

Reaching Out

Third Quarter 2010

Issue #64

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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Mercy in Judgment

—Dallas Witmer

When God punishes evil, we notice the destruction, and tend to ignore the mercy shown. When God rained fire and brimstone upon Sodom and Gomorrah, God listened to Abraham's intercession, and saved from the overthrow three people who feared God enough to flee when they were warned.

And so it is today with God's promised coming judgment upon the earth. He has warned us that, "The heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat" (2 Peter 3:10).

In even greater mercy God tells us how we may escape: "Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for . . . new

heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness" (vv. 11-13).

So when wars, tsunamis, terror, earthquakes, AIDS, volcanic eruptions, crime, storms, genocide, or landslides and floods, come upon us, look for mercy mixed with judgment. In the midst of suffering may God use us to show right attitudes, and to help folks perceive hope through repentance, so that they may escape the real coming apocalypse.

"For thou, Lord, art good, and ready to forgive; and plenteous in mercy unto all them that call upon thee. Give ear, O LORD, unto my prayer; and attend to the voice of my supplications. In the day of my trouble I will call upon thee: for thou wilt answer me" (Psalm 86:5-7).



Would you like to receive each issue of
Reaching Out,
or do you know of a friend who might?
Send your requests to the church
represented on your back page.

Do you care to respond to any of the articles?
Send your thoughts and comments to:

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The Christian Home Series

Surviving a Broken Home

—J. Luke Martin

They are everywhere in every community. Husbands abandon their spouses and children. Wives walk out of their husbands' lives and leave children with devastated emotions. Single mothers give birth to children with no marriage and no father image for support and guidance.

Consider how far removed this is from God's original plan. God planned for one man and one woman to be joined in marriage to become a "one flesh" union. They are to partner together in true fidelity until death separates them.

Hear what Jesus said, *"But from the beginning of the creation God made them male and female. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and cleave to his wife; and they twain shall be one flesh: . . . What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder"* (Mark 10:6-9).

Jesus went on to speak of the sin of divorce and remarrying. *"Whosoever shall put away his wife, and marry another, committeth adultery against her. And if a woman shall put away her husband, and be married to another, she committeth adultery."*

These divine mandates by the Saviour of the world are violated wholesale in our society. The violations are approved by nearly all of professed Christianity which has greatly multiplied the problem. Perhaps you, as a reader, are a vic-

tim of such a broken relationship. Is there a remedy? Is there hope? Can broken relationships and broken homes be fixed?

What can spouses do when their partners walk out? What can children do when their parents abandon them? These are tough questions. The old adage, "Misery loves company," provides little comfort. There is a lot of company in the broken home scenario. But it only magnifies the problem rather than fixing it. Here are some steps to finding God's way.

- Stop and consider that God is greater than any difficulty. In crises, He welcomes us to seek Him and call upon Him. Consider these wonderful promises found in the Bible. God hears the cry of those who are hurting. *"Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near"* (Isaiah 55:6). *"Call upon me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me"* (Psalm 50:15). *"Ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart. And I will be found of you, saith the LORD"* (Jeremiah 29:13, 14a).
- Jesus loves you. He died on a cross of wood for your sin (Romans 5:8). *"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and*

I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light” (Matthew 11:28-30).

- Ask God to make you a better person in the present circumstances. Our first impulse is to strike back or run away. These are negative responses. They will lead to more trouble and disappointment. When you let Jesus come into your life, He will steer you in the right direction. He will empower you to forgive, to love those who may be hurting you. Respond in helpful ways, doing your part to show love in action.
- Seek the help of other Christians. Find someone with whom you can share your struggles. Attend a Bible-believing, Bible-practicing church. Pray privately and with others. Read the Bible regularly.
- Seek restoration. Jesus is the great reconciler. He made peace through the blood of His cross. Jesus wants to work in your life and the life of your loved ones to heal broken relationships. Be willing to say, “I am sorry. I was wrong, forgive me” and “I will do better with God’s help.” Look for something good in others and commend it. Pray for ways you can lighten the burden of others around you. Your own burdens will become more bearable.
- Be convinced that regardless of how bad your situation is, God can make you a person of honor and integrity. In our difficulties, God comes near.

In the Bible, read Jonah, Chapter 2. Jonah cried to God from the belly of a great fish, a most hopeless situation. God brought him deliverance. God allowed the Apostle Paul and his shipmates to face a terrible storm with all hope that they could be saved gone. In that desperate situation, God saved them all (Acts 27).

Read Psalm 40. Note particularly the last verse. *“I am poor and needy; yet the Lord thinketh upon me: thou art my help and my deliverer; make no tarrying, O my God.”*

Jesus taught that all things are possible through Him though they may be impossible

with men. Coping with rejection, abandonment, abuse, anger, and contempt by ourselves is impossible, but not so with God. He sent His Son Jesus Christ to heal the brokenhearted and to set at liberty them that are bruised (Luke 4:18). You can find help from Him this very moment. If you need more help, contact the church or organization named on the back of *Reaching Out*.

O Happy Home!

O happy home, where Thou art loved the dearest,
Thou loving Friend and Saviour of our race,
And where among the guests there never cometh
One who can hold such high and honored
place!

O happy home, where two in heart united
In holy faith and blessed hope are one,
Whom death a little while alone divideth,
And cannot end the union here begun!

O happy home, whose little ones are given
Early to Thee, in humble faith and prayer,
To Thee, their Friend, who from the heights of
Heaven
Guides them, and guards with more than
mother’s care!

O happy home, where each one serves Thee,
lowly,
Whatever his appointed work may be,
Till every common task seems great and holy,
When it is done, O Lord, as unto Thee!

O happy home, where Thou art not forgotten,
Where joy is overflowing, full and free,
O happy home, where every wounded spirit
Is brought, Physician, Comforter, to Thee—

Until at last, when earth’s day’s work is ended,
All meet Thee in the blessed home above,
From whence Thou camest, where Thou hast
ascended,
Thy everlasting home of peace and love!

—Carl Johann Philipp Spitta



Catastrophic Power at Mount Saint Helens

“And he [Abraham] looked . . . and beheld, and, lo, the smoke of the country went up as the smoke of a furnace” (Genesis 19:28).

Man has the capacity to control or release great destructive power such as in the atomic bomb. When the first one was dropped on Hiroshima, Japan, on August 6, 1945, it destroyed the city and took the lives of 80-100,000 people. However, when Mt. Saint Helens blew 1,300 feet of its top off on May 18, 1980, the power released was estimated to be 500 times greater than the Hiroshima bomb. The force from within the earth removed 1.5 cubic miles of material and sent a column of ash 16 miles into the stratosphere.

The ghostly crater remaining; the moonscape pumice plain before it; and the mat of vegetation, logs, and animal carcasses that were left floating on Spirit Lake, were but a dismal relic of the beautiful mountain and lake that once stood there.

The Creator of the universe is of course the master of its powers!

The Mt. Saint Helens eruption was only a small reminder of the powers that God can unleash to serve His purposes. When the boat Jesus was sleeping in was endangered by a storm (in His humanity He got tired), He exercised His divinity and simply said, *“Peace, be still . . . and there was a great calm”* (Mark 4:39).

Evidence of Colossal Eruptions in History

Lava flows and ash deposits from the volcanoes in the Cascade Range show that much larger eruptions occurred there in the past. Ancient Mt. Mazama blew out over forty-two times as much pulverized rock and ash as Mt. Saint Helens. When it collapsed on itself, it produced what is now Crater Lake in Oregon.

Huge basalt lava flows 100 feet thick cover tens of thousands of square miles in the Columbia Basin of eastern Washington. On the Columbia Plateau of western Canada, they pile up 5,000 feet

thick. These were likely poured out during and after the worldwide Flood judgment of Noah’s time (Genesis 7). Lava outpourings are found at various places in the world such as Iceland and the Deccan lava fields of India which are larger than the country of France.

Although the Mt. Saint Helens eruption was small compared to historic eruptions, it was heard nearly 700 miles away in Maple Creek, Saskatchewan. In a surprise move, it reached out in a lateral explosion that destroyed forests 17 miles to the north. Small preliminary eruptions of steam and ash were occurring after a small crater opened on the summit on March 27. The main blast occurred when the expanding north side of the mountain slid down in the largest landslide of recorded history.

A flow of super-heated steam (1,100°) and pulverized rock traveling at 200 mph then quickly overtook the landslide. It plunged into Spirit Lake and over Cold Water Ridge six miles to the north. The water in Spirit Lake splashed up the mountainside 900 feet, like in a dishpan. When it came back down, it brought thousands of trees, vegetation, soil, rocks, and any animals that were in the area. The bottom of the lake was raised 300 feet. The mat of debris on the top was so solid, it was reported in the news that the lake was gone — filled up.

The People in Harms Way

I visited the Johnson Ridge Observatory six miles north of the mountain in the summer of 2009, nearly thirty years after the eruption. I was amazed to see the shattered bases of large trees, knocked off above the ground. It is hard to imagine the force that broke off 500-year-old trees seven feet in diameter. Beyond the blasted area was the large blown-down area—86,600 acres of

Douglas fir, cedar, and hemlock, were stripped bare and “mowed down like tall grass.” The visitors center is named in remembrance of David Johnston, who worked with the United States Geological Survey (USGS). He was on duty when the area was destroyed. He gave one hurried report “Vancouver, Vancouver, this is it!” before he perished.

About 60 people lost their lives, along with thousands of elk, bear, foxes, and other animals. All efforts by authorities to barricade the mountain against sightseers were bypassed by some. For some it meant a quick death. For others—they were well-paid for the series of pictures they got that show the mountain collapsing. Some of the people who perished were found still clutching their cameras. The FAA had put a five-mile flying restriction around the mountain but it was violated as much as seventy times a day! This makes one wonder what causes some people to court disaster like this.

Why People Court Disaster

Natural catastrophes in our world are beyond our control. But social catastrophes need not catch us unprepared or overcome us. We are glad to stay as far from danger as possible. God’s map for life is found in our Bibles. His Word teaches us the way of righteousness. *“The wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy. And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace”* (James 3:17, 18).

We see many people today, especially youth, in careless pride throwing their lives away with drugs, immorality, disease, dangerous sports, and such like. The pride of heroism, and possible fame or lustful appetites is the way Satan draws souls to see how close they can get to danger and escape. Some from despair and lack of fulfillment terminate life in outright suicide.

Many today are also like the old man of the mountain, Harry Truman. Harry was the eighty-three-year-old proprietor of the Mt. Saint Helens Lodge. He refused to leave his property on Spirit Lake despite official orders to evacuate. He said, “That mountain will never hurt me. When you live someplace for fifty years, you either know your country or you’re stupid.” By 9:00 AM on May 18, 1980, Harry was consumed by the flow that incinerated everything living within the inner blast zone and filled the south end of Spirit Lake. The lodge site was then buried under 300 feet of avalanche material.

Mr. Truman is not alone. When faced with the

coming judgment of God many confidently state their denial of the event. Their apparent wisdom will finally be proved foolishness by the facts. Many admire the stubborn spirit of never giving up despite the disastrous results. Satan uses this rebel spirit in man to cause societies to self-destruct. Babel was the beginning of Satan’s false religious system (Genesis 10:10) and Babylon is the system God finally judges in the end (Revelation 18:18). The Prophet Jeremiah says it is Babylon *“that made all the earth drunken: . . . therefore the nations are mad”* (Jeremiah 51:7).

One wonders at times why nations such as the United States take self-destructive courses. People in rebellion against God’s rule in their lives are held on their way, intoxicated by the “golden cup” of pleasure (Revelation 17:4). Pride keeps many from changing course and admitting their error. They brazenly insist that it will all work out somehow and that the naysayers are old-fashioned. Rome was an example of the lust for luxury, violence, blood, and the pride of “the survivor.” There is little thought of the fear and agony of the weaker victims. This is the product of evolution’s “survival of the fittest” taught in America’s schools for three generations.

Then there are others who make their peace with their God. They find fulfillment, satisfaction, and challenges in Christian living and in family life. This is the noblest involvement and calling of God to preserve our race. The needs of all in a Christian community are met as husbands, wives, children, and the elderly humbly and with joy accept accountability and are faithful in their responsibilities.

The Christian qualities of repentance, compassion, and service are what bring peace and rest to the weaker among men, women, and children. The virtue of humility allows people to acknowledge they are wrong and change their beliefs for what is right. The child of God takes a safe course and stays far from danger, not out of fear, but from wisdom. If necessary, it is the child of God who can face danger, suffering, and death with the knowledge of God and steadfastness. *“I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed [my soul] unto him against that day [the judgment]”* (Paul in 2 Timothy 1:12).

Sources: *Mount Saint Helens, the Eruption and Recovery of a Volcano*, by Rob Carson

The Bible — by God, the Author of creation, judgment, and redemption

Feature Article for Youth . . .

What Is Your Top Priority?

Plan now for future success! Invest for the future! Education is for you!

So read the billboard beside the busy freeway. The sign expressed in catchy phrases the main goal of the American public education system—success!

Soon a new school year will begin for millions of young people across the land. One wonders what thoughts might be racing through their minds as they set foot in the classroom.

Perhaps they wonder, “What am I here for? What will the future hold? Will all this study really bring me success? Will I get a job making plenty of money after high school or college?”

Studies made by psychologists and pollsters indicate that what many people want most in life is a money-making job, a home, a little “nest egg” for retirement—in short, financial success and security.

But is financial success really the most important thing in life? Should it be tops on the list of life’s priorities? Does it really give life meaning?

Some seem to think so. They assume that education can solve almost all of the world’s problems. Modern philosophy says we must educate people—then, somehow, war, poverty, hatred, and greed will melt away!

When I was in high school, many years ago, you just weren’t “with it” unless you were out to get all the education you could. High school students were expected to go on to college. Today, we have a superabundance of highly educated people, many with a long string of degrees behind their names. But, are our problems well on the way to being solved? Obviously not! War, crime, government corruption, drug addiction, and immorality are all on the increase. The world seems headed toward chaos, not some bright, man-contrived utopia. The Bible speaks of a time when people will say, “*Peace, peace; when there is no peace*” (Jeremiah 8:11).

Somebody’s priorities aren’t straight. Somebody has missed the real values in life. Education hasn’t been the cure-all for our social ills.

A successful businessman lay dying of cancer.

His wife stood beside him, tenderly wiping the sweat from his fever-wracked forehead. His face was contorted in pain. His cries of pain and despair echoed down the long hospital corridors.

You see, he had given all his life to pursue education and a successful career. He neglected his children and was unfaithful to his wife for years. His god was the “almighty dollar.”

Now his “success” no longer mattered. Death stared him in the face. Life had nothing more to offer. He had missed the mark. He discovered, too late, that something other than his success-drive should have had top priority in his life.

He had sought happiness in the wrong things—things that could bring him no peace of mind. He searched for real meaning in life, but did not find the real key to attaining it.

The Bible says, “*Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things [the necessities of life and happiness too!] shall be added unto you*” (Matthew 6:33).

God must be the object of our search for true happiness and true wisdom. Success only comes through seeking to serve Him above all personal ambitions.

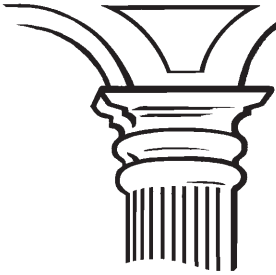
“*Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths*” (Proverbs 3:5, 6).

Your whole life, education included, must be turned over to Christ to be used for His glory. If God’s service and glory is not the center and first purpose of your life, then you’re missing the mark.

All your learning must be centered on the Source of all true knowledge. Take time to study the Bible to find God’s way of success through submission to His Son Jesus Christ. As you surrender to Christ, consider ways of using your education to better prepare yourself to work for Him and for His kingdom. As helpful as some education can be, all will be lost if you do not know Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour of your life.

Make “first things first” your motto. Give Christ top priority in your future. You will never be sorry.

—RLB



—Lester Troyer

Born Again: A Beginning or a Destination?

One of the great tragedies in modern attempts to see people converted to Christianity is a narrow focus on *how to* be born again. It is a subject that the Bible spends little time on, and for good reason. Until people know the sinfulness of their hearts, and the lostness of their souls, majoring on how to be saved is counterproductive.

This is like going around the country, teaching people how to plan the perfect wedding. Do you know what would happen? It would change nothing for the multitudes who get married and then proceed to break every rule of success. Many couples will commit to a good wedding, yet miss foundational commitment that engages the couple in working out rules of successful marriage and family.

For parallel reasons, we also need a shift in focus from a “getting saved” formula, to one that plumbs the depth of human need, and so prepares one to deny himself, and take up the cross to follow Jesus Christ on the narrow way that leads to life. Again, what point is it to enter the Christian life, only to bring reproach to Christ and fellow Christians, refusing the yoke of obedience to the Christ who is Lord and master?

To explore what must happen in the “new birth,” we will observe two laws that define the lives of all people, without the grace of Jesus Christ. These two laws are described in

Romans, Chapter 7, as a desperate struggle to do well, yet miserably failing to accomplish our good intent.

A third law, with the actual power of deliverance is described in the beginning of Romans, Chapter 8.

The first of these laws appears in verse 23 of Chapter 7, as the phrase, *the law of my mind*. If you back up one verse, you find what this law of the mind is like. *I delight in the law of God after the inward man*. Some will surely say, “Not me. I’m no Christian. I’m not convinced there even is a God.” However, this law does pertain to everyone. Romans 2:15, 16 addresses unbelievers as having the law of God written in their hearts, and that their conscience bears witness to the truth. It happens all the time. Unbelievers appreciate the kindness of the neighbor who brings in their mail, waters the flowers, and reports any suspicious activity while they are away on vacation. This law of the mind also causes them to trust emergency room staff in a strange city when their planned vacation has taken a tragic turn. In fact, it is this law of the mind that still keeps many, many people from being murderers, adulterers, thieves, or rapists. And even among those who sin more grievously, you will still find some admirable traits. This law of the mind serves as a control factor on the side of decency.

However, there is a negative side to this “goodness” of the conscience. It is the notion that this level of goodness should satisfy the justice of God. It goes so far as to question the justice of God for not going along with this man-centered analysis of good. It is a mistake to conclude, as many do, that the degree of goodness displayed makes us good people. It does not.

There is another law present in my members warring against the good intent and the actual good that is accomplished by the law of the mind. It is called *the law of sin* (Romans 7:23), and it resides in every human body. It has its own opinions, will, and emotions with an exceedingly high threshold of demanding what it wants. Its focus is on immediate pleasure and on shortcuts out of challenging situations. In so doing, it promotes interests absolutely contrary and even deadly to our good. It permeates the mind with wrong, builds the desire for evil, and breaks through the defenses of a mind wanting to do good.

What we would perceive as people who have it all together, such as the good neighbor, or the emergency room staffers, are caught up in the same struggles you face. It is really quite simple. Sin breaks through the facade of goodness and respectability, leaving us struggling, frustrated, and defeated. We find ourselves powerless over this, because the law of sin ultimately dominates and defines who we truly are. (We are not the good person we meant to be.) It reaches the ultimate complication because of the dominant, contaminating nature of evil. The otherwise perfectly good hamburger from your favorite fast-food place is no match for the trace of salmonella. The same holds true for the sin of the “good” person. *He that keeps the whole law, yet offends in one point, is guilty of all.* Paul says it well in raising the question: *Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?* The law of sin is not unlike the terrifying prospect of an otherwise respectable man being chained to a decaying body.

In summary then, we have the mind to do

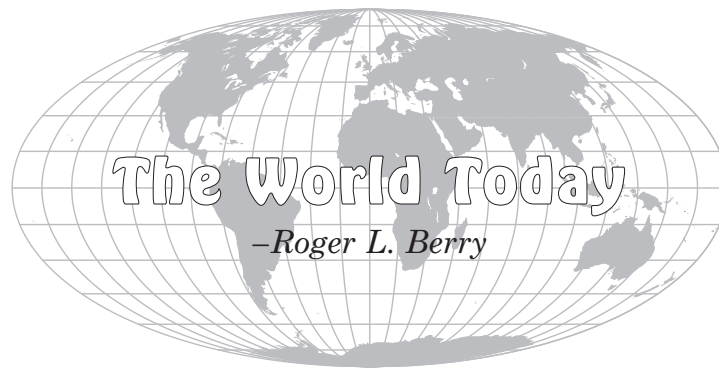
well (I witness this repeatedly even among criminals), but are brought to defeat and despair by a sinful nature beyond our power to control.

There is only one sufficient answer, only one course of victory. Thousands of people in the world demonstrate this principle every day. They board jetliners they don’t own. They couldn’t push them a single inch, much less lift them off the ground by flapping their arms. All they need is a boarding pass that entitles them to a seat. They sit back and trust the airlines to fly them from Detroit to Amsterdam, or from New York to Los Angeles, mocking gravity all the way. Every successful flight meets the following conditions: aircraft designed to the laws of aerodynamics, safe flight patterns, mechanical soundness, and sufficient quality and quantity of fuel. Cutting corners is lethal. Why expect shortcuts for either a good marriage or Christian living?

The one sufficient answer to the power of the flesh, is found in Romans 8:2. *The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.* It is the sufficiency and the enabling power of life in Jesus Christ, who shed His blood and suffered death on the cross for the remission of sins. We who were dead in trespasses and sin may now live for Him who arose from the dead. This holds a standard to which other religions and a compromised version of “being saved” cannot attain.

To substitute a shallow “accepting Christ” for genuine repentance from sin, restitution for wrongdoing, and unreserved faith and loyalty to Jesus Christ, mocks the God who owns the spiritual “airlines” and books passage to victory in Jesus. The scandals that frequently haunt the ranks of the “saved,” block the testimony of the church in society, and discourage some who might otherwise be sincere seekers after God.

For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace (Romans 8:6).



What We Really Are!

Some years ago I happened upon a quaint little town in the hill country of Virginia. Business establishments, jammed one against another, crowded the narrow main street. Here and there I could see an alley between buildings.

Each business displayed an impressive facade. The neat masonry, fresh paint, and sparkling glass windows all added to the neat appearance of the quiet village. As I ambled down the street enjoying the peaceful summer evening, I chose an alley to explore. Stepping from the bright summer sun into the obscurity, I paused momentarily, letting my eyes adjust to the penetrating gloom.

The dim light revealed decayed timbers, exposed sewer lines, and trash scattered helter-skelter. At my approach, rats scurried into their holes.

Beyond the alley lay huge piles of trash and garbage. Beyond them, run-down shacks portrayed the dismal plight of the community poor.

Temporarily I forgot the immaculate sunlit street “back there.” But quickly I jolted back to reality. “What a contrast,” I mused, “so clean on the side visitors see, but so wretched behind that false front!”

This two-sided village made me ponder. Don’t we humans resemble this town?

Each of us has two sides. There’s the “you” that others see—the person who tries so hard to make a good impression, to do everything just right. Then there’s the “you” when you’re alone—the “you” no one else sees.

But suppose someone would see the real you behind the scenes? What would he learn about you? What kind of impression would you make?

Would you be confident of your presentability? Or would you be ashamed to be “exposed” for what you really are?

When a person buys a piece of furniture, he investigates it carefully. He opens the drawers, tests its sturdiness, examining the way it’s put together. He’s looking for quality. He can’t judge it by the shiny veneer. Looks are deceiving, you know.

What you are “underneath” reveals your true qualities—your real worth. People may never see the private “you,” yet there is One who sees it all. *“For the LORD seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart”* (1 Samuel 16:7).

Someday God will judge all people for what they really are. All false fronts will be stripped away. *“For nothing is secret, that shall not be made manifest; neither anything hid, that shall not be known”* (Luke 8:17).

In that day, all the images and good impressions that we may have tried to build up will mean nothing. What we really are “underneath” is all that will matter.

How can you get that inner quality of life that will really count?

You must begin by asking Jesus Christ to take control of your life and clean it up. In Him, you will have a new, changed life. *“Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new”* (2 Corinthians 5:17).

Allow Christ to sweep away the corruption and debris of the old life. *“And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of*

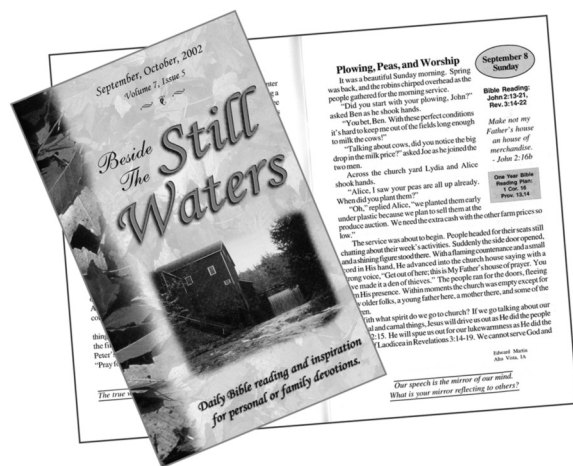
God” (Romans 12:2). There’ll be a new you! Inside and out!

Yield both the seen and the unseen “you” to Christ. Reject the futile efforts of the majority to cover up sin.

Let Christ be the LORD of your whole life. Exchange your false front for a true character. What you do with Jesus Christ will determine the quality of your life now and in the next life.

“If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us” (1 John 1:8-10).

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DO YOU WANT TRUE HAPPINESS?

The United States Declaration of Independence promises citizens “life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.” Since that day many have been pursuing these promises, especially the pursuit of happiness. But they have been looking in the wrong places.

If you want to find true happiness . . .

Acknowledge PERSONAL Sin

“For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23).

“All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all” (Isaiah 53:6).

Believe PERSONAL Promises

“Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures” (1 Corinthians 15:3).

“He was manifested to take away our sins; and in him is no sin” (1 John 3:5).

“Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness” (1 Peter 2:24).

“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life” (John 3:16).

Accept PERSONAL Salvation

“That 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).

Realize PERSONAL Freedom From Sin

“If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed” (John 8:36).

Jesus said, *“If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free”* (John 8:31, 32).

Experience a PERSONAL Change

“Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new” (2 Corinthians 5:17).

