

*Strings
on
Your
Fingers*

"My son, keep my words, and lay up my commandments with thee. Bind them upon thy fingers."—Proverbs 7:1-3.

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A book of sermons for young
people by young preachers



Collected and Published
by
W. CARL KETCHERSIDE

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ROY HARRIS

Roy Harris

Roy Harris was born December 9, 1915, in south Missouri, and grew up in the Ozark Mountain country, famed all over the earth for its scenic beauty. Amidst these rugged hills, through the faithful efforts of a Christian father and mother, he came to have a reverence for the God who controls both nature and spirit. Possessed of a love for song, he prepared himself for increasing the interest in that phase of the worship. He is a graduate of the Stamps-Baxter School of Music at Dallas, Texas, and is a composer of several songs the latest being "Hilltops Of Glory". Approximately three years ago, he was persuaded by the elders of his home congregation to take up evangelistic work. Since that time he has attended two protracted Bible Studies at Saint Louis and has preached the truth in Missouri, Illinois, Nebraska, Kansas and Colorado. Roy's present home address is Brixey, Missouri.

Is the Young Man Safe?

by ROY HARRIS

This question first asked by David concerning his own son, Absalom (2 Sam. 18:32), is one worthy of consideration by both young and old in every age.

Someone may ask, "Why the young man, especially?" Because, if this country is not a safe place for the young man, it is a place, or soon will be where no one is safe, since it is evident that the young man of today will be the middle-aged man of tomorrow, upon whom with the aged, the nation as well as the Church of Christ must depend. Since it is generally true that "as the twig is bent the tree is inclined" we can usually predict the future of any nation, church or family, by the care and consideration given to the training of its young people, yes, even before they reach the age of accountability. The precepts and examples set before an individual in the young and impressionable years form an imprint on the mind which time and circumstances may sometimes alter or obscure, but seldom, if ever erase.

Only a few years more than two short decades ago, a great war was fought and won with the intention of making the world safe for democracy, thus providing a place in which the youth of the world would never again have to go and risk his life upon the battlefield. Although the "crosses row on row" still mark the place of the honored dead "where poppies blow in Flanders fields" and bear grim, yet silent attestation to the hellishness of war, their message has gone unheeded by the nations of the earth.

In every major nation of the world young men have again been drilled to furnish cannon fodder to satisfy the war lord's greed for gain and lust for power. Once more,

the land has been shaken with the tread of marching armies, the air has been rent with the sound of booming guns and the drone of bomber planes with their death-dealing bombs. Once again, the earth has opened her mouth to receive many gallons of the blood of the flower of her youth. But even if the young man of today should never be called upon to sacrifice his life upon the altar of battle to the god of war, is he safe in the ordinary affairs of our modern world?

Just now it might be well for us to consider the circumstances at the time of, and leading to the occasion which called forth this question originally. Why was David showing such anxiety for his son? What has led Absalom into the condition where we now find him? What is his background? What of his early childhood? Was it that of the underprivileged as we think of the term? No! Absalom was the king's son. Growing up in the palace he had all the benefits, privileges and advantages whether physical, financial or educational, it was possible for one of that day to have. He was well-favored, fair to look upon (2 Sam. 14:25) possessed of a pleasing personality, able to sway others to his will. These very qualities proved at last his undoing, since he was able to raise a rebellion against his father, the king, by standing at or near the city gate, and when anyone with a controversy came near, Absalom would fawn upon him and say "Oh, that I were made judge in the land, that every man which hath any suit or cause might come to me and I would do him justice" (2 Sam. 15:4).

Thus he stole the affections of the people and when the opportune time came, he collected a sizeable army with which he attempted to wrest his father's kingship from him. So now we see father and son arrayed against each other in battle just as is all too often true in spiritual warfare today. Yet in spite of his son's waywardness, David still loved him, and desiring to save his life, had given strict orders forbidding his men to harm Absalom personally. Despite this command, however, Joab could not resist when opportunity arose and Absalom was killed.

Then we see David out by the city gate, anxiously awaiting word from the front, where he knows a rebellious son is in danger. Suddenly a messenger appears and as soon as he is within hearing distance, David inquires about the safety of Absalom. The man shouts back what should have been good news. He tells the king, "The Lord hath avenged thee this day of all that rise to do thee hurt". But David is more concerned about his son than all the armies of Israel upon whose success depends his right to remain king. When he is told that Absalom is dead, David climbs to his chamber over the gate, lamenting as he goes, "O my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom! Would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son!"

The day of victory is turned to a day of mourning. Joab, the commander of the armies, says, "I perceive that if Absalom had lived and all we had died this day, then it would have pleased thee well". Previous to this when his little babe had died, David expressed the beautiful sentiment, "It cannot come to me but I can go to it". Why did he not say the same concerning Absalom? Because he knew Absalom had not died in innocency but would have to receive a just punishment. Too, there was probably a strong note of self-reproach in his tones, as he was, no doubt, forced to the conclusion that his own neglect of God's law had contributed to the downfall of Absalom. Unfortunately David had not retained all the sterling qualities of character which had distinguished him in his early life.

Reared in obscurity, forced through poverty to tend his father's sheep, alone oft times in the wilds of the Judean hills, exposed not only to inclement weather, but also to dangers incurred by reason of wild animals with which the hills were infested. David trusted in God and was perfectly safe. He was safe when fighting the bear, and also the lion when they attempted to steal the sheep, because as he later told Saul, "God delivered them into my hand" just as he did the mighty Goliath after this giant Philistine had defied the entire army of Israel and struck terror into the hearts of the Israelites. To David he merely looks like an uncircum-

cised Philistine, who is defying the armies of God and after trying on, and laying aside the king's heavy armor, David takes his little sling shot and walks down into the valley, calmly picks some smooth stones from the brook and goes forth to meet the giant.

At first the giant was inclined to scoff at a boy with a stick and says, "Am I a dog that you have come in this manner?" Disregarding these words, David marches forward, beginning to run as he nears Goliath, and swings his sling to let loose a rock which sinks into the giant's forehead, knocking him to the ground. Having no sword of his own, David runs to the giant, draws his sword from the scabbard, and cuts off the giant's head with his own weapon. Now that their champion has fallen, the Philistines begin to flee and the Israelites, who hitherto had been satisfied to remain in the background and watch, when they see David holding the severed head of the giant, become very bold and pursue the fleeing Philistines until they are completely routed. So it came to pass that a great victory was won by the armies of God because one young man went forth with trust in the Lord and opened up the way.

David was reared in an environment which many parents today, used to ease and security, would look upon with abhorrence; and yet he was safe and amid those surroundings, exhibited an admirable character.

Absalom, on the other hand, was not safe in the king's palace; not safe from the influence of evil companions; above all, not safe from his own evil desires. Can you not see represented in these contrasts, many of the young men of today? Is the young man safe today?

Is he safe, first of all, in the home? Ephesians 6:4 seems to be a much forgotten scripture, since so many parents are failing to obey the injunction to "bring up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord". It is not impossible to find a "christian" family with several children and none of them possessing a Bible, except perhaps a Family Bible, which neither the children or parents ever read. Many children have seen their parents attend a pic-

ture show or other place of amusement, only to stay away from church on the slightest provocation. Some parents are too busy making money for their offspring to fight over after they are gone, to take time to teach them the way of the Lord. What greater, or more priceless heritage could parents leave to their children than the memory of a godly father and mother? In after years, can gold, fame or even a liberal education, equal the picture engraved upon memory's walls of a father or mother with head bowed, voice lifted to God in prayer?

"What have they seen in thy house?" (2 Kings 20:15) is a question which well might be asked today. A great man once said, "Show me what is in your home by choice and I will show you what is in your home life". Above all, what kind of example is set in the home? Advice alone is not sufficient. Lord Chesterfield wrote many famous letters of advice, containing much wisdom, to his son, but there seems to be no record that the son ever distinguished himself as a result. Sometime ago there was an account in the papers of a twelve year old lad in New York City who was awarded a medal for saving a younger child at the cost of his own leg. When he was praised in the hospital, the youngster said, "That's nothing. My father's a fireman, and he saves people all the time". He was demonstrating his desire to emulate what he saw his father do, and while this is not infallibly, it is generally true.

The story is told of a man who was inclined to pay frequent visits to the saloon. Often as he went to and from work he would stop at the bar for a dram or two. One morning when the ground was covered with snow he left his home at the usual hour, but had only gone a short distance, when looking back, he saw his little three year old son following him. The youngster was stretching his legs to the utmost attempting to place each foot in the exact spot where the father's tracks were imprinted in the snow. "What are you doing son?", the man asked. "Daddy, I'se steppin' in your twacks", was the reply, and as the man went on his way those words kept ringing in his ears, "step-

ping in your tracks, stepping in your tracks". He, for the first time began to realize it would not be long until his footsteps would be leading those young feet into the saloon, and other places of vice unless he changed his ways. Would he have the responsibility upon his shoulders, of having led those trusting feet in a path which would culminate in degradation of character, to ruin a life and cast the soul at last into hell?

Suppose that you who are fathers and mothers were called upon to answer the question today, "Where do your steps lead?" Do they lead to the theater, beer parlor, pool hall—or to the place of worship? On Lord's Day morning, do they lead to the river, the park, the house of companions—or to the House of God?

When the young man enters school, where he will mingle with every kind and class, will he have been well grounded in principles of truth and righteousness so that he will not be swayed by the influence of others who are unscrupulous; or will he, through lack of previous training, be induced to commence a life of dishonesty and immorality?

To the young man himself, we may ask, "Whose steps do you follow?" Do you go places and do things merely because someone wants you to, never stopping to consider whether it is right or wrong? Are you so spineless and weak-kneed you cannot brave the displeasure of vile-mouthed, uncouth companions? How many times have you heard such expressions as these: "I don't care so much about drinking but all the fellows I associate with drink"; or, "The others smoke and I don't want to be unpopular"; or, "I just went because the crowd did". Although fancying himself A MAN, he had become a mere toy, a puppet, ready to jump whenever the crowd pulled the strings. Personally, I believe I could have more respect for the individual who did a thing because he desired to, even though wrong, than one who simply runs with the pack like a senseless sheep following its leader.

"In the world's great field of battle,
In the bivouac of life;
Be not like dumb driven cattle,
Be a hero in the strife".

While you are striving to obtain an education, are you following the example of such great men as George Washington, Daniel Webster and Abraham Lincoln, by studying the greatest book of all? It is true that there are occasional teachers who scoff at the Bible and religion but why not be a teacher yourself and show them something?

Is the young man safe who attempts to keep step with the social whirl? In the night life of the cities, with its beer parlors, dives and gambling dens, or upon the high-ways where upon every other corner the road-houses, taverns and night-clubs are "winking, blinking and twinkling an enticing invitation to stop, wine and dance", while music blares forth in alluring appeal? Oftentimes too, those things are only a false front for other practices even more vicious and degrading. Lloyd George of England, during the first World War, is reported to have said, "England's public houses (saloons) are doing the nation more harm than are German submarines". If it was true then, it is true of our country today. Submarines could only put an end to one's earth existence, while the other might send his soul to hell.

What does it profit a man today to become a great scholar, knowing science, chemistry, astrology, etc., if he does not know HIM who is the Great Physician, The Bright And Morning Star, The Lion Of The Tribe Of Judah, and the Lily Of The Valley. As a young man who lay dying on the battlefield of France, expressed it, "I wish the world had known less about chemistry and more about God". Without the love of Christ, nations merely use the knowledge they have gained, to blast more bodies into eternity, and the instruments which otherwise would be a blessing are devoted to destruction.

Upon whom must the responsibility for these conditions be placed? Can it be placed on those growing up in a world

over-ridden with sin, held before them at every turn? Are the young men and women, in their teens or early twenties, who don't have enough backbones or grey matter to keep them out of honky-tonks, dance halls, houses of prostitution, beer joints and saloons, which have sprung up like mushrooms all over the country, responsible for those things being here? Certainly not! It is true today, as it has ever been in the past, that the responsibility for most of the dangers, most of the temptations, which confront the young man, rests squarely upon the shoulders of the older ones. Too long have we been tolerant, saying, "Well maybe there is not so much harm after all". Can we be surprised if a young man fills a drunkard's grave, if the parents think there is no harm in a little whisky or a glass of beer, so long as we do not get too much?

Not long since a man who himself had been a "rounder", a drunkard and unfaithful to his marriage vow, was alarmed when he saw his young daughter, barely in her teens, beginning to lead a wild life. "I know I haven't done so well myself", he said, "but I don't want her to do as I have done". What more did he have a right to expect? There was a man elected mayor of a city, and although he knew crime and vice were flourishing, and was repeatedly urged to do something about it, especially in view of the many young people who were being ruined, he preferred to accept bribes and remain quiet. Then one night he was called from bed to go to roadhouse where a drunken brawl had taken place. Two young men lay dying as a result of the fight. He arrived on the scene to find his only son, his chief joy and pride, one of the victims. Little had he realized when accepting bribes from evil doers that he was selling the soul of his own son. Yet it is always someone's son or someone's daughter, somebody's brother or somebody's sister, though many times we fail to show concern where we are not immediately involved, excusing ourselves by thinking, "It does not affect me. I am not my brother's keeper".

We forget that "no man liveth unto himself" and that we are responsible for the example we set before others, and

are guilty of their crimes to the extent that our influence has caused them to be committed. Could one who sold intoxicants, though he did not drink himself, be held guiltless if his customer became a drunkard? If your card playing leads someone else to become a gambler, can you avoid blame? If someone should be induced to sin, surrendering his or her moral virtue, by reason of the scenes portrayed upon the screen which you had encouraged by your patronage, could you be absolved of guilt?

"Cleanse your hands ye sinners; purify your hearts ye double-minded" (Jas. 4:8). Did you ever stop to think that the characters portrayed and many times glorified, upon the motion picture screen, are such that you would not allow to be entertained in your home in person, and whose companionship you would no doubt shun in ordinary life? But, someone may ask, "what can we do? It is not possible to stamp out of existence all evil in the world." While that is true, we can refuse to endorse or partake of sin in any form. Moreover, we can register our disapproval even at the price of popularity.

Remember, coming in contact with inferior metals only brings out the true luster of a genuine diamond, but contaminates and wears away the imitation. Is pleasure so sweet, or popularity so dear, that they must be purchased, even at the price of character and virtue? "What is a man profited", applies to the young as well as the old. Sometimes the foolish idea is adopted that a person must sow so many "wild oats" in his youth. In other words, give youth and main strength to the devil, then when just about ready to die, hand over the remains of a mis-spent life to God. Perhaps we have forgotten the law of reaping, which teaches, "whatsoever a man sows that shall he also reap" (Gal. 6:7). Thus if we sow to the flesh we shall of the flesh reap corruption.

One among the saddest sights in life, is an individual who, late in life, after having spurned multiplied opportunities of obeying the gospel, living his days in wickedness, encouraging others in a downward course, perhaps some of

them his own flesh and blood, at last sees the error of his way and is whole heartedly converted to Christ. Not too late, perhaps, to save his own soul, since our God is a merciful God. In most instances though, too late to arrest the evil course already set in motion by his influence.

Can you today look back upon a yesterday with no regrets, feeling you did your full duty to God and man? If not, are you endeavoring to live today in such a manner that when tomorrow comes, you'll have no dark yesterday to look back upon? Sometimes we think, "I am young, with much of life before me, but after I have had my fling, I may become a Christian". You may have less time than you think.

Perhaps you have heard of the sun dial by the side of the forest road. It had been placed in a shelter where weary travelers often stopped to rest on their journey, so they might know the time of day. As years passed it got out of order so that it no longer indicated the proper time. Some wag, who observed this fact, wrote beneath it, "It is later than you think". While it was intended as a joke, nevertheless, many a traveler leisurely pursuing his way, or loitering along the road, read this inscription and realized with a start that it was literally true, that he was far from his destination and he quickened his steps.

The same is true in our journey of life. We may have lost more time than we realize. Already, it may be, we have waited too long to do the fullest amount of good with our time and talent. The habits you are forming have a stronger hold upon you than you imagine, until you attempt to break away from them and find "it is later than you think".

If the young man of today, to whom his first glass of beer, or licentious deed is as the opening scenes of some new and undiscovered paradise, could look ahead, to the time when those acts have become fixed habits in his life; when he is a drunkard, a moral reprobate, an outcast from Christian society; he would, in many instances at least, decide he has no time to spare for such practices.

The only safe place for any young man to be today is IN CHRIST. Standing upon the eternal shore, if we have bartered our birthright for a mess of pottage, like Esau of old, we may with bitter tears seek a place of repentance and find it not. "Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth" while you can give worthwhile service.

When the angel declares that time no more shall be, when the secrets of your soul are laid bare in the pitiless glare of the light of God's eternal truth, when the searchlight of God's Word is turned on your soul, revealing the inmost secrets of your life, what will your record be? If the family circle is broken by sin, if your name is not spoken at the last roll call of the redeemed, if when all the worthwhile things of your life are summed up, you do not receive a position in the sunshine of God's love, then the history of your life must be recorded in the Lamb's Book of Life as a tearful tragedy. If that should be your fate, better it were for you if you had never been born!

Take stock of your spiritual position! Would you be content to enter eternity in your present condition, or have you been neglecting your duty or even postponing your obedience to the gospel? If so, remember in all seriousness, it may be

"later than you think"





ARTHUR FREEMAN

Arthur Freeman

Arthur Freeman was born in Osage County, Oklahoma, January 23, 1919. Soon after, the family moved to Des Moines, Iowa, but returned to Oklahoma in 1924. He began school in a small Indian village about 1½ miles from his father's farm near Kaw City. In 1927 the family again journeyed to Iowa, and, after two years on farms near Colfax and Ankeny, moved to Des Moines. There he lived until his marriage, November 28, 1940, to Mayfred Bailey, of Chillicothe, Missouri.

He was reared to know only the Christian church and was immersed by a Christian church pastor at Des Moines. In August, 1932, not long after his baptism, when he attended a tent meeting of the Church of Christ and heard Bro. W. Carl Ketcherside "expound unto him the way of God more perfectly", he took his stand with the "one body".

About a year before high school graduation, he had firmly determined to serve as an evangelist. After about 16 months of mechanical drafting work, he quit to attend a Bible reading and "preach the Word". In 1938, he went through the first St. Louis Bible reading directed by Bro. Ketcherside and began preaching soon after, his first series of meetings being at Council Bluffs, Iowa in May. To his great joy, his first year of work climaxed when he assisted his father in coming from the Christian church and immersed his mother and younger brother into Christ. Again that winter he attended the St. Louis reading and took one year of special study at Washington University in St. Louis in the 1939-40 school term.

His labors in 7 states and his interest throughout has not been merely in preaching, but also in personal work, development of talent of church members for every phase of Christian work, and instructing children's daily vacation Bible studies. He endeavors to commit what he knows to "faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also".

Bearing the Yoke in Youth

by ARTHUR FREEMAN

The pioneers of our country, to whom we owe considerable, were less fortunate than the modern farmer. Instead of the power of the tractor, he used the symbol of strength—the slow-plodding but hard-pulling ox. The transport of logs to build the cabin and the barn, the clearing of the land for farming, the turning of the soil for planting, the cultivation for the harvest, the treading of silage for wintering stock, and all the many odd jobs that took strength, were dependent upon the muscle of the oxen. Well did those pioneers appreciate the importance of those animals to their own existence. The need for the ox to accomplish the work and the necessity of accustoming it to bearing the burdens, forced the farmer to put his oxen to the yoke while they were yet young. He knew that to delay breaking an ox to the yoke was to lose the help that ox could give while it was young. He knew its working life would be shorter; but greater still would be the loss in later years because of the inefficiency of the ox untrained in early life. Perhaps Jeremiah had some very similar thoughts in mind when in Lam. 3:28 he stated, "It is good for a man that he bear the yoke in his youth". He can help bear the loads, use his time wisely, lend encouragement to others, and gain valuable experience which will enable him to render more efficient service to Christ in later life.

Although those in youth are not so strong physically nor mentally as those in the prime of life, yet the fact remains that youth is strong. Young men and women have ability to accomplish for Christ and His Church. Of course it is true that a young man won't wield an ax, plow a fur-

row, or bear the burdens of the day as efficiently, as cunningly, nor as effectively as an experienced man in the prime of life, but should he not do what he can? A young girl will not clean the house, do the washing, or prepare the meal as quickly, nor as thoroughly as an experienced housewife, but should she not do her best trying? Christian young men and women may not do the work assigned them in the church with the proficiency of those their superiors in age, but is that any reason for their not being kept busy doing what they are qualified to perform? Certainly not. They are strong enough to do a share of the work of the church. Besides, other members of the body of Christ need their assistance.

When Paul stated "Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ", (Gal. 6:2) he surely did not mean to imply that the church could get along very well without certain ones in the church. He did surely as life exists teach that there are burdens people must bear which can more easily be borne with the aid of others. Is it not possible that the young people can make the load lighter for others who really need their help to get along? The same writer wrote the entire twelfth chapter of his first letter to the church at Corinth describing how that the church, even as a human body, has many different members and that no matter how small its part, each member has a very vital function for the body in its entirety. "Those members of the body, which seem to be more feeble, are necessary". Verse 22. Are not the young people in Christ part of that one body? Do they not have certain functions for the edification of the whole body? And that according to their ability—just the same as every other member? Without their work will the church progress as well? Do not most young people who become Christians before their parents endeavor to lead their parents to Christ? Does the church, in order to accomplish the most for Christ, need the assistance of the young members? Indeed it does.

Is it possible that one man could farm as much ground as effectively as a father with four young sons to assist?

No more than it is possible for one lady to care for a large home as nicely as a mother with four young daughters to lend their aid. Can a Church of Christ with twenty-five middle-aged and elderly workers complete as much as the same church with twenty-five additional young men and women? No! Only the ignorant and selfish would affirm it. And who is there today who can not truthfully say even as Jesus did to his disciples, "The harvest truly is plenteous, but the laborers are few; Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth laborers into his harvest"? Matt. 9:37, 38. The young generation in the kingdom should, will, and must bow its neck to the work to be done.

Think of your time and what you can do with it. Suppose you are a young Christian and are doing nothing more for the church than going to its services. You don't study the Bible. You don't tell your friends anything about the Bible because you don't know. You don't even invite them to church with you that they might hear some one who does know. In other words you go to church. Besides the work you could be doing for Christ, think of the precious time you are wasting. When the clock ticks an hour by, it is gone, no man can ever call it back—it is gone—forever. Whose time was it? If you are a Christian, it was the Lord's, for he has declared, "ye are not your own, for ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's". (1 Cor. 6:20). Then you are wasting time—time that belongs to God—and that with the following as a judge staring you in the face, "Walk in wisdom toward them that are without, redeeming the time". (Col. 4:5). Many middle-aged and older people have expressed to me their humblest regrets of the past saying, "If only I could live part of my life over, I wouldn't waste my time the way I have, but I would serve Jesus faithfully". Let us not make the same sad mistake. Let's bear our share of the burden, young people, and make wise use of that precious time which passes but once. Let's study the Bible, know the church, anxiously look for op-

portunities to influence our friends, and willingly do what we are assigned or asked to do for the church. But listen! We can do more than just help others bear the load and save the time.

There are two things which are especially encouraging to a person endeavoring to complete a task—the good example of another doing his very best and the realization of a genuine helper. I am sure everyone of my readers several times has labored long and discouragingly by himself on a task and then been enlightened and encouraged by the help of some friend who arrived on the scene. Congregations sometimes encourage other congregations by their labor and help. The church at Corinth in giving to help the poor saints at Jerusalem was such a good example that Paul wrote to it, “your zeal hath provoked very many”. Groups or individuals in congregations can be the same encouragement to the rest of the church. You more experienced of the Church of Christ, and more especially you preachers, know what a real thrill and beam of enlightenment comes into your heart when you sit in an audience and hear a young fellow for the first time do a bit assigned to him with all the zest and determination of youth. I have seen the simple prayer of a young man just immersed into Christ bring tears to the eyes of many. I have seen the bravery and sincerity of young people just baptised bring to weak and unfaithful members a sense of shame because of their laxity and a determination to overcome. I have also seen the unfaithful members return to the fold and begin to labor with power for the Gospel and (believe it or not) arouse the supposedly diligent members to “lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees”. What does it? That good example and the hand of a fellow-laborer.

Paul knew all of this when in 1 Tim. 4:12 he stated to the young man Timothy, “Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity,” and again in verse 16, “Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thy-

self, and them that hear thee". He commanded another young man, Titus, what to teach the young men. "Young men likewise exhort to be sober minded. In all things shewing thyself a pattern of good works: in doctrine shewing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity. Sound speech, that cannot be condemned; that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of you". Titus 2:6-8. Fellows, we are not told by the sacred word that because we are young only once it is permissible to sow our "wild oats" and leave the church to others until we get old. What can we do?

There are scriptures to be read, prayers to be prayed, songs to be led, classes to be taught, talks to be made, friends to be instructed in the Gospel, tracts to be delivered, advertising to be done, church house to be cared for, money to be placed in the contributions, and hosts of other duties to be performed. Young men, listen to me; shall we go our happy-go-lucky way to satisfy our own fleshly desires and let others care for the church until we are more mature in life, or shall we now, in our youth, accept our God-given responsibility? Shall we be the "example of the believers," the "pattern of good works" we justly should, or shall we be just members on the book?

Although God has designated that the officers of the church and evangelists are to be men, there are very many functions for the sisters of the church to perform. The young women in Christ must accept their work and train for it the same as the young men theirs. Here are some things you young women can do; teach Bible classes on Lord's day, teach home Bible studies, instruct vacation Bible studies, deliver tracts, make personal calls, visit the sick, influence friends toward Christ, help keep the church house neat, do typing, filing, etc. All of those things and many more can you do. If you are married and have children, you have an extremely important and pleasant task in training your children in the way of Jesus. With that task and the many other things to be done in the church, you can manage to keep yourself quite busy. It was such as you to

whom Paul referred when he told Titus to instruct the aged women "That they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children. To be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed". Titus 2:4, 5. Just here I want to insert the words of Peter to the married women:

"Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives; while they behold your chaste conversation coupled with fear. Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; but let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price". (1 Pet. 3:1-4).

When a person who has the ability to perform certain tasks is forbidden to do so, he is likely to develop a feeling of inferiority and irresponsibility. On the other hand, when a person is given the privilege of exercising his God-given talent to accomplish good, he gains a satisfaction of having done something worthwhile plus a sense of liability. Foremen and superintendents in industrial or business concerns are appreciating more and more the value of placing their workmen upon their own initiative whenever possible. If a boss just keeps telling the workers "You do this," "You do that," "Don't do this," and "Don't do that," they become disgruntled and care little whether they do the "do's" or don't the "don't's". When the foreman says "Here, John, is the task I want you to complete," or "John will you do this for me?" both men get a lot more done and both feel one hundred percent better about it. They mean something to each other. Each has a responsibility and they are glad to cooperate with one another for the completing of the one big task. Young Christians are not a whit different. Give them a task and put them somewhat on their own ingenuity and they will work for the church. Then

they will realize that they mean something to the church and the church to them. They will cooperate with others to accomplish the one big task of the church. If the young are given their responsibility and take it, they will be doing more than just the work of the present.

I recall a visit with a family on a farm in Missouri. The prize possession of the farmer at that time was a small colt he was raising himself. He went to the barn and came out proudly leading the frisky specimen of beauty. Up and down the length of the barn lot he led him for my gaze and admiration. Then he related how difficult it had been to train the young animal to lead as well as it had that day. He had worked possibly an hour to get him across the lot the first time. Daily he had led him across that same lot several times. Then the colt followed willingly. Thus was the farmer's job to continue until the colt was fully trained to work for him. Surely by this time he is reaping the reward of his patience. For a man to be his best in life, he must be trained patiently from his childhood. Solomon taught to "Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it". (Prov. 22:6). Therefore when the young members of the church perform the work their ability will permit, they are training themselves to be more efficient laborers in the coming years.

Let us not lose sight of the fact that the older members of the church, upon whose shoulders rests the greater portion of the load, will soon pass from the stage of life. In the words of Job, "Man that is born of woman is of few days, and full of trouble. He cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down: he fleeth also as a shadow, and continueth not." (Job. 14:1, 2). When these fathers of the church are gone, others must endeavor to take their places. The cycle of life goes on. Our boys of today will be the leaders of tomorrow. Our girls of today will be the homemakers of tomorrow. Yes, and the young members of the church today will be the elders, deacons, evangelists, teachers, and parents of the church tomorrow. Hence, if we expect the Lord's cause to continue here on earth, we who are young must accept the

yoke in our youth and you who are older must train us to bear the yoke—not later—but now.

If one queries as to whether it might be easier for a person to delay taking much active part in the church until he is in the prime of life, without hesitation I reply, "No!" for in youth one can alter his habits and develop newly discovered talent with ease, but in later life one would make the same changes with great difficulty. If you strongly disagree with that statement just use your imagination a little just now. Imagine yourself as a football coach. You have decided to make a football team out of a group of fifty-year-olds who have never once played the game. Oh, yes, you might make a team out of them, but how many trophies would the team win in competition with our modern college or even high school teams? I believe your endeavor would make a "believer" out of you. For what reason would you not be able to make a very strong team of those men? For the same reason you could not expect to make an excellent work horse out of a ten-year-old but could out of a two-year-old. Visualize yourself as a cabinet maker of thirty years experience taking schooling to become a surgeon, or a surgeon of thirty years becoming a cabinet maker. True, you may be able to change from the one occupation to the other and even make a fair living after such a change; but hardly would you become expert in either. Now this teaching should not discourage a fifty-year-old member of the church from taking part in the church and doing his very best to develop his talent, for many such persons have done remarkably good work for Christ. I just mean to show that youth can change its style, methods, and habits with ease and old age with difficulty.

Here is a good example of the truth of the above theory, if it may be called a theory, for I think it so certainly proved that it deserves a better word. A certain young man living in a rural community had very few opportunities in life. His schooling was quite meager. The entire circumstances surrounding his humble life gave him a very faint hope for

advancing far in any phase of life. His open heart received the simple truths of the gospel in his youth, but his local congregation was lacking in talent and, what is worse, indifferent to the service of the Lord. He learned to do very little for the church because none taught him. For a number of years he remained in the same community developing hardly any in his Christian duty. Then he chanced to find work and move to a locality where he attended a congregation which, though not large, was interested in gaining new souls and did all within its power to train each Christian to serve in any way his ability would permit. Neither would this church be satisfied that a person could not do a thing until it had exhausted every effort to train him. When he first tried to read publicly, he tried, struggled, and stumbled over the words. Could it be done? He tried again—and again—and still again. He became more interested day by day. He studied. He practiced. He tried again. By little steps he made some real headway. His first talk. His second. His third. Again and again he tried, struggled, and stumbled over what he wanted to say, but like water being poured by an unsteady hand from a bucket, he poured out his heart to his audience. As experience makes the hand more steady, so this faithful brother's experience gradually made his words flow more smoothly and with deeper meaning. Today he is one of the very diligent workers in that same local congregation. His labors reach out to smaller less fortunate congregations in his State. A more impressive exhorter I have not heard. He is truly "a pillar" in the church.

Even with all his labors, which are to be highly commended and appreciated, there is a little "if" which could have changed everything. I hesitate to speculate upon the power and influence in the brotherhood that man would have been "if" he had only been trained and given responsibility in the church when he was young. "It is good for a man that he bear the yoke in his youth." There are more than a few Christians who have wished time and time again that they had been given religious work to do in their youth or

who wish that they had accepted such work when they were young and had the chance. I wish every one of my readers would have a plain talk with some of those who know from experience their loss in not bearing the yoke in youth. If we young people could only realize, we would busy ourselves now; we would find something more to do for Christ. If you older readers would only realize, you would busy yourselves trying to find something to do to help the young people. We would all work with each other, each as a "true yokefellow".

Why do some of us young people look upon the older members as "old fogies" and why do some of you older people look upon the younger members as "frivolous and silly upstarts"? Why? Look at yourself a little while. Perhaps therein lies the fault. Sometimes instead of helping a person to overcome a fault, we only view him with a sneering critical eye. If we are viewing another's actions in that light, we have a beam in our own eye. "First cast out the beam out of thine eye: and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye." Matt. 7:5. "Let all bitterness and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you." Eph. 4:31, 32. "For we are laborers together with God." 1 Cor. 3:9.

You trained and experienced oxen, please don't kick us younger undeveloped oxen over and leave us behind as though we were worthless. And we immature and undisciplined oxen, please, let's not kick at the better trained oxen as though they were too valuable in their own estimation. Listen, brothers and sisters in Christ, young and old alike, "We are laborers together with God". Therefore, "Bear ye one another's burdens and so fulfil the law of Christ". "It is good for a man that he bear the yoke in youth."

Youth, listen to me some more! We can help bear the load of others because we are strong, others need our assis-

tance, and the church can accomplish more with our help. We can make wise use of our time by applying ourselves to more diligent service in His kingdom. We can encourage others by our good example of ambition to do the work of Christ and by the helping hand. We can accustom ourselves to the work of Christ and make of ourselves more efficient and valuable Christian servants in later years because we can develop with ease now but with difficulty in later life. Everything is to our advantage. Serve Christ—not later—now! Not half-heartedly—diligently! Not grudgingly—willingly!

“Thank God every morning when you get up that you have something to do that day which must be done, whether you like it or not. Being forced to work, and forced to do your best will breed in you peace, happiness, and contentment, and a hundred virtues the idle will never know”. (Anonymous).

“My son, keep my words, and lay up my commandments with thee. Keep my commandments, and live; and my law as the apple of thine eye. Bind them upon thy fingers, write them upon the table of thine heart.” (Prov. 7:1-3).

“It is good for a man that he bear the yoke in youth!”

Again I say “It is good.”





WILLIAM HENSLEY

William J. Hensley

William James Hensley, was born March 30, 1918 in Cedar Rapids, Iowa where without interruption, he spent the first twenty-one years of his life. His father passed away when William was nine years old but the mother and father's brother saw to it that he was provided for and given an education.

At the age of twelve he joined the rest of his family as members of the Christian Church being baptized in the usual Easter Sunday service. He engaged in the youth activities of that body until he was seventeen, at which time he heard W. Carl Ketcherside, in a tent mission effort at Cedar Rapids. He took his stand with the Church of Christ and attended several short Bible Readings during the same summer, later attending three lengthy Readings in Saint Louis, and one in Chillicothe, Missouri.

In 1939 he entered the evangelistic field and has now completed his third year as a proclaimer of the truth. He was united in marriage to Verneta Clem, of Fairbury, Nebraska on October 15, 1941, and as this book goes to press, they are making their home in Fairbury.

The Profitable Exercise

by WILLIAM HENSLEY

The young man read and re-read the last paragraph of the letter, and each time one brief sentence registered again on his young mind. His father had written him many letters but somehow this one was different. The message that lingered with him stood as wise advice; practical for the life he was about to enter. A senior in college, he was about to launch out into a complicated business career. One that would demand all his available attention it seemed. Just because of that he thought of Dad's letter. It was a definite warning that he could not forget. That ringing statement, "Never in your life my son, regardless of how occupied you may become, let yourself forget the more profitable, God and the spiritual side."

What practical advice this father had given his son. The many years of life had taught him, above all things that the spiritual side was the more profitable. The spiritual side is above value to all and must not be left to die at any age. To the young man who is entering life's complicated corridor, to the young woman, who prepares to establish her home, or to the elderly one who retires from life's swift current to quiet waters along the shore, the spiritual side must live if one wishes to find the profitable thing in life here, and an incorruptible crown beyond the river of death.

The aged Apostle Paul directed the young man Timothy, whom he called his son in the faith, in the following manner: ". . . godliness is **PROFITABLE** unto all things . . ." What was Paul's motive for such a statement? The remainder of this scripture reads: ". . .

having, promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come" (1 Tim. 4:8). So many times we humans are prone to let the spiritual man and God take the back seat in our busy lives. In perilous times, as well as in normal times, we must not lose sight of the **more profitable thing**. It is an evident fact that some profit can be gained in other things, but all must be governed by the spiritual to merit a home in heaven. Let us hear Paul again in the first part of I Tim. 4:8, "For bodily exercise profiteth little but godliness is profitable unto all things . . ." Yes, building up our bodies is important. If for no other reason than they are the creation of God. He has given us this temple and we are duty bound to take care of it. In the above scripture, Paul, without a doubt, has reference to the Roman athlete, who considered his gymnastic efforts and preparation for such, as very profitable. We cannot help but note his fervent zeal in achieving his desired goal. Practically every action of his life during the training period was meant to edify the body. Long tiring hours were spent, without a murmur, in preparation for the race or field event. A rigid training schedule was his to follow to the last jot and tittle. Regardless of what conflicted with the schedule, it all stood secondary to his training. His mind was on that important day, when he would strive earnestly to win the race or field event, receiving the olive wreath, as well as the deafening applause from the innumerable thousands in the stadium. To him it was the profitable thing—the profitable exercise. The moral that we may all gain from the athlete is his combined zeal, determination and effort. By applying this to our spiritual structure we have something that is worthy of our attention.

Paul's wonderful contrast in his message to young Christian Timothy tells us, that bodily exercise does profit to some degree. He uses the word "little", in this side of the contrast, which means to some extent. All my readers can see that such is true. As I have mentioned before in this article, God expects us to respect and appreciate the works of his creation, namely our bodies. To neglect them

would be an open act of disrespect to our Heavenly Father. By his great power he has created man so he can reproduce after his kind, and then gives him power over all animals so he may gain his living. He then to respect God, must edify his body in this life. Anything, whether it be neglect or excess, that would tend to harm or impair the body, would stand at enmity with God. This being the case we can safely say, that bodily exercise does profit something. Sane exercise and care for our bodies will, without a doubt, prolong our lives. Pure lives that can be used as valuable centers of influence for Christ and his cause. Here someone might gain the idea that Paul was mistaken in stating, ". . . bodily exercise profiteth little." Remember, here is a contrast. Exercise of the fleshly temple is needed, but in the light of comparison or competition with the spiritual, it stands as "little". For example, there may be a product on the market in a small community which everyone thinks to be the best. One day another brand is introduced and proved to be much better. Placing the two side by side in comparison and competition, the one that appeared formerly as the best, would now rate as inferior to the later one introduced. The first product would still be good and worth while, but in comparison with the better it would stand as inferior. Many methods used years ago in pioneer days were considered good. They were good and still are, but in many ways prove to be inferior, when measured or compared with our modern streamlined methods. Bodily exercise must take a back seat when compared with spiritual exercise. Why? Because, as Paul told Timothy, spiritual exercise was far more profitable.

Godliness can safely be classified as a spiritual exercise, that will lead up the Christian ladder to God's great promise of eternal life (2 Pet. 3:9). Godliness on this spiritual side will far exceed the flesh, as it is not held at the brink of Hades, but goes on into the new world.

When my mind views godliness, it always brings to my remembrance the old story of the man who looked daily at the face on the mountain side. As the years passed, his

friends noticed that his appearance resembled the face on the mountain. The moral here is association. Godliness simply means God-like-ness. We become more and more like our Creator by viewing and associating ourselves with his word. To me, this is the key to the profitable thing—the profitable exercise.

To render the profitable exercise of godliness, one must naturally be a Christian. We cannot expect to use God as a pattern and not follow Him. Paul was a follower of God, and exhorted all others to do the same (I Cor. 11:1; 4:16; Phil. 3:17). I fear that many people today have the Christian situation completely inverted. Young as well as old. It seems to be a common idea today, for the young man or woman to think of Christianity as something limited to the old "rocking chair" age. Many older ones miss also, thinking it is alone for the younger. We see them bringing their children to Bible study and going home with a soothed conscience, thinking they have done their duty. To them, taking their youngsters to church, is Christianity applied to their own lives. Paul says, ". . . work out your own salvation." (Phil. 2:12) which is contrary to how they feel.

I have often stated that Christianity plays a part in each and every life, directly or indirectly. The child before the age of accountability, should receive the gospel from the parents. This is in an indirect way, but in a way. The Bible stories that a mother or father can teach their little boy or girl while they are young, will lay a foundation in this little life that will later grow bigger for Christ. After accountability, the gospel plays a direct part in our lives as we study and meditate upon it day by day. To isolate Christianity or godliness into one certain age or class, would be to defeat Christ's accomplishment at Calvary. There he died that his new order, Christianity, might not only influence one life, but all, (Gal. 3:28). Young and old alike can be Christians, most of all they should be, and must be to find the profitable thing.

It grieves my heart above all things, to hear any young man or woman express their formula for getting the "kick

out of life". Older ones too, who should it seems, have an ability to view beyond youthful days, pass off the sins of youth by saying, "Oh, it is only natural for all young people to sow their wild oats. It won't hurt them." May God have mercy on such an attitude and outlook. As the scriptures plainly teach, ". . . whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." (Gal. 6:7). They sadly forget the practical words of the wise monarch Solomon. "Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth: and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes: but know thou, that for all these things GOD WILL BRING THEE INTO JUDGMENT. Therefore remove sorrow from thy heart, and put away evil from thy flesh: for childhood and youth are vanity." (Eccl. 11:9, 10). Also the instruction to Timothy, "Flee also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart." (2 Tim. 2:22). There is no better time to embrace godliness than in the morning of life. "Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while evil days come not, nor the years draw night, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them." (Eccl. 12:1). Youthful days spent in the clutches of Satan, turn into weeks, months, and years of remorse in later life.

The forces of Satan that attract young America, are as the whitewashed tombs of Judea. Their appearance to the observer is one of grandeur, but once securely enveloped within their terrible walls, only regret, remorse and death can be the plight for their victim. If only it were possible to persuade young and old alike, that in **GODLINESS**, the human can find the key to greater enjoyment even in this life. God's word teaches us that there is a plan whereby we can have all, "According as his divine power (gospel) hath given unto us all things that pertain unto **LIFE** and **GODLINESS**." (2 Pet. 1:3). It is not necessary to disobey the law of the Lord to enjoy life. One need not fill his body with intoxicating liquor and drive an auto at an unreasonable speed to enjoy life. Neither is it necessary to sell his

birthright for gratification of ill sexual lusts and desires to enjoy his days. Some may consider the above as securing the so called, "kick out of life", but truly, they are only getting "kicked out of life" into death.

My belief that godliness is profitable above all things in this life, has met a challenge in many of the communities where I have had the opportunity of speaking. Even though, young in years, I have had numerous conversations with young and old who seem to feel the Christian life cannot afford a way of amusement. In every case I find one of two things is true: First, The individual has not fully given his life to Christ and found the way of godliness; or second, He has started to try it but has not pursued it far enough to discover the genuine enjoyment. I ask now, how can one find godliness to be profitable to him unless he tries it? I know of no one who enjoys life better than the Christian. The man of the world cannot enjoy the splendors of living for Christ, as the outlook on life and its future appears different to the Christian than to the man of the world. "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." (1 Cor. 2:14). To the Christian, fellowship with those of the same precious faith, as well as the glorious consolation of being a child of God, is sufficient to fully overshadow all the fleshly joys of this world at one sweeping stroke.

I never see or hear of anyone yielding to the will of Satan, without first thinking of what they are missing. It is true that this worldly person may feel that he or she is doing something that offers grand enjoyment, but oh how much must be paid for a few moments of evil gratifications. They think they have found the genuine, but have truly missed their mark. It is counterfeit. Real pleasure even in this life is found in Christ. The pleasures of the Christian are lasting and edifying, building to better health in mind and body. Instead of tearing mind and morals down they build them up. Contrary are worldly ways, which can only tend to the tearing down of mind and morals. This

is an evident fact, as no house can be stronger than the foundation. The worldly man's foundation is a foundation of sin, namely: Lust of the flesh, lust of the eye and the pride of life (1 Jno. 2:15-17). The pleasure mad man or woman can never find true satisfaction. One daring pleasure of one day seems mild the next. Their desires are not satisfied. Something more daring must be theirs to try. Never can they appease the hungry monster of their lust. He is as evident here, as he is to the greedy miser, who never fully satisfies his yearnings for money. He may say, "Just let me gain a few more dollars and I'll seek no more." When the goal is reached he only wishes for more. Many Epicureans still roam this wide world. These Greek philosophers of ancient days, who deemed trying to fill all desires as their chief purpose in life, would find many companions.

Let us not conclude that one must refrain from all pleasure, but simply state that there is a genuine way of amusement as well as a counterfeit way. I affirm that many today fail to find the genuine, and are indulging in ways of amusement that stand inferior in about every respect. These inferior ways are paths of the devil that lead to sure destruction. Someone may say, "The Christian life does not offer enjoyment." Anyone who makes such a statement, makes it because he or she is on the outside looking in at the Christian life with the foggy glasses of the world. Will they only stop and think that it might be different on the inside? Things of the world are seen by the man in Christ also. He most always has the advantage, as he has without a doubt experienced the way of the world as well as the Christian's way. He is in the proper place to make a worthy comparison. What will be his conclusion? Not for all the world will he give up his position with his Savior. He has discovered the new way, the better way. The whole question is solved when we understand the **TRUE CHRISTIAN**, looks at things altogether different. The things that formerly interested him, now stand as nothing. They are as dross to this new golden life, only a hindrance.

He does not want them. He can't see why he ever did want them. It is like a house I once visited. The outside was in bad condition. I expected to find the interior in even worse condition. To my amazement the interior was grandly decorated with hard wood floors as an attraction. How surprised I was, and how wrong I had been in accepting just the outward appearance, without first examining the inward as well as the outward. It is the same way with one of the world. The Christian life to the outsider or alien may look bare and worthless, but to the Christian who has investigated, it is altogether different. A man of the world would be unfair to judge the Christian life or attack it, without first trying it. Let him try it honestly and he will never wish to turn to the worldly way again. He will be like a captain in the storm, who steers his bark away from the treacherous rocks of a foggy, rugged coast into the haven. He has no desire whatsoever to steer back into the stormy fog to sure destruction, but with all vigor will press his boat forward in unabated manner to the harbor. When one really finds Christ and learns to appreciate the Christian life, he will no longer wish to leave it but will rejoice in following Christ with the same true love that Ruth had for her mother-in-law Naomi. The words will then be, ". . . for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge; thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God." (Ruth 1:16).

Above I have mentioned the outlook that many take on the evils in the world. It truly appears in the case of young or old that those who would serve with evil have estimated the true value of a Godly virtuous life. But just as true as the world is made up of those who fail to reach this height sublime, there are also those who diligently pursue the steps of the Man of Sorrows. They are the undimmed reflectors of God's love to mankind. Would it be possible for anyone to gain a better picture of everyday godliness than in the aged man or woman who have rendered many years of steadfast, faithful service to their God?

No reader, young or old you must admit that in that fleecy head you cannot help but wish your lives could be found in the same way. How true the glorious words of Solomon are as he spoke, "The hoary head is a crown of glory, if it be found in the way of righteousness." What a detriment it would be if that head was found in the way of unrighteousness. In the saloon, in the gambling joint, or such like. To be found in the way of righteousness is to be found in the way of GODLINESS. To be found in the way of godliness is to be found in the way of profit—the profitable way, and the profitable thing.

Then we would arrive at the decisive conclusion, that only one way can truly be profitable. Only one exercise can stand as the greatest. Godliness the way. Spiritual the exercise. Together they point without question to Christianity. The true Christianity, that is pure and un-mixed with the poison of man made doctrine. With proper stress placed on the spiritual side we will have apprehended the profitable thing — God-like-ness or Christ-like-ness, which will of course lead us under the general head of a Christian. Then we will understand the true meaning of Paul's writing to Timothy, ". . . godliness is profitable . . . having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come." It is profitable here, but even more so for the future life.

Every Christian is spoken of as a soldier, as Paul devotes a portion of the sixth chapter of Ephesians in naming the Christian's armor. (Eph. 6:11-17). If there is a soldier and his uniform, there must be a foe. Evil has always been a foe of good. Even to David of old we find wickedness a foe (Psa. 27:2). If a foe, there must be a battle. Paul mentions about a wrestling against a foe of "wickedness" and "rulers of the darkness of this world" (Eph. 6:12). If a battle, then a victory. ". . . and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith" (1 Jno. 5:4). And last if there is a victory, here must be a reward. "And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a CROWN OF GLORY that fadeth not away" (1 Pet. 5:4).

I just wonder if there is a doubt in any mind if living for Christ is worth while? We need not pause now, we can easily see that a godly life here is the worth while thing. We do not fight alone as we might in the nation's army, while on special patrol service for our country, but find our general always by our side to lead us away from the dangerous path by his word. He tells us, "take my yoke upon you" (Mt. 11:29). Christ assures us he will be on the Christian's side, ever ready to help him. I ask now one and all, can we go wrong in following Christ? The answer must be no. By following Christ we can truthfully say, "Oh death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" (1 Cor. 15:55).

In conclusion, let us look at the Christian life from the angle of an investment of time. No one can find an investment that is more sure than this one. Neither can man invest in anything that will pay bigger dividends. Why should any man or woman spend an unprofitable life with nothing to gain but fading worldly glory, when it is possible for all to spend a profitable life in godliness and receive the great glory of our creator in heaven? May all strive to be followers of the great Apostle Paul, as he was of Christ. Then we may say as he said at the brink of death, "For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a CROWN OF RIGHTEOUSNESS, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto ALL THEM ALSO THAT LOVE HIS APPEARING."

"When I come to the river at ending of day,
When the last winds of sorrow have blown
There'll be somebody waiting to show me the way,
I won't have to cross Jordan alone.
Often times I'm forsaken, and weary and sad,
When it seems that my friends have all gone;
There is one tho't that cheers me and makes my
heart glad,

I won't have to cross Jordan alone.
Tho' the billows of sorrow and trouble may sweep,
Christ the Savior will care for his own;
Till the end of the journey, my soul He will keep,
I won't have to cross Jordan alone.
I won't have to cross Jordan alone,
Jesus died all my sins to atone;
When the darkness I see, He'll be waiting for me,
I won't have to cross Jordan alone."





W. CARL KETCHERSIDE

W. Carl Ketcherside

W. Carl Ketcherside is the son of William and Annie M. Ketcherside. He was born in Flat River, Mo., May 10, 1908, and is the oldest of six children. The father was a miner originally, and due to ill health moved the family in succession to Marshalltown, Iowa Chillicothe and Gilman City, Mo.; Pearl, Ill.; and Topeka, Kansas.

Carl obeyed the gospel at Old Pearl, Ill., and was immersed by one of the elders, Jesse Jackson. He began preaching at the age of twelve, using as his first topic, "Counting The Cost". During his entire high school and special college career he utilized every opportunity to proclaim the truth and his baptized several thousands of persons into Christ. In one year alone 495 people accepted the truth as offered by him.

On June 24, 1928 he united in marriage with Nell N. Watts, of Flat River, Mo. Two children, Gerald Bernard, and Sharon Sue, have come to bless the home. Carl is publisher of the Missouri Mission Messenger, compiler of the companion to this book, "The Ship Of Zion", and has done a great deal of special speech work in addition to his preaching labors. At present the family have their home in University City, Mo., making it convenient for the teaching of the annual protracted Bible Study in Saint Louis.

Planning for Happiness

(A Sermon for Young Men)

by W. CARL KETCHERSIDE

"My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not. If they say, 'Come with us, cast in thy lot among us; let us all have one purse:' My son, walk not thou in the way with them; refrain thy foot from their path" (Prov. 1:10, 15). Many of our troubles in this present age are brought about by failure to heed the above admonition, by an unwise choice of companions. "Evil companionships corrupt good morals" is a truth of the Holy Spirit, that has been demonstrated by the sad experiences of many. To save you from such trials is our purpose in this sermon.

You have a high and holy purpose for being on earth. You were made by the Lord and created for His glory. All that would contribute to your happiness, pleasure and joy he has given you. Within you are certain instincts, that are impelling. The desire for self-preservation is a part of your being. The hunger for food, the desire for water, called thirst, you are familiar with. And too, there is within you a hunger which has had much to do with the course of the world. It is a desire for companionship, the longing for a kindred spirit to your own. God knew about this and in the beginning declared that it was not good for man to be alone. That statement has never been disproven; it is still true. And just as a loving Father has provided food for the hungry and water for the thirsty, so he has provided a helpmeet to share life and its blessings and sorrows. Moreover he ordained the great institution called marriage for

the protection of society, the perpetuation of our race, and the blessing of all who enter into it with clean hands and pure hearts.

It is peculiar indeed, the changes through which you pass in order to reach maturity, and the place where you are to assume the responsibilities of life upon your own shoulders. When you entered this world, you had already lived for nine months, sheltered in your mother's body. What wonderful arrangement God invented for the preservation of life of the human family, and how utterly we disregard its sacredness many times. You were born a tiny, helpless, squirming infant, without teeth, unable at first to see or distinguish between objects; unable to walk, to feed yourself, or to do anything except to cry for assistance when hungry or in pain. You lived a fairly sheltered life, watched over, cared for and loved by those who had given you life. For seven years, you learned by imitation of others, to talk, make your wants known, and conduct your daily life.

Then certain chemical changes took place inside you, of which you were unaware, but they were transmuting you from infancy to childhood. You had now arrived at the age when you could learn by reasoning, and thus you were started to school. During this age, you boys were boisterous in play, and your young animal spirits sought release in running, jumping and yelling. You were cowboys, Indians, circus performers, scouts, etc., in turns as the mood struck you. You cared nothing for girls, and sought only to tease them and torment them, lest the other fellows in the gang might think you "a sissy". And the girls didn't like "old mean boys" who wouldn't play with dolls or jump rope, but who wanted to be engaged in a game of leap frog or spend their time in climbing trees. You recall how insulted you were, when the crowd walking home from school chanted behind you, "Johnny's got a girl! Johnny's got a girl!"

But again unknown to you, there were other changes taking place in you, destined to help you fulfill your true

mission on earth, preparing you for manhood. Some of these changes were internal, but others were external also. When another seven years had passed, you had reached the stage of your career, known as "adolescence". It manifested itself by a change in your voice, which of a sudden became uncontrollable. You might start out in a deep bass tone, to find yourself suddenly speaking a high treble note. Hair had begun to grow on various portions of your body, and the "fuzz" on your face which you had watched so eagerly for the first sign of real beard had at last begun to stiffen, until you could begin to think of shaving. These were outward omens, but more momentous changes had taken place internally, and with them came certain strange urges and desires.

Your attitude toward the girls began to change. You no longer were aggravated by their nearness, but secretly pleased. It even delighted you when you were teased about them. This period which you entered was also entered by your girl companions at about the same age. It manifested itself somewhat in the same way with them as it did with you, except for slight differences, because of bodily construction and functioning. This lesson is not a discourse on physiology, so we shall postpone discussion of the differences in makeup between the two sexes for another time, and continue to discuss the grave matter of our urge for companionship, and the scriptural fulfillment of that urge.

Adolescence brings new temptations! We become aware of certain organs and their functioning, and there arises new questions in our minds. Often, we heed the unwise advice of those who are more ignorant than ourselves. We suddenly feel a strange shyness in the presence of our fathers, and though we would like to sit down and talk things over with dad, we draw back into a shell of indifference. Our only source of information is those, who pretend to know much, but who are no older than ourselves. We recognize that their talk is smutty, and we know that we do not like to be around them, yet we are so eager to know about ourselves, that we hearken to the whispered counsel

of "alley-rats" and "gutter-snipes". After all, fellows, your fear of talking things over with those who have your interest at heart, is just a state of mind. Conquer it, and go to them, and say, "Listen Dad, here are some things I want to know". You don't hesitate to ask father for money when you need it, then why hesitate to ask him for advice when you need it. Your curiosity is not a new thing in the world. Every other normal person has had it. Go to a pure source for advice and you'll get pure advice. You wouldn't want to kneel down and drink the water from a ditch beside the road, if that water was covered with a thick green scum, and full of dirt, insects and impurities, would you? If you wouldn't take that into your stomach, then why take worse into your heart? Be careful whose advice you listen to!

Oh you'll be tested and tried all right! There will be those who tell you that the only way you can learn anything is by experiment, and they'll do their level best to get you to practice the shameful things which they indulge in secretly. But you know better than to be caught in that snare. You have already learned that the best teacher is not always EXPERIMENTATION, for you know that one does not have to drink intoxicating liquor and get behind the wheel of a car going sixty miles per hour to learn what happens. You can tell what will happen NOT BY TRYING IT, but by observation OF THE WRECKS that bestrew the highway.

The organs which make us differ from the other sex, are not impure at all, but rather they have a high purpose in this world, and were made by the wisdom of God to fulfill that purpose. While it is true that there are impurities taken from our system, which pass out of the body through these channels, in the form of urine, yet that is a secondary use of them which nature herself amply takes care of. They are rather provided for us as a holy trust, given by the Creator to be used in future and mature years as a means of transmitting a life that will never end, but go into eternity. What a thrill to know that within us God has deposited the germ of life which can cause another being to enter the

world, a part of us and of another that we love, and that this life once started will never end! Yet that is true. Let's be like soldiers, and guard ourselves! Let's look at the body as being a sacred citadel in which dwells something precious and let's guard it until the appointed time of its service, with all the strength we have.

Abuse of the organs of transmission means often development of a habit that is loathsome and ruinous. Our sexual side is very closely connected with our nervous system, our brain and spine. Excitement of these nerves by continual thinking of a momentary pleasure, or their abuse by handling except to cleanse the organs, will result in exhaustion, making the back ache, the mind become fogged and the whole body weak. Such actions persisted in, mean a weakened memory will result. You'll be listless, negligent, and your eyes will lose the brightness which they ought to possess. The great apostle Paul said, "Keep thyself pure" and also "Flee youthful lusts".

Be careful what you read, be careful of your associates. If your companions of the past want to talk about things that will cause you to forsake the right path, shun them. Stay away from them. Have nothing to do with them! Don't think it does no harm to practice self-abuse because you note no ill effects now. It is said, "The mill's of the gods grind slowly but they grind surely". That's only another way of saying that "Whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap".

I think that all of us who are normal, are looking for a mate from the time we grow up. It is a law of nature. Everything that lives must have a mate, or soon that thing would perish from the earth. The flowers must have their mates, but they are not permitted to go to their mates. Instead God has provided a third instrumentality which acts as a go-between and fertilizes the flower so it can reproduce. The wind carries the pollen sometimes, and at other times the bee or humming bird acts as the intermediary. But it is at this time the flowers are their loveliest, for they

must put on their most brilliant colors and throw out their sweetest perfumes to attract the insects.

It is at the mating season that the animals appear at their best. The feathers of the birds are at their brightest hue, and their songs are louder and clearer than at any other time. The crowing rooster lifts himself to his fullest height, the peacock struts with his beautiful plumage of purple, blue and green. In the forest the call of the bull moose is heard echoing as he summons the cow; and even the bodies of many fish take on a far brighter hue. The mating season is the most wonderful season in the rounds of nature. But when the instinct is strong within the animal he usually takes as his mate the first animal of his kind that he sees. Animals do not know that they will become parents, they are only driven by a blind will, and have no power of control.

How much more glorious is the mating of man and woman. For they possess reasoning power, intelligence inherited from a divine Creator. They can decide upon the qualities that will make for a life of peace and happiness. Animals do not mate for life, except in a very few cases, and thus their mating is casual, and soon forgotten. But man establishes a home. "Home" is one of the most beautiful words in our language. How carefully we should approach the greatest moment in life, that in which we pledge to be true to each other as long as we both live. Nothing else in all creation is permitted such an exchange of solemn vows. We must go into the arrangement with clean bodies and clean minds. We do not want our children to pay for our sins! We want them to have healthy bodies, unwarped minds and strong will power to resist evil. Then let us manifest the same tendencies.

Let's look at our Bibles for a little while, and see what God proposes as a means of keeping us pure. Turn with me to Proverbs 6:20-25; "My son, keep thy father's commandment, and forsake not the law of thy mother: Bind them continually upon thine heart, and tie them about thy neck. When thou goest, it will lead thee; when thou sleep-

est, it shall keep thee; and when thou wakest, it will talk with thee. For the commandment is a lamp; and the law is light; and reproofs of instruction are the way of life: To keep thee from the evil woman, from the flattery of the tongue of a strange woman. Lust not after her beauty in thy heart; neither let her take thee with her eyelids."

The wise man Solomon asks the question, "Can a man take fire in his bosom and not be burned?" Again he says, "Can one go upon hot coals and his feet be not burned?" You know the answers to those questions, and just as surely will one suffer who disregards the law of God regarding our associations. It is true that those who desire your money and virtue have sweet lips that drip as an honeycomb, and a mouth smoother than oil, but it is also said, that the feet of such go down to hell. (Read Proverbs 5:1-14).

The trouble with many of us is that we are our own worst tempters. We stop to reason about certain sins, and the longer we argue with ourselves, the weaker we become. We are specifically told to "FLEE youthful lusts" and that is the only way to overcome such a sin. He who hesitates is lost! Read the story of Joseph over and over, and make up your mind that as he kept himself pure, so you'll keep yourself pure.

You can aid yourself in your fight for purity by abstinence from cigarettes, for nicotine has a weakening effect on will-power. Anything that tends to make you a slave, batters down resistance. "Know the truth, and the truth shall make you free!" Above all other things, run from liquor as you would from a poisonous serpent in the jungle. Liquor intoxicates the mind, puts you in a more receptive mood to listen to Satan's wily suggestions, takes away your force for overcoming sin, and in short, puts you on the spot. If thrown into company with a group of drunken debauchees, get away from them as quickly as possible. They are not accountable and you may be blamed for something which they did, that will bring reproach and shame upon you and your family name. Don't cram your mind with a lot of highly-spiced literature, or feast your eyes upon ob-

scene pictures. The allure of them may not be great at first, but

Vice is a monster of so frightful mien
That to be hated, needs but to be seen;
Yet seen too oft, familiar with her face,
We first endure, then pity, then embrace.

By-and-by you'll come to that place where you are ready to select that one who will be your companion through the remainder of the journey of life. How will you make your choice? Will you be so foolish as others have been, and select a mate upon the basis of physical beauty alone? What qualities will you demand in that one who will be so near to you? Upon your choice depends your future happiness and success!

A certain one has said, "Marriage should be made a study. Every youth, both male and female should so consider it. It is the grand social institution of humanity. Its laws and relations are of momentous importance to the race. Shall it be entered blindly, in total ignorance of what it is, what its conditions of happiness are?"

How little consideration is given to any laws of happiness by those who choose their life companions. Perhaps you see a girl at church sitting a few seats ahead of you. She has flashing eyes, a becoming hair-do, a pretty, laughing face. You can't keep your eyes off of her through the service, and later on you maneuver yourself into a position where you can determine who she is. Nothing can keep you away from the next service, because you hope she will be there again. She is, and you look, and look again, with no apparent sense or reason except that she is outwardly attractive. By-and-by you get an introduction, you meet again at a party, you take her home, and find that she is good at repartee and nonsense. And so you day dream and moon around, you buy a new tie that will better match your shirt, you stand in front of the mirror a little longer and comb every hair into its proper place. You want to write poetry, buy flowers, look at the stars— and the first

thing you know you are engaged! Then you get married!

Of a sudden it occurs to you, that you cannot live on poetry and star-gazing. Perhaps much of the beauty that you once glimpsed is now found to be artificial, and you find yourself comparing the looks of the woman with frowsy hair who sits across the breakfast table, and the girl you thought you were marrying. You didn't marry the woman you have at all—you married a painted doll, son, and the doll disappeared at the marriage altar. You know now that just as you assumed airs not your own, and just as you shone in borrowed plumes and false character for the purpose of impressing and deceiving her, she did the same thing. And thus the courtship which should have been a voyage of discovery, and a court of inquiry, has been turned into a game of blind-man's buff, and you got beat at your own game! You now wish that you'd married a girl, just like the girl, that married dear old dad. Perhaps if you'd used the same good, practical sense in picking a girl, that dear old dad used, you might have had a companion like his. There's the grave danger in flirting, and toying with the affections! It's the danger in petting, and going too far—until you think you can't back out. You are entrapped by desire, blinded passion, and unthinking lust until you select someone to be the mother of your children, that you thank God was not your mother! **THINK! THINK!**

The thing that should demand your first consideration is whether or not your companion is a Christian. There is no substitute for a clean life! No paint can cover up, no mascara can hide defects of a moral, spiritual nature. When beauty turns to ashes and wrinkles mask the once sparkling eyes, your heart will still rejoice in the heart of your loved one, if the both of you are Christians. The years with their sorrow and pain, with their gladness and laughter will bring you closer to each other; you'll share both sunshine and shadow and grow old gracefully together.

Select a congenial spirit to bring out the best that is in you! Choose one who has similar opinions, tastes, habits and feelings as your own! Don't attempt to bridge the gap

of age variation, and bring perpetual unhappiness to yourself and the one you think that you love. Marriage can become a bondage to those who marry someone much older, and who has already begun to tire of the things that should make for mutual happiness and joy.

When you have pledged your solemn vows, then never forsake your promises to be true to your loved one. There may come temptations to entice you from the part of husbandly virtue. In Proverbs 9:14-16 is given a description of those who make their livings by their charms, those abandoned women who seek to eke out a degraded existence by selling their bodies. Such an one is represented as saying, "Come in! Stolen waters are sweet, and bread eaten in secret is pleasant". But the answer to that is given by the wise man in another place (Prov. 5:15-21). Listen to it and heed it!

"Drink waters out of **thine own** cistern and running waters out of **thine own** well. Let thy fountains be dispersed abroad and rivers of waters in the streets. Let thy fountain be blessed: and rejoice with the wife of thy youth. Let her be as the loving hind and pleasant doe; let her breasts satisfy thee at all times; and be thou ravished always with her love. And why wilt thou, my son, be ravished with a strange woman, and embrace the bosom of a stranger? For the ways of man are before the eyes of the Lord and he pondereth all his goings".

Briefly summed up and reduced from the Hebraistic poetical form in which written, this acknowledges the desire that is within you for the intimate companionship and love of another. It places a necessary restraint upon it for the protection of society and the salvation of your soul. It declares that the Lord is observant of our deeds and recognizes when we violate our solemn and sacred promises made at the altar of marriage. Thus we are taught in God's Word that we are not to step outside the marriage relationship for the gratification of the instinctive desires of sex. If we do it will bring a sure and swift punishment, perhaps in this world; certainly in the next.

The dearest spot of earth to me
Is home, sweet home.

The fairyland I long to see
Is home, sweet home.

There how charmed the sense of hearing,
There where love is so endearing,
All the world is not so cheering
As home, sweet home.

I've taught my heart the way to prize
My home, sweet home.
I've learned to look with lover's eyes
On home, sweet home.

There, where vows are truly plighted,
There where hearts are so united,
All the world besides I've slighted
For home, sweet home.





JOHN W. RHODES

John W. Rhodes

John W. Rhodes, was born February 13, 1915 at Perryville, Mo. When he was three years old the parents moved to Marshall County, Iowa, where John was reared and attended LeGrand schools. He finished High School in 1932, in the month of May, and in June was baptized into Christ by W. Carl Ketcherside. He attended a 4 weeks Bible Reading at Des Moines in 1933, taught by D. Austen Sommer; and studied in a two weeks Reading with W. Carl Ketcherside at the same place in 1934. In the fall of that year he transferred his membership to Nevada, Mo., where he made his home with Brother and Sister Ketcherside until 1936. In the month of November 1934, he was given his letter of commendation as an evangelist and has been actively engaged in that work ever since.

He was united in marriage to Eleanor B. Russell, of LeGrand, Iowa, on June 25, 1936, and one daughter, Donna Rae, came to bless this union on May 1, 1940.

Brother Rhodes attended a three months study of the Bible at Saint Louis in 1941, but at present resides at LeGrand with his membership at Marshalltown, Iowa.

The Greatest Choice

by JOHN RHODES

The Gospel teaches us that the greatest choice an individual can make is one, the result of which would condemn our souls to Hell or cause us to be ushered into the wonderful city of God. When our Savior was tempted by Satan he chose to worship the Lord and declared that "Him only would he serve." This resulted in his being publicly acclaimed as the Son of God, and that he was well pleasing to his Father and also meant salvation for all that will be saved. God with his mighty power has created man and given him the right of choice. Where we spend one long eternity will be determined by the choice we make while in this life. We should all be made to realize however that the welfare of many of our loved ones is depending upon our choices in many instances. In fact there are very few decisions we can make today that will not affect others. It will not be necessary for me to bring some case to you and show how one person choosing sin has caused serious setbacks, both to himself and his own congregation, because I am certain you know of some similar instance in your own life. I can call to mind several individuals who have entirely ceased serving God because of some of their brethren, in whom they had confidence, chose to do wrong. If we would only realize, before making a choice between good and evil, how much there is in the balance perhaps some would give more serious thought to these things.

If you were to be given the sum of \$10,000 to use as you saw fit then you would have a choice to make. You would give that matter the most careful consideration because of what it would mean, but if so it would soon be gone and you would be none the better for the experience. On

the other hand you could buy a home which would be a benefit to you for years to come or could invest in some business which would continue to pay you dividends for life. I know you are sensible enough to know which was the wise choice without even giving it a second thought. We all have the same kind of decision to make in the spiritual world. Each of us has a degree of talent, influence and ability. We have the choice of deciding how we will use these which God has given us. We may use them to satisfy our lusts and have a good time, perhaps could become the most popular person in a fast moving crowd, if so what do you have when it's all spent? Just eternal death. If we make a wise choice we will use our talents in the service of our king; spending and being spent for his work. If we do this we will enjoy good clean friends and activities and then when all is spent we can go to the city of the King and live forever as a result of the use we have made of our ability. You are spending all you have in one of two ways, either for the Devil to receive the wages of sin, or for the Lord to hear him say "Come Ye Blessed." No one on earth can make this decision for you. It is your problem but the Bible is written and is being preached for the purpose of enabling you to see which would be the wise choice.

In the Old Testament we are told that Solomon was given the privilege of choosing one thing which would then be granted him. It could have been riches, fame, honor, power, or any number of things. He chose a double portion of wisdom to be able to rule his people right. By choosing this, all the other things came as the direct result. A great many young people today are asking for wisdom. Some want the wisdom of this world and spend their time in schools and colleges and after that believe they have enough and forget about the True Wisdom of God. Others want to be wise in the estimation of their crowd, so read all the movie and radio magazines so they can talk intelligently about the Matinee Idols of the day. I thank God for the fact that there are a number of young people who have chosen the wisdom that comes from a careful study of God's Word and are working

long and hard to acquire the same. Those people will learn some day that this wisdom will give them Glory, Honor, Treasures, and recognition in God's celestial city. Moses was given a choice and made an extremely wise one. By choosing what he did it was a great benefit to him and the whole congregation and by his choice he influenced upwards of a million people and delivered them from slavery. In Heb. 11:25, Paul says Moses chose to suffer affliction with the people of God rather than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. All he turned down would naturally have been lost in death, but what he chose was something that was not taken away from him either in this world or the world to come.

If the young people of today would take Moses for their example and make a similar choice, choosing God's people and his work in preference to the pleasures of sin they would be of such great influence that the Church in the next generation would be several times stronger both in numbers and ability than it is at present. In many places the Church is not doing what it could. It is trying to get along as well as possible while young people who could do much good simply sit, because they have not whole-heartedly chosen God and his people. So many sit back idly and say, "I don't like to bring my girl friend because I am ashamed of the way the work is carried on here. We come and someone gets up to talk and admits he didn't make preparation because he didn't know it was his turn." Perhaps the same young man who criticises has not even done that much. Oh, for some more who would say, "I choose the Lord and his people, I will do all I can to make the worship appeal to the people who come. I ask the help of you older brethren and am resolved to take my part and study hard to do well and will never shirk my duty." To make such a decision we will have to work the rest of our lives to live up to it but think what the result will be both to us and the Church for which Jesus died. I know there are many congregations that would be able to double their influence if only the younger members would show they have chosen to do all they can for their Lord. Many congregations wait as it were for a deliverer when among those

who sit on the back seat and watch the clock there is a deliverer out of the present rut which so many churches are in. The boy who chooses God and lives a life that is prompted by such a choice can cause the older brethren to take courage, and his "Come On" will do something among those back seat fellows too. There have been boys come from wicked homes and by choosing God, and keeping a constant vigil against sin, have finally lived to see their father and mother buried with their Lord in baptism. Who knows but what you, if you would make that wise choice, would be able to influence that very near friend of yours to see the error of his way and come to God? It is a challenge to every young person who believes he loves God to try to influence others in the way of the cross.

Suppose you were given two glasses filled with a liquid and were told to drink one of them. You were told that one contained pure water, the other such a deadly poison that it would kill you instantly. Naturally you would refuse to drink either one but we will suppose you are forced to drink one and are given the right to choose which it will be. If that were the case I know you would give it more consideration than any decision you had ever made. You would look very closely and pray that God would guide you in the matter. Finally you have made your decision and your heart almost fails as you raise it to your lips. Now if the one who had prepared the contents of the glasses informs you that you have chosen the pure water, would you drink a part of it and then change it for the other? No, I am sure you would thank God and continue to drink the pure water. You are deeply concerned in that matter because it deals with your life. Now I am certain you will never have such a decision to make but you do have one very similar.

God and Satan have each placed before you their position. You must choose one and take the consequences. Remember that everything in this life that is worthwhile, and all that is in the next world hinges on this choice. Give it more attention than you have ever given anything and pray that God will give you courage while you reach forth and do

as he has commanded. After choosing God never turn him away for Satan as many have done, for to do this is to lose all that you may have gained thus far. When at the end of Life you have finished doing God's will, how fortunate and thankful you can be that you made him your choice.

Many have chosen Christ only to change and in a short time refuse him, choosing the pleasures of this world which are held forth by Satan. Many young people say, "Well a fellow has to have some fun." Under the pretense of fun they choose the course of sin and feel justified in so doing. If some of the things that are being done today are fun, then I deny that a young person has to have fun. I know I live a useful and enjoyable life and as a result go to Heaven without that sort of fun,—But I know no one can ever enjoy the pleasures of Sin (called fun) which are only for a very short season, and yet be saved. You have heard numerous questions about places to go and things to do, tho it is seldom you have heard many ask what they could do to help others become interested in the Christian way of life. Usually the questions run like this:—Is it allright to dance—if not in public then in private? What's wrong with an occasional movie? Is there any sin in a friendly game of cards? Is it a sin to smoke? etc. Those who ask these and similar questions appear to be straining to get back into the world though the Apostle John said, "Love not the World." Satan has something which appeals to everyone. That which would not touch one is really a temptation for another. About every sin, the devil or his followers have what seems to be something good to say. Some of the "good" is really very silly. About the dance he says, "It is good exercise and gives you grace in your walk." There was a time in my life when I thought it was fun to attend such places. Well do I remember plowing all day with a walking plow, going round and round the field from morning till night, then after supper I would hurry and get ready to go out and get my exercise. Now I didn't need such and I know those who attended had had all the exercise they needed too but it is sad how foolish one can get to justify what he wants to do.

About the card game Satan says, "It's a good way to pass away the time, (and that is not all some people pass away at cards). Not long ago a man came to visit his brother. They had not seen each other for better than a year and were glad to be together. Not over 30 minutes after he had come they got out their cards and proceeded to beat the hide off their knuckles playing a friendly game of cards. This game lasted until time to go home, several hours. It was a surprising thing that they who had not seen each other for so long needed something like that to pass away the time.

There are many scriptures which could be used on these questions to show what's wrong with them but I do not believe you who will read this would insist on so many so I will use three and try to explain them, believing that a better way than using a lot and not having time for explanation. First let me say that I know this position is just a bit old fashioned and not so popular but I feel sure, and know you do too, that if Christ were living today he would be a little old fashioned relative to the social activities and no doubt would not be the most popular fellow in town. I feel certain he would not be the best dancer, skater, bowler, card dealer, a chain smoker, full of dirty stories, or know all the "Low down on the matinee idols."

In Thess. 5:22 Paul says, "Abstain from all appearance of evil." Paul did not say, "If it is in black and white in the Bible that such activities are an absolute sin they are alright." That is the way some people expect the Bible to read and will not accept any other form of reasoning. Paul however teaches us to abstain from the things that appear evil and many things have the appearance of evil that are not specifically mentioned in God's word. There may be some of you that read this that practice some of the pleasures of this world which are set forth by Satan's followers. Even if that be the case I feel certain that you want to do right and you have shown that by reading this book instead of a "Wild West" or True Story. I know you are honest enough to admit that the aforementioned activities appear to be evil to say the very least and if so they are wrong and professed Christ-

ians are forbidden to participate in them. Did you ever, before your conscience was seared over, sneak into or out of a theatre? I have had people tell me that when they did frequent such places they were afraid some people might see them who were in the Church and always held their breath until they had made it in or out of the movie. Well I have talked to a lot of people but none have ever told me of having to sneak in or out of the house of God. Why do people have such a guilty feeling upon entering a show? Just one reason! Though it is not in black and white saying "Thou shalt not go to a show" it is the appearance of evil to say the least and that according to Paul is enough.

A group of Church members were playing a Friendly game of cards one night when the preacher and leader of the Church came in without knocking. Did they ask the preacher to pull up a chair and get in the game? No! But it was almost magic the way the game broke up and the cards disappeared. There was a forced effort to visit awhile and then the preacher and leader left. The card players were peeved at the leader for some time and said he should not have brought the preacher though any other time they would have been glad to have seen the preacher. Why? Because tho what they were doing may not have been in Black and White in the Bible they knew it was the appearance of Evil and that should be enough to cause any Christian to say "I'll quit such a habit." It's too bad when people have to be told ahead of time that the preacher is coming so they can have all their evil things hidden. The only sad thing about it is the fact that our Lord will not give you a 3 day notice before he comes.

The second scripture is also from the Apostle Paul's writings—"Let not your good be evil spoken of." Understand I do not believe there is any good in such activities but some people do. Even if there is, Paul said, let it not be evil spoken of and meant what he said without any sugar coating. I have known of a number of men who chew tobacco for a toothache, have you? Now it may stop a toothache but for me it would start a stomach ache and that would be much

worse. I can have a tooth pulled and get along alright, but I have heard of a very few who could get along if their stomach was pulled. The sad thing about those who chew for a toothache is that they lay down all reason to justify their lust. I know that they know there is a medicine sold for the very trouble they have, toothache. This medicine is more effective, less expensive, and above all it is not offensive and does not cause their influence to be hindered. When a man uses toothache medicine he quits it when his teeth are all gone, but some who use tobacco keep on chewing it for their teeth when they have no teeth. No one, not even the users of tobacco will dare say it is not evil spoken of, even those fathers who use it speak evil of it and warn their children not to use it. Since it is spoken evil of we are commanded not to partake of it. There are so many things we can do that are good and that good is not evil spoken of, let's be satisfied to do that and then receive a reward for such good.

The third scripture is found in 1 Cor. 15:33—"Be not deceived, Evil communications corrupt good manners." This is the equivalent of saying "Evil companions corrupt good morals." I know that we cannot keep from associating with the world to some extent due to our necessary activities of life. But we can keep from choosing them as our intimate friends to the exclusion of our brethren. Paul spoke by inspiration and also with much experience. If we were to go to people who have had experience in such their story would be the same as his. If we would visit jails and penitentiaries today we would find many a young man who had been brought up by good parents and taught right from wrong and yet in prison. They would tell us the reasons for being in custody and many would have the same reason, namely—"I ran with the wrong crowd." Many who are now in the world of sin and are now headed for Hell, tho they were once in the church could say, "I am in sin now and away from the church because I ran with the wrong crowd."

If you were to come to a house that had a small pox sign on the door, would you go in and thus expose your self to a disease which might result in your death? Even if those

in the house were your dearest friends I know you would still stay away, this would be to protect your body. Why do you not then realize that when you associate with those whose only thoughts are worldly pleasures, greed, and etc. you are only exposing your soul to sin which will destroy it eternally. With whom do you associate when you dance, play cards, attend movies, night clubs and first begin to smoke and drink? Is it with those who are living for God and are an influence for the good of your soul? If you would choose your friends and companions from God's people it would be one long step toward immunity from sin. No doubt you know from your experience what associates will do, either for good or bad. I know and believe if I could learn by experience that any of you can. About the time I graduated from high school I thought, as all my crowd thought, that we were meant to have all the fun we could. It was our custom to attend a barn dance every Friday night, and we thought that if we could not go the whole week was spoiled. Now my folks promised us boys that if we didn't smoke until we were 16 we would be given a new bicycle. My older brothers didn't get theirs and tho I earned mine by not smoking, times were so hard with us when I was 16 that the folks could not have bought me a second handed one. One night at the barn dance a fellow from Marshalltown offered me a smoke. I refused saying, "I don't smoke." "What," he exclaimed, "Don't smoke. Well who ever heard of such? Say, you're a regular little Sunday school boy aren't you? Does your Mamma know you are away from home tonight?" Well that made me good and angry and since he was much larger than I, that's all I did about it. His words remained with me all the way home and I muttered, "A Sunday school boy am I? I'll show the like of him." The next morning I told my brother who was two years younger all about it and said. "Lute, We've got to learn to smoke. Do you know if we don't we'll be sissies?" We bought a 5 cent sack of tobacco and a pipe and were in earnest learning to smoke. I thank God that before the tobacco was all gone I attended a meeting at the Church of Christ in Marshalltown and cast my lot

with God's people. This resulted in throwing away the pipe and remainder of the tobacco. If I had continued with that crowd much longer I would have smoked habitually and it would have led to more and more wrong.

Yes I know it's true, "Evil companions corrupt good morals." Some young men and women look outside the Church for their life companions. They choose from the world a girl and keep company with her for a year or two, during which time they try to make a good impression. They tell her all the good points but leave out the religion. This worldly young lady likes shows so he spends his Sunday evenings at the theatre instead of at Church. He tells himself they'll quit such when they are married but is sure not to tell her. When they are married he tells her that now they should quit such places because he is a Christian. She says, "Were you not a Christian when we were going together before we were married?" "Yes." "Then you just keep on being the same kind of Christian now." This settles the argument. Many young people who used to take an active part in the work of the Lord are no longer even identified with the Church because they looked among evil companions and married one of them! The result was this evil companion has led them off into sin. When you are tempted to do something that you are not certain about, ask yourself these three questions:

1. Is it the appearance of evil?
2. Is it evil spoken of?
3. Are those with whom I shall associate in this thing, God's people?

After asking yourself these and being honest with yourself and your God, you'll say "No" to a lot of worldly activities.

Some of you may ask, "What then can we do?" When we were kids at home it was very seldom the folks went away, tho once in awhile they would go for an afternoon. Now we were not a very ambitious group and I for one could always find something better for me than work. When the folks were gone though we wanted to do something special.

The girls would maybe try to make a cake, or wash windows, etc. We boys would get busy and mow weeds, rake the yard or something we could find that would show. Now we didn't do such every time but we did once in awhile. What was the fun in all that work? Just simply this! We loved our parents and it was fun to see how pleased they would be when they returned and saw what we had done. When they did come and say "That's fine," it made up for the work and was better than any ball game we could have had.

Now our Savior has gone away, and has promised to return. I know of many of my brethren that get great enjoyment just working at what he has left for them to do, and they enjoy it because they anticipate the pleased look and kind words of him whom they truly Love. Won't you be added to this great number and work till Jesus comes? Work and enjoy it because you love him and want him to love you. This is a wise choice and your all depends upon your decision, may God guide you in this matter.





HAROLD SHASTEEN

Harold Shasteen

Harold Shasteen was born Oct. 30, 1919, on a farm near Sullivan, Illinois. He was the fifth of seven sons born to Mr. and Mrs. M. E. Shasteen. By reason of his acquaintance with farm life, Harold receives much satisfaction from preaching in rural localities.

He was baptized at the age of seventeen by W. Carl Ketcherside, on the same day that one of his brothers and wife obeyed. His father also left the Baptist faith and took his stand with the One Body in that meeting. Harold ascribes his early obedience to the faith which dwelt first in his mother and his grandmother (Aunt Allie Hawbaker). God be praised for such godly influence.

He graduated from Sullivan High School the year following his obedience to Christ, and plans were laid to attend the St. Louis Bible Reading. This he did with pleasure and profit accompanied by his grandmother and a good friend, Carter Honn. He preached his initial discourse at Hartford, Ill., the third Sunday in January 1938. Since that time he has engaged in gospel preaching without thought of diversion.

On May 10, 1942 he was united in marriage to Bonita LaRose of Crystal City, Missouri. As this goes to press, the two of them are travelling from place to place in the work of the Master and rendering effective service to His Cause.

Showing Thyself a Pattern

by HAROLD SHASTEEN

I readily confess that I know nothing about quilting a bed covering, however, I have many times heard much ado being made about different kinds of patterns. For instance, one speaks about "The Flower Garden," another has something to say about "The Endless Chain," whereas someone else inquires how "The Road To Jericho," is looking by now. Taking it for granted that these terms have something to do with the art of quilting, my idea is that they are certain patterns used to guide one who quilts.

Job said that his days were swifter than a weaver's shuttle. Job 7:6. What was true of Job is, of course, just as true concerning you and me. Even though the movements of the nimble fingers of the weaver are scarcely discernable, to those who watch him maneuver his shuttle to and fro, yet as he sits at his loom hour after hour a beautiful pattern takes shape to reward him for his tireless effort. The beauty of the rug is, of course, dependent upon the one who weaves. It has been shaped to suit his fancy.

We are weaving and shaping our own lives according to our own fancy. Especially those who are young with the greater portion of life before them, must decide which pattern to copy after. There are diverse patterns. As we look within the covers of the Book of Life we find there are certain patterns from which we may choose. There are two types of patterns that are noticeable, the desirable and the undesirable. The famous, made so because of their aspirations toward qualities of refinement and rectitude, and the infamous, made so because of the base qualities of ingratitude. (Jude 7; Heb. 4:11.) The prophets are held up by James

as being models for us to pattern after. (Jas. 5:10). Christ is continually elevated as a pattern for all Christians to follow. (1 Pet. 2:21; 1 Ths. 1:6,7). In Paul's first letter to the Corinthians, chapter eleven, verse one, he holds himself up as a pattern. He said, "Be ye imitators of me, even as I also am of Christ." R. V. By taking Christ as his pattern, Paul became a pattern for others. He admonishes the young evangelist Timothy to conduct himself in such a manner that he may be a pattern for others. "Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity." (1 Tim. 4:12). Likewise Paul wrote to another young man and exhorted him to shew himself a pattern of good works. "In all things shewing thyself a pattern of good works: in doctrine shewing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity." (Titus 2:7). Notice, the instructions were, "Shewing thyself a pattern of **good works**." Not an example of good looks or witty quirks, but the apostle says of **GOOD WORKS**.

The young disciples of Jesus Christ today need to heed the timely advice given by this inspired writer. To do this means that we must do some works and the works must be good. In this manner our good works, not us, will shine forth.

"Ye ought to be teachers," Paul has said. Preachers of the gospel ought to be teachers. Elders and deacons ought to be teachers. Old disciples ought to be teachers. Anyone who has knowledge of something that others should know ought to be a teacher. But, as a teacher, we must realize our responsibilities and our heavier judgment. It would do no good for a teacher to proclaim the truth if he did not illustrate the truth. But one says that he is not cut out for a teacher, hence, because of his inability to stand publicly before a group of people and reproclaim the truth and a wholesome manner of living in that manner, there is no way in which he can depict the truths of the gospel. This, of course, is a mistaken idea. It is based upon the presumption that the world is composed of quaint people who are all ears and no eyes. Titus was told to be a pattern. Patterns are to be seen and not heard. One can be a teacher by sight and by example as

much as by sound. In fact, they are closely related. Principle and practice must go hand in hand. If our actions are not closely aligned to our words, the glitter and sparkle of our words will be as salt having no savour. Our good words must be backed up by our good works else both will fall in the ditch.

Young people, we must shew ourselves a pattern of good works. This can be done, not only on Sunday morning as we attend the services of the church, but the other 166 hours of the week as well. We have associates; whose principles are most dominating; theirs or ours? Sometimes the companions of Christian boys and girls are not members of the church and their standards are not as high as ours should be. This would provide a wonderful opportunity for us to heed Paul and "Shew thyself a pattern." We could teach those companions lessons of truth and uprightness by ourselves being the predecessor in practice. Sometimes the associates of the Christian boys and girls take the lead in setting the example and the wrong pattern is followed. For instance, Jim is called a sissy because he doesn't smoke and carouse with the rest of the gang. He is a little ashamed to tell the crowd that he doesn't believe in smoking, he just doesn't want a cigarette right now. By their persistence he is betrayed by those whom he considers his friends and he, "Sitteth in the seat of the scornful," by becoming a partaker with them. Jim becomes a sissy because he is called one and has not the backbone to be anything else. Young people remember this, the devil loves a sissy, and it takes real man-power to keep him from falling in love with you. You are the type of fellow he is looking for because all he has to do is do a little nagging and you're his for the asking. He promises you so much; good times, thrills, plenty of friends (?) etc., but having given yourself to him he finally leaves you betrayed at the hour in which you need help most. Then with your sin-diseased body, laden down with uncleanness and dissipation you are left to arise alone and face your Maker. All because you could not resist his insults. Someone has

aptly said this, "Say **no** to **wrong** and say it **strong**; say **yes** to **right** with all thy **might**."

Vice is a monster of such hideous mien,
To be despised needs but to be seen;
But seen too oft, familiar with its face,
We first endure, then pity, then embrace.

Be a pattern to your associates. You may be surprised and greatly rewarded for saying and doing the right thing at the right time. Sometimes young people get to daring one another to do something a little worse and each one tries to appear the biggest and smartest (?) by going just a mite further. Why couldn't holy principles challenge young folks to see who could do the most good to themselves and others? Dare your friends to commit more acts of charity than you do, see who can memorize the most Bible verses, who can attend more services of the church in a given time, be a pattern of good works one to another. Never be ashamed to do what you ought to be ashamed not to do. Never be ashamed not to do, what you ought to be ashamed to do.

One time there were two small neighbor children who played together almost continuously. At the beginning of their companionship one of the small chaps who came from an irreverent family would boastfully remark in his coarse way, "when my dad gets mad he curses a blue streak; when my mother gets mad, she curses a blue streak; when my sister gets mad, she curses a blue streak; and when I get mad, I curse a blue streak." The other little associate knew what it meant to respect the name of the Lord, consequently, during their association it grieved him to hear the name of his Maker being used so disrespectfully. His feelings were expressed to his playmate both by word and deed. Because of such decorum, the playmate who had learned to use the name of the Lord irreverently soon became ashamed of himself and stopped his evil speaking. Had the decorous child been persuaded to adopt the language and habits of the other, the results of their companionship would have corrupted his virtuous habits, but since he had a good supply of starch

in his back bone he was man enough, even in his youth, to resist evil. We have all sung this good old song that fitly describes this case and is so full of good exhortation to help us cope with our problems.

Yield not to temptation, for yielding is sin;
Each vict'ry will help you some other to win;
Fight manfully onward, dark passions subdue;
Look ever to Jesus, He'll carry you through.
Shun evil companions, bad language disdain;
God's name hold in rev'rence nor take it in vain;
Be thoughtful and earnest, kind-hearted and true;
Look ever to Jesus, He'll carry you through.

By heeding the sermon that is portrayed in this song I am sure that we young people will be more able to be an example in faith, purity, etc. Consequently, our pattern will be one of good works.

In the scripture under consideration, (Titus 2:7), the apostle Paul went further than this and also said, "In doctrine shewing uncorruptness." This also is instruction that is vital for the young people who are in Christ. Even though we must pay strict heed to living a good moral life, we still must not overlook the other teachings of God's word relative to our worship. Paul's instruction to Timothy was "Take heed unto thyself, **and unto the doctrine**; continue in **them**: for in so doing thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee." Our doctrine ought to correspond with our lives. By taking heed to ourselves our morals will be uncorrupted; by taking heed to the teaching of the Bible our doctrine will be uncorrupted. Inasmuch as Titus was left on the island of Crete with the care of the churches invested to his trust, the apostle would naturally admonish him to be uncorrupted in teaching. We who are young people in the church today and the pillars of the church tomorrow, ought to be uncorrupted in doctrine, for soon the Churches of Christ will be left to our trust. Even though we are living in a machine age with the world about us continually changing, the teaching of Christ hasn't changed since the instruction was given to Titus, hence

it applies to us today. We have a blue print to guide us, and in regulating our worship according to this pattern, we will in turn be a pattern; not only by our good moral works but also "In doctrine shewing uncorruptness."

Sometimes young people have a tendency to follow the popular view point and if such is their attitude the standard by which we are guided is forsaken. The doctrine is thereby corrupted. The youth of the Church of Christ is a great asset to it and are to be commended but we must continually watch lest we be as some generations who grew up before us, bringing with us ideas that may corrupt the teaching of the New Testament and divide the Body of Christ. For if we shew a corrupted doctrine to the world we will be just another among the many denominations around us. We must realize our responsibilities as young disciples of Christ in keeping ordinances of God as undefiled and holy as our fathers have given them to us. When we leave the field of activity we too can hand down to our sons the pure uncorrupted doctrine of Christ. This should be an incentive for each of the young members of the church. Let us each make a solemn promise to God at this moment that we will always exalt the pure teaching of God's word and until the time when our spirits shall go back to the God who gave it, we shall, "In doctrine shew uncorruptness."

These are the times when we young people know (?) much more than our elders, and discord is thereby caused in the church. This accounted for the division of the tribes of Israel and has been the occasion for dissension today. There have been occasions when the doctrine of Jesus was disregarded because of young and inexperienced church members who let their conceit and egotism get the best of them. We must realize that experience and wisdom can only come through years of labor in the master's vineyard, consequently, through our inexperience it is not left to us to legislate and rule. If such is our attitude it can probably be laid to our conceit. (Prov. 26:12). We who will compose the backbone of the church in the future, must preserve the Church of Jesus Christ with her original pureness and sim-

plicity that we might leave a heritage to the other young people who will take our place.

The further instruction in our text reads, "Young men likewise exhort to be sober minded. In all things shewing thyself a pattern of good works: in doctrine shewing uncorruptness, **gravity**, **sincerity**. Sound speech that cannot be condemned; that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed having no evil thing to say of you."

Young people are generally thought of as being thoughtless and frivolous. In too many instances such is the case. However, the young members of the church should be separate in that they are commanded to be sincere in serving the Lord. One time a young Christian asked the preacher, who was conducting a protracted meeting, a question relative to modern amusements. The preacher announced that he would answer the question publicly for the benefit of all concerned on a certain night. Another young church member was heard by the preacher to remark that it didn't matter to him what the preacher said on the subject, he was too fond of the amusement to give it up. This is a case of one who not sincere in his religion. Even though the interests of young people differ from the interests of their elders, it is not necessary for the young people of the congregation to act so trifling and foolish that the reproach and shame is brought to the congregation.

During the afternoon of an All-Day Meeting when the congregation had assembled to sing and worship God one of the young members of the church who did the loudest singing afterward, was heard by the preacher to remark that she wished she were at a skating rink. Another case of insincerity in the life of a professed young disciple. Young people this ought not to be. "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he." If your hearts are not sincere in serving the Shepherd and Bishop of our souls, we will only bring reproach to the worthy name of Jesus.

Webster gives as one meaning to the word gravity, "Tendency of matter to attract and be attracted." Another meaning is, "Seriousness." Paul told Titus to show gravity

and sincerity. The law of gravity is a powerful something which attracts objects to the earth with an almost irresistible force. Even so, those who are young in the master's vineyard should be those who are attracted to the Lord in all sincerity. Two things are magnified by Joshua when he was exhorting the children of Israel to serve the Lord. Those two things are, the truth, and sincerity. He said, "Now therefore fear the Lord and serve him in sincerity and in truth." The same two things are necessary in our service to the Lord today. We can be an example in sincerity as in other things, and by giving our whole-hearted service to our God we will be extolling the name of Jesus Christ in all gravity and sincerity.

The young man Titus was also to use "**Sound speech that cannot be condemned.**" The word "sound" is an adjective and not a noun hence he was not to speak so as to make merely a noise but his speech was to be of the nature to stand the test of criticism. Many times we have taken our skates with us to the pond with the view of going skating, but before we would venture on the ice we would test the ice with the weight of our foot to see how sound it was. If it cracked and snapped we would not take a chance on skating on the insecure ice. Even so we should test our speech to see if it will bear the weight of those who are opposed to us and consequently are trying to find fault. Whether it is our teaching that we are trying to describe (verse one) or when we are engaged in social conversation, our speech should bear the weight of examination.

One time as some students were driving home from high school, a young Christian girl began talking to her chum about the church and her Creator. As she continued to talk of religion and her duty to the church the girl said, "You sound just like my mother." That was quite a compliment. For a school girl to converse in such a way toward the welfare of her schoolmate certainly indicates that she was using sound speech as well as sound judgment. That matter of conversation cannot be condemned even though there be many of the contrary part who ought to be ashamed.

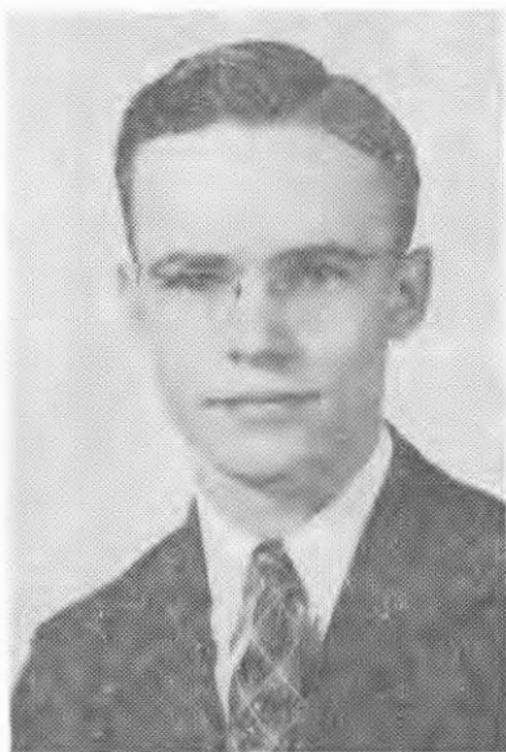
There was once an occasion when a school teacher sat through an entire two weeks protracted meeting trying to catch errors in the preachers grammar, but without success. The preacher apparently made no blunders. It would be encouraging if our speech would be seasoned with salt to the extent that those of the contrary part could find no occasion for evil speaking against us.

Young people, let us remember, that life at its longest is swifter than a weaver's shuttle. This should be a constant reminder to us to be diligent about the manner of pattern that we are weaving and should cause us to realize that Christian principles are the only principles that make life worth living and death worth dying.

In conclusion let us say this, we hope that the words and the thoughts that herein are expressed will be read in the same spirit of Christian servitude which has prompted their writing. As one young Christian to the many young Christians that shall read this chapter and the other chapters of this book I write these words, "That ye may approve things that are excellent; that ye may be **sincere** and **without offence** till the day of Christ."

Let us continually elevate the words of the Apostle Paul, "In all things shewing thyself a pattern of good works: in doctrine shewing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity. Sound speech, that cannot be condemned; that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of you."





KENNETH MORGAN

Kenneth Morgan

Kenneth Morgan, son of Joe and Erie Morgan, was born at Clinton, Oklahoma, October 11, 1920. He completed his high school work at Westville, Oklahoma in May 1937. He obeyed the gospel and was immersed into Christ, by John W. West, at Bristow, Oklahoma, on Sunday evening, April 19, 1939. A few months later he began to prepare himself for the work of an evangelist of the gospel. His first series of meetings was conducted in a schoolhouse, a few miles from Stilwell, Oklahoma, in October 1940, with a little group of brethren struggling to keep alive the work of the Lord. Here he received the greatest thrill of his life, when in response to an invitation at the close of the meeting, two grown people presented themselves for baptism into the Lord Jesus. In the summer of 1940, he became acquainted with the work being done by D. Austen Sommer, and others in opposing innovations which had become so prominent, such as the Bible Colleges, Pastor System, etc. Correspondence brought him a greater insight into that work and led him to attend two Bible Readings in the winter of 1940-41. He is now affiliated with the congregation at 7121 Manchester Avenue in Saint Louis, and is working steadily in the gospel field. When this sketch was penned sometime ago, Kenneth had already assisted 28 souls in obeying the pure gospel. Undoubtedly others have obeyed under his teaching since. He is beloved by all who know him, sincere and consecrated to the Cause of Christ. Possessed of a brilliant mind, he is able often to grasp such things as the casual reader of the scripture might pass by.

God's Athlete

by KENNETH MORGAN

"Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life."

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: AND HAVE DOMINION—" Thus the first team to play the game of life with God as their coach began their career with this admonition, we hear so often in the field of sports today, "Get in there and fight!" Here where the game of life originated we find also that it must be played with teamwork—"It is not good that man should be alone." These two factors are built into the nature of man. Watch children at their play; watch men as they relax for pleasure; watch men at work. Mastery and companionship are their greatest interests. Wherever the field of endeavor, on the sports field, around a checker table, with brush and easel, on the farm, in the office, at the shop, everywhere there is a desire to excel. Men want your admiration: "This is where I work"; "Would you like to see my—"; "We boys at the office beat the KLEN-M-UP Laundry Scrubbers in a HARD game Saturday"; "Did you see what I fixed for my wife?" etc. A philosopher came to this conclusion: Life affords no higher pleasure than that of surmounting difficulties. And double that pleasure when there are companions with whom to share our triumph. Who admires the little soul of the selfish egotist who grandstands the play and steals the show? When a companion took the place of gold in Silas Marner's life, light and warmth and HAPPINESS took up their abode with him. Success was empty until a companion shared it

with him. "Our team," says the school. "I'm just with the team and we're all for the school," says the player.

The infidel Gibbon, philosophizing, said: "The observation that, in every age and climate, ambition has prevailed with the same commanding energy, may abate the surprise of the philosopher; but while he may condemn the vanity, he may search the motive, of this universal desire to obtain and hold the sceptre of dominion." The motive is revealed, we look beyond the team with its fighting energy and burning desire to carry off the trophy, we see the school, the founder and head of the school, their fellows yelling on the sidelines, the coach who trains and advises them, and who said as the game got under way, "Get in there and fight!" Those boys are not fighting for individual glory, but they are fighting for the honor of the school; thus an explanation for the ambitious struggling of men, the coach said: "Get in there and fight!" But as Gibbon said, there is much vanity in the struggling we view on every side. "Vanity of vanities, saith the preacher, Vanity of vanities; all is vanity." You've seen teams in the same predicament. The boys working their hearts out, but somehow their play just doesn't click. They no longer listen to the good advice of coach and captain. Each begins to think his idea is better than the rest, and plays the game his own way, some even to their own selfish ends, that they might be praised though the team suffer loss, teamwork is broken up. And so did man leave the wise advice of the coach in the mighty game of life, he quit striving for the honor of the school, began playing to an end mapped out by his own intelligence. "There is a way that seemeth right unto man, but the end thereof are the ways of death." Here is the vanity of the world's ambition and in its striving for the mastery; the futility of that ambition which ignores God.

Our Coach

It was to redeem this empty, foolish struggling that Christ came; to put our energies in proper channels. He reorganized and consolidated the school of right; he gave

new leadership, new zeal, new hope to the team. "Let us run with patience the race that is set before us, LOOKING UNTO JESUS the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." He came to urge us on to higher goals, to lead us to new victories. What a coach he is! Paul was so enthused by his leadership that he exclaimed: "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me!" He can be touched with our infirmities, and gives mercy and grace in time of need. He infallibly advises our plays. He is near us with his companionship and care. He gave an example. He richly rewards us. His guidance gives reason and purpose to our struggle: ". . . and I count all things but the loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, and be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith; that I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made comfortable unto his death; if by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead. Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting these things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of in Christ Jesus." Such loyalty he inspires: "For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." And what teamwork: "Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought to love one another."

Our Cause

is the will of God, to incorporate it into our own lives, and by teaching and example, love and kindness, reproof and admonition, lead others to conform their lives to it. This is the goal at the end of the field—the tape at the end of the course. As we half squat there on the cinder path, every muscle tense, waiting for the signal, it is the one highest aim in our heart. This was our incentive to temperance in training, the hours of instruction and practice; and it is the motive of that zeal and courage which fills us now. Submission to God is the only true mastery, and the desire to please God is the highest ambition. “Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the children of God:” Be honest in your answer. Which is the highest service? Of Creator? Or, of creature? Which is the highest calling? That of the passions of men, up the ladder of their intelligence? Or, that of an all-wise God, who plans for our good always? Frankly, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. One writer said, “Perfect conformity to the will of God is the sole sovereign and complete liberty.” Let me illustrate. I retell the story from memory. A writer had as his shop an observatory completely surrounded by windows. One summer day when some of the windows were open the writer returned from lunch to find a bee flying around the room, vainly searching for a way out. On the floor were several bees which had killed themselves vainly endeavoring to escape through the glass windows. He decided to assist the remaining bee. Then he decided to capture the bee and thus to free him. Taking a napkin he captured the bee and loosed him through an open window. The bee tried to sting him, and injured himself slightly in his rebellion. “When God who sees all, and who wishes to save us, upsets our designs, we stupidly complain against him, we accuse his providence. We do not comprehend that in punishing us, in overturning our plans and causing us suffering, he is doing all this to deliver us, to open the infinite to us,” writes Victor Hugo.

Moses found "bee-like" opposition among the Israelites in his efforts to help them. "Who made thee a prince and a judge over us? intendest thou to kill me as thou killedst the Egyptian?" Their murmuring in the wilderness stands as a monument. I would that all men could see that true liberty is conformance to the will of God. "Because the creature itself be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of the body."

Victory in Jesus

As we face the opposing team one of our greatest sources of strength is the confidence we have in the final triumph of our cause. We don't mind putting up our savings when there is no doubt about the security of the investment. Paul gladly counted this life loss, that he might gain Christ; and figured that he had made a bargain, "For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." Sacrifice? Sure! The athlete must expose himself to the dangers of the game if he is to win. "Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." "My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into divers temptations; knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have her perfect work, that you may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing." He that wrestles with us strengthens our nerves and sharpens our skill. Our antagonist is our helper. "God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that you are able; but will with the temptation also make a way of escape, that ye may be able to bear it." When you succumbed to temptation, and for a "mess of pottage" sold out the team who had trusted you, and had given you a place in the line, it wasn't because you were tempted above that you

were able, it was because you wanted the "pottage," "For Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world . . ." "Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man, but every man is tempted, when he is drawn away after his own lust and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin; and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death." There is an old adage, "Where there is a will, there is a way." The way of escape is for him who has received into his heart "the love of the truth." Sometimes we are called upon to make the sacrifice of our lives upon the altar of service. By this we mean, all that pertains to this earthly life: Our friends, loved ones, our position, our career, our wealth, even our existence on this earth. This isn't impossible in modern civilization, the last few years have witnessed just such sacrifice for their religious faith by men. I ask you, young fellow-soldiers, will we resist to the blood striving against sin, should such demand arise? A good motto for the Christian is found in the book of Daniel: "But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself . . ." And he let this moderation be known unto all men. But as touching his obligations, he rendered to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute was due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honor to whom honor. For even his enemies were forced to admit: "We shall not find any occasion against this Daniel, except we find it against him concerning the law of God." There's a standard of life worthy of our imitation; Daniel was willing to give his life to stand by it. And Christ says, "Whosoever shall lose his life for my sake, and the gospel's, the same shall save." "If God be for us who can be against us? He that spared not his own son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things? . . . Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, of persecutions, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? . . . NAY, IN ALL THESE THINGS WE ARE MORE THAN CONQUERORS

THROUGH HIM THAT LOVED US. For I am persuaded that neither death, nor . . . , nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." ". . . thanks be to God which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

Our Opposition

We wrestle not against flesh and blood but against an even more formidable force. "Against principalities." "Against powers." "Against the rulers of the darkness of this world." Let us send the light of the glorious gospel of Christ into every corner, especially should we be concerned with the corners where we are. "Against spiritual wickedness in high places." Let us without ceasing fight for the purity of the church, and join with Paul in the announcement: To whom we gave place by subjection, no, not for an hour, that the truth of the gospel might continue with you. "Resist the devil." Not only should we refuse to fellowship the unfruitful works of darkness, introduced by Satan, but also reprove them. And who do you think we find playing fullback on the team? The fellow who sneaks around right end when we are engaged with the rest of the team in none other . . . but we'll let Paul tell you about him. "But I see another law in my members, WARRING against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members." (Compare) ". . . but I keep my body under, and bring it into subjection: lest by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway." This seems to have been one of Paul's toughest opponents. Many men have risen to fame, only to be conquered by their own passions. An old proverb says: "He that conquers self is greater than he that taketh a city." A very good illustration of this is Alexander the Great. He had taken a world, but at an early age he perished in the cruel bondage of his own lusts and passions. He once visited Diogenes to honor a man who had conquered himself. One of the requirements of coming to Christ was self-denial. "And they

that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its affections and lusts." Here is the line-up of the opposition: "your own bowels" "unrighteousness" "darkness" "Belial" "infidel" "idols" and Satan is their coach. (2 Cor. 7)

" . . . like MEN!"

Christ admired men with "spirit". Listen to him praise John the Baptist, a strong man who served God. "What went you into the darkness to see? A reed shaken with the wind? But what went you out for to see? A man clothed in soft raiment? **BEHOLD, THEY THAT WEAR SOFT RAIMENT ARE IN KING'S HOUSES.** But what went you out to see? A prophet? Yea, I say unto you, and more than a prophet. For this is he, of whom it is written, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee. Verily I say unto you, Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist . . ." How many of you have caught the demand for courage and strength in Paul's words? "Quit ye like **MEN!**" The "fight" in those who answer the Master's call, "**TO ARMS!**", is used to accomplish the will of God among men. "Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit ye like men, be strong." "Fight the good fight of faith." "Neither give place to the devil." Are we ready? We don't have to be with Stephen before the High Priest to find occasion to display Christian courage. Have you the courage to go all the way with this command? "Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, **BUT RATHER REPROVE THEM.**" Do you have the strength to keep your head above the level of the whisperers, when all about you deal in whispers? You don't have to be with Paul in Corinth, Ephesus, or Philippi to find adventure in Christian living. Have you ever had anyone accuse you of filling the city where you live with the doctrine of Christ? Make that your goal and see if you don't find some rich adventure in the path of Christian duty. Do you put people off with some excuse when asked who you refuse to partake of worldiness, or do you plainly tell them your Christian duty? Let "mod-

eration be known unto all men" and you'll find a place for courage in your life. Are you by any chance the member of a small congregation, hard-pressed for existence, and of whose membership, half are indifferent, or tossed about by the winds of doctrine? Sometimes we find them ready to "give place by subjection", sometimes they are ready to quit. Where would we find you? Did I hear you say, "Well, we can't do much here, we just don't have anything to work with, and besides, we just can't get the outsiders interested." Or, are you the fellow rolling up his sleeves and saying with a grin, "Here is as fine an opportunity to demonstrate my faith and zeal and courage as could be had." Someone has said that it is the temper of the highest souls to strive most upward when they are most burdened.

I can imagine Paul praying just such a prayer as this:

God give us men! A time like this demands
Strong minds, great hearts, true faith, and ready
hands;

Men whom the lust of office does not kill;
Men whom the spoils of office cannot buy;
Men who possess opinions and a will;
Men who have honor. Men who will not lie.
Men who can stand before a demagog
And damn his treacherous flatteries without winking!
Tall men, sun crowned, who live above the fog
In public duty and in private thinking;
For while the rabble with their thumbworn creeds,
Their large professions and their little deeds,
Mingle in selfish strife, lo! Freedom weeps.
Wrong rules the land and waiting justice weeps.

“. . . a workman that needeth not to be ashamed . . .”

Catch this note of scorn. "I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air:" Paul ridiculed beating the air, and uncertain (half-hearted) playing. His admiration is for those who put their heart and skill into the game. "If anything is worth doing

at all, it is worth doing well." God's athlete must be zealous and well trained. "And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible." Whatever your field of endeavor, several rungs of the ladder of success are made of diligent training. One recognized musician illustrated the necessity of constant training. "When I leave off practice one day, I notice it; two days, my friends notice it; three days, everyone notices it." "Know you not that they which run in a race run all, but receiveth the prize? So run, that you may obtain." He who earnestly strives for the mastery will diligently train. After a driving contest for high school students sponsored by Henry Ford the young champion was asked how he became so skillful in driving. "Every time I drove a car, I drove as if contesting for the championship." An effective training course contains both discipline and development. Discipline gives us patience and enables us to "endure hardness as good soldiers." It is the last half of the game that crowns the victor, we must have strength to carry the fight all the way through the game. Don't think that you are going to be the only one to dish out blows in this fight. Can you take it? When natural lusts batter your will? What about ridicule and accusation? Not to mention real persecution! We must develop our skill and ability. We are perhaps qualified for different positions on the team, each should train to fill his position. And I do mean TRAIN! Study to shew thyself approved unto God! Don't get into the ring just to spend your time "beating the air". Whatsoever is found for thy hand to do, do it with all thy might.

The true athlete develops his whole person: in his body, strength, skill and endurance; his mind is trained to be alert, active and resourceful; he is no less diligent in keeping a strong moral and spiritual character, for this is the source of courage, zeal, ambition, honesty, and loyalty; it is his spiritual character that enables him to be a noble winner and a good loser. Let the Christian athlete train accordingly . . . "But we an incorruptible." To function best

mentally and spiritually we should have strong healthy bodies. We should rid ourselves of habits that weaken our bodies, injure our nervous system, and expose us to disease. These might be the use of alcoholic liquors, tobacco and similar stimulants, over indulgence in food, neglect of bodily care, uncleanness, or the permitting of any lust or passion to become our master to the harm of our body. We should develop physical skill. Cleanliness of thought and purpose should not escape our concern, and we should educate the mind and train it to fill its place in our work. The necessity of spiritual development in the Christian life is apparent. We need faith, courage and hope. We need love and humility. We must have zeal. Our spiritual being must conquer and rule the mental and physical if we are to attain the high standard of self control which the Christian athlete must have for eligibility.

Play the game carefully. Make your punches count. Be alert. The Brooklyn Dodgers learned in the 1941 World series how disastrous a slip-up can be. At Pearl Harbor we learned the value of vigilance. Play diligently. Play lawfully. ". . . yet is he not crowned, except he strive lawfully." The referee in this game is not mocked! And finally we ask you to play loyally. Christ and the church depend on you to play honorably and to put up a good fight. I can almost hear Paul say:

"Take up your quarrel with the foe;
To you from failing hands we throw
The torch; be yours to hold it high.
If you break faith with us who die
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow
In Flanders fields."

Make full proof of thy ministry. Don't sell out Christ and the church to your own lusts, to any man, or to any cause.

Some of the most beautiful stories given to us by the contest, war or sport, are those of teamwork. "The soldier and his buddy". Or, "Jonathan and David". There is a glow

in our hearts when we read the story of a "sacrifice" in the chronicle of a baseball game. Let brotherly love continue. Let us have love, encouragement, and assistance for him who is overtaken in a fault, an "error". Under the same circumstances we might have faltered too.

". . . a crown . . ."

Ye that have faith to look with fearless eyes
Beyond the tragedy of a world at strife,
And know that out of death and night shall rise
The dawn of ampler life.
Rejoice, whatever anguish rend the heart,
That God has given you the priceless dower
To live in these great times, and have your part
In Freedom's Crowning Hour.
That you may tell your sons that see the light
High in the heavens . . . their heritage to atke . . .
"I saw the powers of darkness put to flight,
I saw the morning break."

And when we have breasted the tape of death at the end of the course, and stand before the Judge's seat, a wreath of life will adorn our brow. Our glorious title won . . . "A Child of God." And the purse? An inheritance in the beautiful city of love.

* * * *

The game is called . . . on the sidelines the coach hurriedly whispers last instructions, then with feeling: "GET IN THERE AND FIGHT!"