that causes corruption and extinction in the world. We learn from God’s revelation in His Word that a curse of degeneration and death came upon God’s original, perfect creation. *“The earth . . . shall wax old as doth a garment; and as a vesture shalt thou fold them up”* (Hebrews 1:10-12). This happened when Satan taught Eve, then Adam, to rebel against God’s all-wise providence in the first world (Genesis 3).

We will look at just a few biologic systems to see irrefutable evidence of divine creation.

Irreducible Complexity

Biologic organisms (plants and animals) cannot have one part of their metabolic systems missing and still live. Such things as the lymphatic system or immune system could not have evolved at different times.

Irreducible complexity has been illustrated as a large steam engine sitting on the railroad tracks. It can have all the steam pipes in place, water in the boiler, coal burning in the firebox, engineer at the controls, but if the electrical system is not complete it won’t go. In fact, it is more likely to blow up!

The created creatures such as a woodpecker have specialized features to do what they do, and they do it well. The woodpecker is fitted for drilling into wood to get its food. It has short stocky legs with opposing toes to hold onto tree bark. It has stiff tail feathers to brace itself. He also has a shock absorbing material between the beak and skull that other birds don't have. This cushions the skull for up to 100 blows per minute. The woodpecker has a tongue four times longer than its beak. It wraps around the back of its head and is barbed or sometimes sticky on the end. This tongue can reach deep into tunnels for ants and grubs.

Secular scientists, including Darwin, study and publish on many complex biologic features and functions. They may even describe them as "miracles" and unlikely to have self-organized. Yet they make the blind leap of faith that nothing could have produced everything. They will not credit God.

The eye is such an organ. It requires exact shapes, chemicals, stimuli, ordered processes, communications with the brain, and actions and reactions to be functional. Darwin wrote that as he thought of the eye, it turned him cold all over when he pondered its origin. "To suppose that the eye with all its inimitable contrivances for adjusting the focus to different distances, for admitting amounts of light, and for the correction of spherical and chromatic aberration, could have been formed by natural selection, seems, I confess, absurd in the highest degree." Darwin acknowledged the improbability of evolution in his book *Origin of Species*. But by much talk he worked improbability up to possibility, and possibility to probability and ended with certainty?

Symbiotic Relationships

Another miracle of God's creation called symbiosis is when two different organisms are dependent on each other for survival. One could not have evolved and then the other come along 100,000 years later.

A lichen is a twin organism of an alga and a fungus. Lichens reproduce when the fungus part sends out spores. If a spore lands near a suitable alga it grows around the alga and a new lichen is formed. When it is moistened by rain or dew and absorbs sunlight, the alga produces sugar. The fungus uses the sugar as food, causing the lichens to grow. Termites also need a certain protozoa organism living in their gut

to digest the cellulose in the wood and paper they live on. Killing this protozoa organism destroys termites.

Cooperation on a higher order is seen in the actions of the yucca moth. The reproduction of the yucca plant and the yucca moth are dependent on each other. It is another evidence that God created them at one time to live together. The yucca plant only attracts the yucca moth to its nectar; thus there is little competition from other insects. It is just a drab little gray moth, but God gave it special mouthparts to do a special job. The yucca plant's stigma tube is too tight to self-pollinate. The yucca moth fills the role of gathering pollen into a ball and pollinating the flowers. It goes to a flower and lays some eggs in the flower, then instinctively shoves the pollen ball down into the stigma. This causes seeds to develop, some of which the moth grubs will eat. The rest of the seeds can produce new yucca plants. If too many eggs would be laid in the flower, the flower and the grubs would die. So the moth looks for flowers that don't have the female scent of other moths.

Irretrievable Loss

Cooperation in mutually beneficial relationships could not have come about by accident. But the marvels of God's creation can be destroyed never to be regained again. When the last of a plant or animal becomes extinct the original genetic code of billions of bits of information that God wrote is gone forever. This was the case in 1680 when the dodo bird became extinct on the island of Mauritius in the Indian Ocean. In more recent years, only old trees of a certain species peculiar to the island could be found. It was concluded that the dodo bird ate the fruit of the tree. Passing through the gut of the bird softened the hard shells of the seeds so that they could sprout. Since the dodo became extinct, no more of the tree's seeds have sprouted.

The harmony and cooperation in nature causes honest souls to praise God. *"I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvellous are thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well"* (Psalm 139:14).

Sources: *Answers Magazine*, "Providential Provider," October – December, 2010 *World Book Encyclopedia*, "Lichens."

Feature Article for Youth . . .

Buying Time

Got plenty of time on your hands? Bored to death? Don't know what to do with yourself? The things you do don't really bring satisfaction?

Some time ago I happened upon a magazine article on boredom. In essence, the author asked the questions I just asked you. With lots of modern lingo and vivid illustrations, he tried to pass out "answers." The writer ran almost the whole gamut of "things" to do with excess time—everything from yoga sessions to talent shows. His grand finale was the suggestion just to try something he didn't suggest, if you were still bored after reading his article.

At least, the writer did make one reference to God. A suggestion to think about God and read the Bible was stirred about in his "vegetable soup" of ideas. Bible study and talent shows shared a similar significance it seems.

One could summarize that author's philosophy for dealing with boredom and use of time as "do your own thing." Actually the article was packed with *existentialism*. You see, existentialism knows no absolutes, no sure answers for what a person should do with his time. To that writer and to others, life is kind of a blind leap into the dark to find something satisfying. Maybe you land on something and maybe you don't. The idea is to keep trying everything you can think of. And when you finally land on something that's really your style, then that's what you do, right or wrong.

Certainly there must be a better way to use your time than that! I don't want to flounder around, do you? I'm looking for answers—how to live and how to die. I can't be satisfied with trial and error living.

Answers!

Happily, for the sincere seeker, there are clear-cut answers on how we can best use our time and get real satisfaction. Thousands of people are missing out. They're trying to find answers for life the hard way. God has the answers—we find them in the Bible.

The Bible abounds with illustrations of good and bad uses of time. Here are just a few ways the Bible talks about time.

A common measurement of time in the Bible is

the "watch." Sundials were inoperative, of course, at night. Therefore the night was divided into parts called watches. The ancient Jews observed three night watches—the Romans had four.

Perhaps the most interesting reference to watches in the Bible is a prophecy about Christ's return to earth from the Gospel of Luke. It gives us good advice about a very important thing to do with our time.

"Blessed are those servants, whom the lord when he cometh shall find watching: . . . if he shall come in the second watch, or come in the third watch, and find them so, blessed are those servants" (Luke 12:37, 38).

This means that each of us must be carefully watching (something to do with our time). We must be keeping a lookout for Christ to return. That means spending our time getting ready for the greatest event of all time. Being ready for that coming will bring everlasting satisfaction.

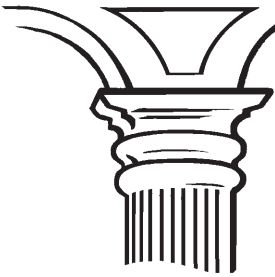
The Bible talks more about *hours* than any other measurement of time. Very often the Bible uses *hour* to mean any rather short and certain-to-happen period of time—not a sixty-minute hour as we know it. Jesus said, *"For the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his [God's] voice, and shall come forth"* (John 5:28, 29). That's an *hour* we'd better prepare for.

That is just a sampling of what the Bible has to say about time. It's something to use wisely for God. God inspired Paul to give us this advice: *"See then that ye walk circumspectly [watching carefully], not as fools, but as wise, redeeming [buying up] the time, because the days are evil. Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is"* (Ephesians 5:15-17).

The challenge for you and me today is to use our time for God, to prepare for a good life now and a life with Him that never ends. You won't be bored if you buy up your time as a precious gift. It is too precious to waste in an aimless search for what really doesn't satisfy.

Are you bored? Don't know what to do? Search God's Word with an open mind. Ask Him to control your life and to show you how to use your hours for Him.

—RLB



—Lester Troyer

Evaluating Our Survival Quotient

A few contradictory items have come across my desk recently. They have brought a keener understanding on how the morality of a culture relates to the survival of that culture. In the midst of this, the most simple truth came along to carry the day. It is the illustration from Jesus about the wise man who built his house upon the rock, versus the foolish man who built his house upon the sand. Both appeared to be legitimate structures—until the flood test came and washed the one away, leaving the other standing as the survivor. These structures can be compared to cultures in our world.

The simple difference? The non-surviving culture seeks to build without moral bounds, whereas the surviving culture limits its moral options to what the Bible describes as “doing the will of God.” As quaint as that may sound, it turns out to be the only sufficient engine for cultural survival (at least in a wholesome way), and in its Biblical context, for a personal relationship with God. This means, then, that Biblical morality, with its unchanging, controlling moral code, is the catalyst of an enduring culture.

One of the items that came my way (*Summit Ministries*, the journal, January 2011), was from a 1934 study by Oxford anthropologist J. D. Unwin. After studying 86 human civilizations, Unwin concluded that the principal factor in all-around cultural well-being is “absolute monogamy.” This is what today would be

considered a narrow, restrictive moral code. Sexual relationships are limited to the context of one-man, one-woman marriage for life. Divorce/remarriage, adultery, and fornication, are unacceptable.

From the other side, came a double negative. *On Gay Rights, Keep Fighting or Adapt?* Tom Krattenmaker, writing for *USA TODAY* (February 14, 2011), has already declared the winner. Gay rights, he claims, will prevail, as a matter of “civil rights.” He calls for a “peaceful” end to the controversy. How? If you are against homosexuality, feel free to continue believing what you believe. But keep the objections to yourself. Krattenmaker baits his argument with the words “mean” and “hate” (as descriptive with those of us who disagree), giving a good clue as to what could happen down the road against those inclined to resist his advice. By the way, even true civil rights don’t always win. Civil rights lost on the abortion issue.

The second example is offered by the Obama administration. According to a front page article (*Obama: Law Against Gay Marriage Is Illegal*) of the *Pioneer Press* (St. Paul, MN, February 24, 2011), the Justice Department will no longer defend the *Defense of Marriage Act*, passed by Congress in 1996. (This law bars federal recognition of same-sex marriages, and was doubtless intended to restrain strong-arm tactics by the courts).

So what is the difference between the two sides of the question? America needs men of integrity, men who find fulfillment in doing the right thing, over the “fun” thing. These are men who keep marriage vows, assuring that they are trustworthy. They perform faithfully on the job, and happily take home the rewards of their labors to first benefit their wives and children. These are not distracted from the most important things by bleachers, bars, or brothels. These are men who received their job descriptions from God, not from society. These did not start on the surface mode of being honorable men. Rather, it is their personal morality that defines them—from the inside out.

When it comes down to the survival quotient of western civilization, where will such men come from?

One would think that with the magnitude of national and worldwide cultural troubles, there would be a conscious effort and desire for a return to moral soundness. But for some reason, in kind of a last-gasp moral degradation, the opposite is true. Biblical morality is mocked and maligned. In fact, western civilization is actively warning people away from the surviving moral structure, to join the crowds rushing for “security” into the already collapsing building.

What’s missing here is the accurate assessment of the *survival quotient*. We miss the obvious signs of our impending cultural doom, and our inability to stop the process short of changing what we are doing wrong. Anthropologist Margaret Mead pointed out ground zero of civilization in a remarkable statement, when she described the “central problem of every society”—that is, to “define appropriate roles for the men.”

The surface manifestations of men’s problems are all over the map. From foreign dictators, now forced to choke on their own excesses, to powerful CEOs, those who run the economy into the ground, to the powerfully entrenched entitlement mentality that deludes most of our male population and defies budget cutting, to the losers in circuit court who are admonished yet again to abstain from drugs and alcohol, to further their education, to do job searches (they are rarely employed), and to pay child support. All this points to the fact that sexual excesses and economic greed ultimately yield lonely mis-

ery and poverty.

In contrast, true happiness, security, and cultural survival is rooted in moral restraint. (At the end of the day the reward goes with having done the right thing, rather than the selfish thing or the cheating thing.) Our survival depends on motivations of the kind that will carry us higher than passions of the moment, or the “right” to one’s own body (translate that into refusing reproductive responsibility), or the “right” to a government check.

We need not be surprised then, that civilizations are not maintained apart from aggressive spiritual commitments in what the Bible describes as “losing” our lives now in order to ultimately save them through the Cross, for the long term. This is a concept that a dying culture deems foolish. But without recognition and surrender to the God over us, the best of human ideals cannot be maintained, with the very aspirations themselves finally being scorned.

Finally, men are not choosing a job description. What they are doing, either consciously or otherwise, is to embrace or reject the Biblical moral code. This code will, in turn, assign their appropriate place, their purpose, and their *survival quotient* in the culture. (The single greatest threat to the world today is the lack of *survival quotient* value in her men.)

The man’s place in the culture cannot be defined nor taught through public education nor through the courts. In the very act of rejecting God over the past few generations, the public sector has shed its moral authority and with it, its potential value in teaching the survival quotient. This is a culture that now cheats its way defiantly around the marriage/reproductive requirements, and stamps its counter values into the educational, ethical, economic, and political realms. It has also turned to sharpening its teeth against the morality it once embraced.

The public sector was once the backup and support system for the only place where the role of men could be effectively defined and taught—fathers exemplifying responsibility and moral leadership, and passing on the same to their children, who would in turn teach their children. This is the context and the fruit of “absolute monogamy,” as practiced in the fear of God.



The Christian Home Series

In the Beginning

—Marlin Kreider

“In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth” (Genesis 1:1).

“And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: . . . So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it” (Genesis 1:26, 28).

“The LORD God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him. And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof; and the rib, which the LORD God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man. Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh” (Genesis 2:18, 21, 22, 24).

Thus reads the early Biblical record of the creation of man and woman. Today, we must return to the beginning to discover God’s plan for man, woman, marriage, and home life.

In Genesis 3:1, Satan came to the first woman, Eve, with a question, “Yea, hath God said?” His purpose was to plant doubt as to whether God really meant what He said. He wanted her to believe that God did not have

man’s best interest in mind and that God was withholding some good from the human race.

This question was an affront to God’s wisdom, holiness, and justice. In essence, Satan was saying, “God does not really know what He is doing. I have a better idea!” But it was all lies.

Satan is a liar and the father of lies (John 8:44). Adam and Eve believed Satan’s lies and fell into sin and great ruin. The sin of unbelief and rebellion against God is the root of all man’s and the world’s woes today. The masses still believe Satan’s lies and are suffering for it.

Some are bold enough to declare that the world is getting better. Others arrogantly accuse God for this world’s problems. Pride, unbelief, and hypocrisy are being perpetrated against God and His laws. Society needs to wake up to the fact that it has violated God’s laws and is paying a high price for that sin.

The masses are saying that premarital sex, multiple partners, divorce and remarriage, and live-in arrangements are normal and acceptable. Homosexuality and lesbianism (the Biblical term is *sodomy*—Genesis 19) with same-sex marriages are becoming politically correct and legal. If this folly prevails, how will

the human race maintain itself? *“Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools”* (Romans 1:22).

Society has legalized abortion which is murder. For the past thirty plus years in America alone, we have slaughtered millions of innocent babies. This is all done in the name of “planned parenthood” and world population control. Our society has accepted the atrocity of partial-birth abortions. Consciences are seared (hardened) by the widespread acceptance of sin and violence. How can America survive? Surely we have nearly exhausted God’s mercy!

If that were not enough, our society has almost totally rejected God’s method of child training. The Bible is clear that God, in love, chastises His children (Hebrews 12:5-11). The Bible also plainly teaches that parents who love their children will correct them in love and train them by the use of the rod (corporal punishment.) See Proverbs 22:15; 13:13, 14, 24; 29:15, 17; and Ephesians 6:1-4.

Today, humanistic psychology, civil governments, and even so-called “Christian psychology” want to eliminate corporal punishment, calling it child abuse. This writer and all Biblical Christians are against child abuse. However, there is a big difference between godly discipline, that in love exercises the use of the rod, and hate-filled, unrestrained child abuse. Laws are being considered in places, that if passed, would make children property of the state, taking away Biblical parental rights and custody. And the end is not yet.

So what are the results of these anti-God philosophies? We are seeing more and more broken, dysfunctional homes, uncontrolled rebellious children, drugs, drunkenness, sexual perversions, school shootings, teen suicide, and the list goes on. The state cannot afford enough prisons to hold all the criminals, not to mention the tax burden on the general population. When will society ever learn?

We must wake up, repent, and return to the beginning—what God has taught us in His Word. We need to get back to the Bible and God’s all-wise plan for marriage, home life, and child training. If we refuse and continue on the present “politically correct” course, the only option is that we will reap the righteous judg-

ment of Almighty God. The Biblical law of sowing and reaping describes how ignoring God’s plan for the family will catch up with sinful society. *“Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap”* (Galatians 6:7). Remember there is always a period of time between sowing (planting) and reaping (harvest). Sooner or later, refusal to take God’s way will catch up with us.

It is refreshing in our corrupt society to see well-behaved, God-fearing families. Praise God, there are still some today who believe in doing and living the Bible way. You, too, can find God’s way as you search His Word, the Bible, and surrender to the Bible way.

Do you need more guidance on how to have a true Christian home? First read your Bible and ask God to reveal Himself and His ways to you. Also feel free to contact those listed on the back of this magazine. We will be glad to try to encourage you. May God help us all to have homes that reflect His will and His love.

Happy the Home

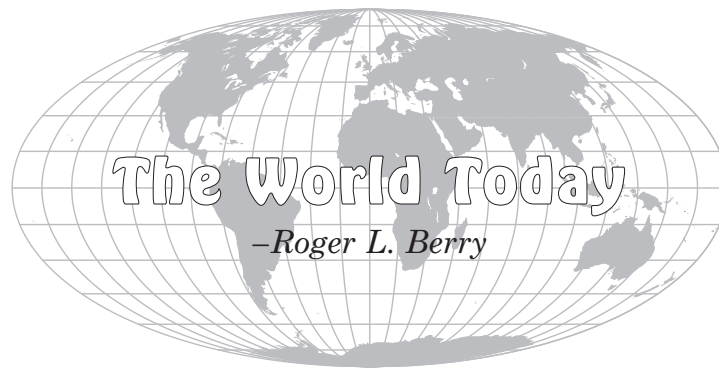
Happy the home when God is there,
And love fills ev’ry breast;
When one their wish, and one their prayer,
And one their heav’nly rest.

Happy the home where Jesus’ name
Is sweet to ev’ry ear,
Where children early lisp His fame,
And parents hold Him dear.

Happy the home where prayer is heard,
And praise is wont to rise;
Where parents love the sacred Word
And all its wisdom prize.

Lord, let us in our homes agree
This blessed peace to gain;
Unite our hearts in love to Thee,
And love to all will reign.

—Henry Ware (1846)



Dangerous Times

“Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord” (Acts 3:19).

We are living in dangerous times. The world experiences many disasters that take many lives and mean much physical suffering. Earlier in this year a huge earthquake and resulting tsunami took the lives of over 25,000 people in the technologically advanced country of Japan. Other highly populated and advanced places such as California may be next in line for such disasters. Hurricanes kill hundreds and cause billions of dollars in damage. Storms, lightning strikes, and flooding take more lives. If our lives are not threatened by natural disasters, fatal accidents can easily happen. Heart attacks or aneurysms could take our lives at any time. In light of this terrible uncertainty, it's time to be ready to face death. It is time to repent and turn to God.

The Bible underscores repentance again and again. It's absolutely essential. But people begin to get confused. Everybody seems to have his own ideas about repentance, from the bearded doomsday crier to worshipers who confess to a priest every week. People tend to underestimate what all is involved in the Bible command, “Repent!”

Genuine repentance is one of the most neglected and forgotten Bible teachings.

A common misunderstanding about repentance is that it's a one-time affair. The one-time repenters say, get saved, confess all your sins to God, and imply that there is no more need for repentance. Some think a Christian does not do anything that would need to be repented of. But everybody knows, deep down, that's not the case.

Then there are those who claim repentance or “confession” is a good tonic for the “soul,” but they don't really think it matters much how one lives between confessions.

Obviously such people have practically no concept of what repentance really is. They only see it as telling God you're sorry for your sins and asking Him to forgive you. Repentance involves sorrow and

regret, but it is much more.

The Greek word used in the verse above has the idea of thinking differently or reconsidering. A dictionary definition of the English word is “to feel such regret over some past action as to change one's mind.”

These definitions speak not so much of being sorry as of a change of mind or intentions. Genuine repentance is being sorry enough for sin to ask forgiveness and then, through the power of the Holy Spirit, to change one's mind about sinning and do differently.

Repentance is *not* being like the alcoholic who, after each drunk spell, wept and begged God's forgiveness, only to do the same thing over later.

The Fruits of Repentance

Genuine repentance has evidences, or fruits, that people can see.

One of the first fruits is RESTITUTION or making wrongs right.

You may have heard stories of converted sinners who need to do a lot of returning of stolen goods. That is called restitution. Also involved in restitution is restoring as much as possible broken relationships with other people.

REFORMATION is another necessary fruit of repentance. Repentance must always bring a change of action. If it doesn't, then it's not real repentance. Things the repenter once loved to do, he now hates. Things he once shunned, he now loves. His life will be completely reformed or changed by the power of God.

One misconception about reformation is that it alone will make a person fit for Heaven. That's putting the cart before the horse. Repentance must come first or reformation is only a useless white-washing with no change on the inside.

The truly repentant and reformed person will show by his life that God controls him. The Bible

says, "For a good tree bringeth not forth corrupt fruit. A good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is good" (Luke 6:43, 45).

DETERMINATION is an obvious fruit of repentance. There will be an inner urge to do the right and shun the wrong. People will see this determination evidenced in a person's zeal and enthusiasm for the things of God. Christ said, "Be zealous therefore, and repent" (Revelation 3:19).

Repentance is essential to salvation. It is essential to remaining saved. The Christian must ever be ready to confess his faults, make any wrongs right as far as is possible, and bear the fruits of repentance. We are living in dangerous times. Repent and prepare to meet God.

"The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise" (Psalm 51:17).

Are You Ready for Christ's Coming?

Can you say "yes" to each of these questions?

Do I believe in Jesus Christ?

"He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him" (John 3:36).

"But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name" (John 1:12).

Have I repented of my sin?

"Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out" (Acts 3:19).

"Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost" (Acts 2:38).

"Put off the old man with his deeds; and . . . put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him" (Colossians 3:9, 10).

Have I confessed Christ as my Master and Saviour?

"If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved" (Romans 10:9).

Am I following Jesus as Master?

"Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me" (Matthew 16:24).

"Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven" (Matthew 7:21).

Am I part of a spiritual fellowship of believers?

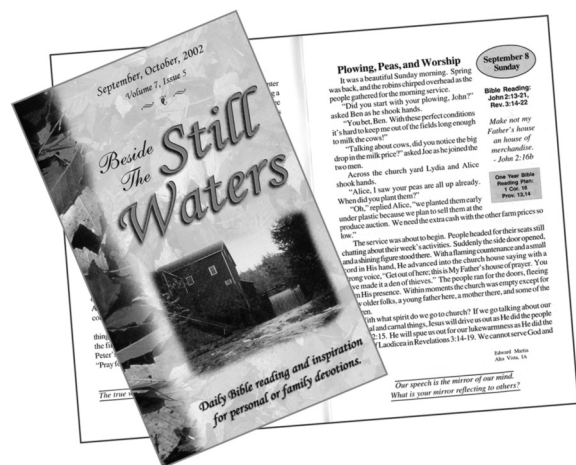
"And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together" (Hebrews 10:24, 25).

"Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls" (Acts 2:41).

Am I watching for Christ's return?

"Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man" (Luke 21:36).

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