

The Elisabeth Elliot Newsletter

Premier Issue November, 1982

Contexts

A writer in the *New Yorker* some months ago analyzed television as "the context of no-context." Think about that one. The only context in which the words are coming at us from the tube is our living room or kitchen, which has nothing whatever to do with the speaker. The speaker's backdrop is usually a TV studio, which we know is a mock-up. So we are excused from evaluating what is said in terms of context. There is none.

In what context does a Christian live, move, act, think, decide? It must be the context of God's kingdom. We either live in that kingdom, or we live in the world, taking our cues from the Bible or from the media, setting our goals according to what is going to matter forever or according to the quotation of the day.

Think, in the context of the kingdom of God, about this recent incident in a public school classroom: The teacher asked each child what his mother did. There was only one child whose mother did not work outside the home.

Teacher: Oh, so what *does* your mother do?

Child: She—um, well, you know, she does, um, stuff around the house.

Teacher: You mean she cooks and cleans? She irons clothes, makes beds?

Child: Yes.

Teacher: So you could say, then, that you have a *traditional* mother, is that right?

Child: Yes.

Teacher: (with a long, searching look) And do you *like* that?

Consider the context from which that teacher's questions come. It is not one which recognizes any divine design for the home, any glory in service, any joyful willingness to do humble work without thought of gain or appreciation. Consider the pressure put on a little child to question the only context his life has had, the context which has till now meant security, normalcy, and happiness for him. He will be wondering if his mother is some sort of an oddity, his home not an ordinary one.

It is not for nothing that the classic passage on the warfare of the Christian immediately follows Paul's specific instructions about intimate human relationships: wives, submit; husbands, love; fathers, do not goad your children to resentment. These are the areas of most vicious and relentless attack. The Christian home is a stronghold, and the enemy will never let up his attempts to undermine it or breach its sanctity.

"Put on all the armor which God provides, so that you may be able to stand firm against the devices of the devil. For our fight is not against human foes [corrupt government officials, public school boards, for example, or even an impossible-to-live-with spouse or teenager] but against cosmic powers, against the authorities and potentates of this dark world, against the superhuman forces of evil in the heavens. Therefore take God's armor . . ." (Eph 6:11-13 NEB).

Prayer is a powerful weapon. It is an indispensable weapon. It takes practice to wield it. It takes courage and time and spiritual energy. ●

Why Another Newsletter?

People have actually asked for a newsletter. The suggestion has been made a number of times over the years, but I've balked. Who would want to read it? What in the world would I say? And the *mechanics* of the thing, alas. How to put it together, who would help, where would it be printed, what would I do about mailing? Several members of The Word of God, a Christian community in Ann Arbor, Michigan, came to me about a year ago and out of the blue told me I ought to be writing a newsletter and offered their services of every kind to make it possible. They are a group founded in the sixties, comprising about five-hundred families, doing ordinary work like ordinary folks (they don't live in a compound), but trying earnestly to live the life of Christ and to stand against what they see as an "escalation of evil" in the world today. They are committed also to standing with any who are fighting the same battles. I was awed and humbled to be counted among this latter group, and I gratefully accepted their suggestion and offer of help.

Not very much of what I have to say applies exclusively to women (can't think of a thing just now that would). I hope that my being a woman will not limit too seriously the readership of my letter. The Bible is a book for men and women. Like Jews and Gentiles, we are fellow-citizens with God's people, members of *God's household*, bonded together, being built with all the rest into a *spiritual dwelling for God* (Ephesians 2:19, 21, 22 NEB).

Encouragement comes to me from many different sources, and I would like to be able to pass some of it on to others of the "household." It'll be one more way of "bonding" us. Not the least of the sources of encouragement is letters that come to me. Instead of just throwing them away or filing them, I can give you some of the more toothsome bits.

Lessons I'm trying to learn, issues I'm thinking about (and asking God to bring every thought into captivity to Christ), and maybe some news about a recent book or tape will be a part of the

letter. Could you stand a story now and then about one of my three grandchildren? How about my husband? Here's one from him—the other day he said to me, "Now dahlin" (he's from Georgia, you know), "I'm going to explain what I plan to do about this matter. I really want your opinion. Be perfectly frank. Then, if you think the whole idea is absolutely asinine [long pause, expression of deep study], why, I'll probably just go ahead and do it anyway."

Finally—and this, I guess, is the primary reason why those men from The Word of God convinced me—I need prayer. I need more pray-ers—people who know what's going on and are willing to give themselves to God for me. Of course I have no special claim on anybody's prayers. I'm just one individual, but one to whom much has been given in the way of opportunities I never sought, platforms I never asked for, and influence I hardly know about. What do I have that I have not received? Not a thing. But "where a man has been given much, much will be expected of him; and the more a man has had entrusted to him the more he will be required to repay" (Lk 12:48 NEB).

The work we do for/with God must be done by the power of the Holy Spirit. That kind of work demands prayer. C.S. Lewis said in one of his letters to his friend Arthur Greeves that in a sense we can paddle every canoe except our own. I think the principle applies here. I can pray, of course, for help in the things God asks me to do. I do pray. But I can't do it alone. Each of us needs to have other people praying for him, paddling his canoe, as it were.

May I ask you then, most earnestly, to pray for me? For every book, every article, every talk, every tape—that Christ may be lifted up. ●

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From *Discipline: The Glad Surrender*

The bodies we are given are sexual bodies, equipped for sexual intercourse. Modern advertising never lets us forget this. Popular songs refer to very little else. The fashion business thrives on sexual provocation through dress. But being sexually equipped is not a license for us to use the equipment in any way we choose. Like every other good gift which comes down from the Father of Lights, the gift of sexual activity is meant to be used as He intended, within the clearly defined limits of His purpose which is marriage. If marriage is not included in God's will for an individual, then sexual activity is not included either.

"What am I supposed to do, then, with all this? I've got so much to give—what if nobody takes it?"

Give it to God.

"You cannot say that our physical body was made for sexual promiscuity; it was made for God, and God is the answer to our deepest longings" (1 Cor. 6:13 JBP).

To offer my body to the Lord as a living sacrifice includes offering to Him my sexuality and all that that entails, even my unfulfilled longings.

Today this advice will be laughed out of court by most. Sexual control is regarded as a "hang-up," from which the truly mature have been liberated. There are those still, however, as there have been in every age, who hold as holy the intimate relationship between a man and a woman, recognizing in it a type of Christ's love for His own bride, His church. As such it is not to be profaned.

This attitude can be held only by the mind's being captive to Christ. It is a miracle of grace. Let us not imagine it is anything less.

Malcolm Muggeridge notes in his diary, March 26-27, 1951 (published by Collins, London, 1981), that Tolstoy "tried to achieve virtue, and particularly continence, through the exercise of his will; St. Augustine saw that, for Man, there is no virtue without a miracle. Thus St. Augustine's asceticism brought him serenity, and Tolstoy's anguish, conflict, and the final collapse of his life into tragic buffoonery."

This body, remember, is to be resurrected. As John Donne pointed out long ago, the immortality of the soul is acceptable to man's natural reason, but the resurrection of the body must be a matter of faith. ●

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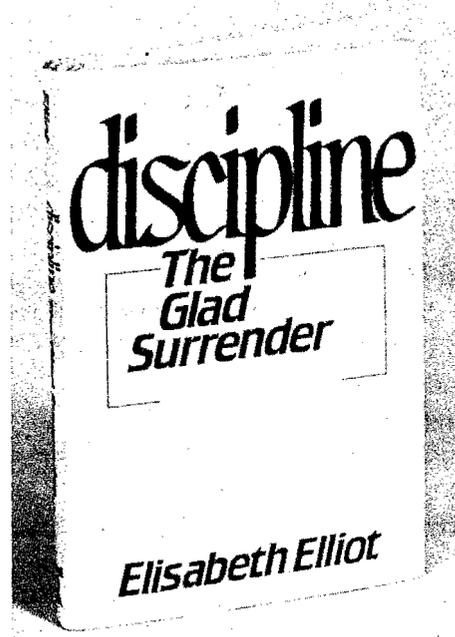
Letters Received

A MOTHER in Tucson writes about her little boy Chris: "After hearing you, Chris got into the car and announced, 'What I know now that I have to do is love my enemies.' Since then he's been praying about his specific enemies and acting on this principle." On the back of the same letter was a drawing by a four-year-old with this dictated message: "I liked your talk too. I have laid with my sister to help her fall asleep, so I'm laying down my life for her. Chris is trying to help his enemies."

A TWELVE-YEAR-OLD BOY writes that he has decided to get up ten minutes early each morning to read his Bible, and has decided to stay home this summer in order to help his mother when she has a new baby.

Prayer Requests

- Pray for those in Christian leadership, that they may be living examples of what they teach. Temptations increase as influence increases. They need the protection of prayer and the armor of God.
- Please pray that the words I speak and write may be words that I also live by. God forbid that I should sin against any by being merely a talker.
- Pray for the mothers of young children, that they may be given eyes to see the glory of their task—a humble task, of course, but seen by angels, assigned by God, and leading to tremendous influence if these children are nurtured and admonished in the Lord.



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Tapes from the Firs and Indian Springs conferences:

Some were defective. Sorry we cannot replace them with the same talks, but will be happy to send you a set of similar talks if you return defective tapes to:

Lars Gren
746 Bay Road
Hamilton,
Massachusetts 01936

*Travel Schedule:
November 1982 —
January 1983*

Nov. 12 Westmont College chapel, 10 A.M., Santa Barbara, California.

Nov. 12-14 Women's retreat at Danish Inn Motel, Solvang, California (Mrs. Marjorie Schweinfurth, 803-962-5677).

Nov. 21-22 21st at First United Methodist Church, Carrollton, Texas. 22nd, women's seminar, same church.

Jan. 13 Wives' Association of Gordon-Conwell Seminary, S. Hamilton, Massachusetts.

Jan. 21-22 Northwest Singles Conference, Hinson Memorial Baptist Church, Portland, Oregon.

Jan. 24-26 Torrey Memorial Bible Conference, Biola College, La Mirada, California.

Jan. 27-29 Oklahoma University Baptist Student Union Conference, Norman, Oklahoma (Mrs. Ralph Neighbour, 405-321-2810).

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The Elisabeth Elliot Newsletter

January / February 1983

Give Them Parking Space but Let Them Starve to Death

Another moral threshold was crossed last April when a tiny baby boy, at the specific request of his parents and with the sanction of the Supreme Court of Indiana, was starved to death in a hospital. "Infant Doe" (he was not allowed the usual recognition of being human by being named), born with Down's syndrome and a malfunctioning esophagus (the latter could have been corrected with surgery), died, as the *Washington Post* (April 18) stated, "not because he couldn't sustain life without a million dollars worth of medical machinery, but because no one fed him." For six days the nurses in that Bloomington hospital went about their usual routines of bathing and changing and feeding all the newborns except one. They bathed and changed Baby Doe but they never gave him a bottle. Over his crib was a notice, DO NOT FEED. Several couples came forward, begging to be allowed to adopt him. They were turned down.

What went on in that little box during those six terrible days and nights? We turn our imagination away. It's unthinkable. But if I were to think about it, and put down on paper what my mind saw, I would be accused of playing on people's feelings, and of making infanticide (yes, *infanticide*—call it what it is) an "emotional issue." Let me suppose at least that the baby cried—quite loudly (at first). One report says that he was placed in a room alone, lest his crying disturb others (others, perhaps, who were capable

of helping him).

Joseph Sobran in his column in the Los Angeles Times Syndicate on April 20 suggested that "opposition to infanticide will soon be deplored as the dogma of a few religious sects who want to impose their views on everyone else." The language sounds sickeningly familiar.

There has been a conspicuous silence from those who usually raise shrill protest when other human rights are violated—the rights of smokers, homosexuals, and criminals are often as loudly insisted upon as those of children, women, and the handicapped.

The handicapped? What on earth is happening when a society is so careful to provide premium parking spaces to make things easier for them, but sees no smallest inconsistency when one of them who happens to be too young to scream, "For God's sake, feed me!" is quietly murdered? It is in the name of humanity, humaneness, compassion, and freedom that these things occur, but never is it acknowledged that the real reasons are comfort and convenience, that is, simple selfishness. "Abortion not only prefers comfort, convenience, or advantage of the pregnant woman to the very life of her unborn child, a fundamentally good thing, but seeks to deny that the life ever existed. In this sense it is a radical denial not only of the worth of a specific life but of the essential goodness of life itself and the Providential ordering of its procreation" (R.V. Young, "Taking Choice Seriously," *The Human Life Review*, Vol. VIII, no. 3).

But weren't we talking about infanticide and haven't we now switched to abortion? The premises on which abortion is justified are fundamentally the same on which infanticide is seen as civilized and acceptable. What Hitler used to call

eugenics is now called "quality of life," never mind whether the life in question happens to be the mother's or the child's. Death, according to three doctors who put the issue out into the open in the *New England Journal of Medicine* in 1973, is now considered an option in the "treatment" of infants; in other words, a mortuary may now replace the nursery. One cannot help thinking of the antiseptic "shower rooms" of the Third Reich, where the unwanted were "treated" to death. Nor can one forget the words of Jesus, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."

Can any Christian argue that the smallest and most defenceless are, by virtue merely of being too small and too defenceless, *not* His brethren? ●

What Is Happening?

What on earth is happening? I asked on page one. The answer is plain, I'm afraid, in Romans 1 and 2. Men render truth dumb and inoperative by their wickedness. They refuse to acknowledge God or to thank Him for what He is or does. They become fatuous in their argumentations. Behind a facade of wisdom they become fools. They give up God. They forfeit the truth of God and accept a lie. They overflow with insolent pride; their minds teem with diabolical invention. They recognize no obligations to honor, lose all natural affection, and have no use for mercy. They do not hesitate to give their thorough approval to others who do the same. (Rom 1:18-2:5 JBP)

Can we condemn them without subjecting ourselves to the same standard of judgment by which we condemn? Of course we can't. Judgment must be *righteous judgment* (John 7:24), based on the Word of God.

"There is no doubt at all that he will 'render to every man according to his works,' and that means eternal life to those who, in patiently doing good, aim at the unseen. . . . It also means anger and wrath for those who rebel against God's plan of life. . . . But there is glory and honor and peace for every worker on the side of good." (Romans 2:6-10 JBP) ●

New Zealand Trip

Last August, Lars and I spent three weeks in that indescribably beautiful little country of New Zealand. I was speaking for the Church Missionary Society's "Spring Schools," one in Hamilton on the north island for four days, another in Christchurch on the south island. It was spring-time, of course. New Zealand is at about the same latitude south that Massachusetts is north, so the seasons are the reverse of ours, and everything was in glorious bloom. Thousands upon thousands of newborn lambs capered and gamboled in the pastures (called paddocks there). We missed witnessing the birth of one of them by about thirty seconds. It was just staggering up onto its little rubber hoofs. The ewe was busy cleaning it.

We've seen the Rockies and the Andes and the Alps. We've been to Wales and Norway and Ecuador and Peru, Hawaii and a few other places, but we agreed we'd seen nothing to beat New Zealand. Such miles and miles of lush velvet green pastureland, such sweeping plains, such rank upon rank of awesome snowcapped jagged peaks, such pearly smooth sheets of turquoise glacial lakes. We traveled for six days after the speaking part was finished, having hired a small Japanese car (a Daihatsu!). From Christchurch we drove west into a beautiful forest, through the Rakaia Gorge, across the Canterbury Plains, and up into the high brown grass country similar to the moors and Highlands of Scotland, then into the Southern Alps. Flew in a small plane around the highest peak, Mt. Cook, and over three or four glaciers (pronounced "glassyuh" by the natives), then down over the Haast Pass to the Tasman Sea. Drove to Queenstown, Lake Te Anau, and a fjord improperly named Milford Sound (we were taught the difference between a fjord and a sound) where we took a boat trip through towering mountains

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to the sea. A little crested penguin obliged us by waddling primly up a rock very near the boat, and two seals yawned with ennui to see another crowd of tourists. On the west coast we picked up driftwood on a lonely wild beach, gathered ferns in a very wet jungle (rainfall is 300 inches per year in that section), and climbed over rocks to the foot of Fox Glacier.

Ah, but the people! What dear, lovely people we met. Warm, responsive, hospitable, and we did not feel apologetic for being American (except when our fellow travelers on the fjord boat began to play loud country music on a tape recorder and square dance on the decks).

One woman, a missionary from East Africa, told me she had been saved just nine months at the time of the death of the five men in Ecuador. The testimony of Jim Elliot had a powerful effect in her life. Three times she had put in writing her willingness to be a missionary. Then she came across Jim's note in a diary, "Ananias was not slain for not giving, but for not giving what he said he'd given." That word was a link in the chain of her actually going to Africa. ●

Response from a seminar a few months ago in New Jersey:

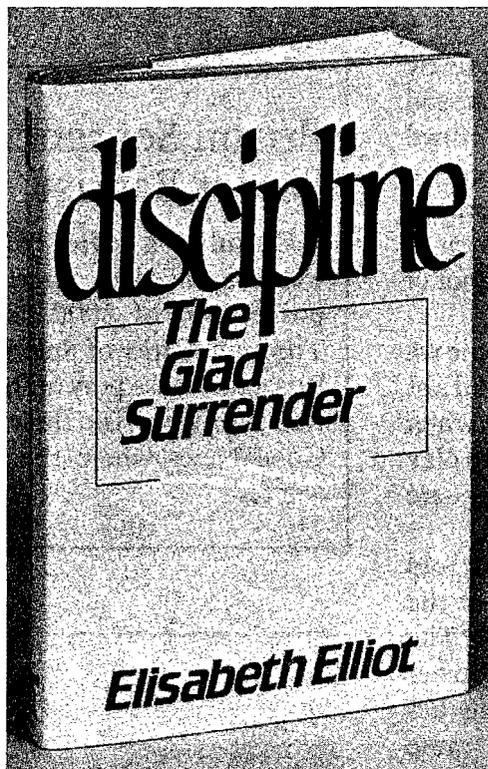
"Wish I could say thank you, but I can't. Oh gosh—thank you for *that*? You talked about forgiveness, and my mother, my sister, my neighbor are all sitting there looking at me. All through your talk, they're looking at me. They knew why I needed that talk! My husband is a gambler and am I *bitter*! Bitter, resentful, anxious—all the things you talked about! I'm telling you, God had a funnel from your mouth to my ear. I couldn't believe it. Who told you, I'm saying to myself, who told you about me and my husband? I was taking notes, and I put a box around that word forgiveness. That's for my sister, I said, that's not for me. She's the one that needs that! But it's really for me. God's telling me it's for me. And to think my neighbor gave me the ticket for this seminar for a birthday present. What kind of a friend is that? A *birthday* present! But thanks, Elisabeth."

Prison Sentence for Soviet Baptist

On July 8 a Soviet Baptist, Vasili Pali, 54, was sentenced to three years in prison for possession of 3000 copies of my book, *Through Gates of Splendor*, translated into Russian. Please pray for him and many others like him who risk their lives to spread the Good News where the Good News is not wanted.

Prayer Requests

- Pray for those who are fighting for the lives of millions of unborn and now newborn children—by lobbying, by legislation, by writing and teaching and serving in hospitals, or in any other way. Remember that prayer is a powerful weapon, too.
- Pray for Christian fathers. Theirs is a position of God-given power and authority, often poorly understood, poorly lived. Pray that they may be true *priests* in their homes, standing ready for sacrifice. Pray that they may not goad their children to resentment (Ephesians 6:4 NEB).
- Pray for wisdom, courage, and humility for President Reagan, that he may be a leader who helps our country toward the path of righteousness; that he may not be pressured to abandon principles for pragmatism (e.g., what is right for what offers an instant "solution").
- Pray that I may never speak or write without remembering that "there is no question of our being qualified in ourselves—we cannot claim anything as our own, the qualification comes from God" (2 Corinthians 3:5-6 NEB).



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Jan. 27-29 Oklahoma University Baptist Student Union Conference, Norman, Oklahoma.

Feb. 11-12 Trinitarian Congregational Church Seminar, Wayland, Massachusetts.

Feb. 22-24 Criswell Center for Biblical Studies, Dallas, Texas.

March 10-12 The Word of God Christian community, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

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March / April 1983

The Taking of Human Life

In the relentless effort to keep the world from squeezing me into its own mold (see Rom 12:1-2, J.B. Phillips) my mind is always making comparisons and connections and trying to test the world's reasoning by the straightedge of Scripture. Recently, when I read of the execution in Texas of Charles Brooks, Jr., by lethal injection, I made one of those connections. I remembered another news story a few months ago about an unborn twin who was quietly dispatched, while still in its mother's womb, by means of a needle in its heart. Medical science has advanced to the stage where it is possible to remove human beings from this world's scene cleanly and kindly (we tell ourselves) and without too much trauma to the executioners and the consenting public. Of the trauma to the victim we prefer not to let ourselves think too much.

One of the people I refer to, of course, was a full-grown man, convicted of murder. The other was far from full-grown. It was not even born. Nobody wanted it to be born because it happened to be not quite normal. A person, without question, but not quite a normal person. So, since the mother very much wanted the normal twin to be born, she was very glad to be able to get rid of the abnormal one in such a handy way.

In a *Time* (Dec. 20, 1982) essay about the Brooks execution, Roger Rosenblatt writes of the public's eagerness for a "gentle killing," yet its hunger also to know the details of the prisoner's

last dinner and last words, his position on the stretcher, and how the tubes were hooked up which would carry the poison into his bloodstream. Strange that there should be this fascination at a time when there is strong protest, at least in the media, against the death penalty for criminals. There is no protest in major magazines against the death penalty for unborn children and no corresponding eagerness for pictures or descriptions of just how it is done. Few people are willing to scrutinize the details of what happens to the tiny bodies who are daily, at the request of their mothers, and with the consent of the Supreme Court, being disposed of by sophisticated chemical, pharmaceutical, and mechanical techniques.

The correction facility in Texas and the abortion facilities in hospitals are equally thorough in their efforts to make sure that the method *works*. Imagine the embarrassment if Charles Brooks had managed to slip out of the straps that bound him to the gurney, or if the silent fluid had somehow been obstructed in the tubes! Nobody wants that to happen. It is a major disaster, too, when an abortion produces a living child instead of a dead one. Some awful scenes have taken place in hospital nurseries when a baby has been taken there who had been intended for the garbage can. What is wanted in the cases of both the murderer and the undesirable fetus is death, pure death, the "spectacle of life removed."

Do not misunderstand me. I believe that capital punishment is both necessary and just. I believe that abortion is murder. Both are appalling to anyone human, it seems to me. Surely, no matter what our convictions and public declarations may be, we shrink inside at the hideousness of it

all. But one is commanded by God—evil must be dealt with by public justice—and the other is forbidden. We cannot, without His express direction, take human life into our hands. Let us not imagine that we can somehow palliate the stark and shocking fact of death by making it private. Only a few people, including four reporters and Brook's girlfriend, were allowed to witness his death. An abortion is now called a *private matter*, to be decided solely by a woman and her physician. Let us not, by making it quick, easy, and clean, evade the truth that somebody is being killed.

Rosenblatt in his essay looks for the day when we may "drive out the barbarians." Is it barbaric, then, to mete out judgment in this form to a murderer, but somehow civilized to send a lethal poison into the heart of an as yet sinless child?

Paul wrote to the young minister Timothy to warn him of the sort of evil he must guard against. "Men will love nothing but money and self . . . men who put pleasure in the place of God, men who preserve the outward form of religion but are a standing denial of its reality. Keep clear of men like these. . . . These men defy the truth, they have lost the power to reason, and they cannot pass the tests of faith" (2 Tm 3:2, 5-6, 8-9, New English Bible). God help us not only to stand for the truth, but to obey it scrupulously that we may not lose the power to *think as Christians*. •

What Do You Mean by Submission?

People are always asking me this. What *is* this business of "submission" you're always talking about? We're not really very comfortable with this. Seems kind of negative. Sounds as though women are not worth as much as men. Aren't women supposed to exercise their gifts? Can't they ever open their mouths?

I wouldn't be very comfortable with that kind of submission either. As a matter of fact, I'm not particularly comfortable with any kind, but since it was God's idea and not mine, I had better come to terms with what the Bible says about it and stop rejecting the whole thing just because it

is so often misunderstood and wrongly defined. I came across a lucid example of what it means in 1 Chronicles 11:10: "Of David's heroes these were the chief, men who lent their full strength to his government and, with all Israel, joined in making him king." There it is. The recognition, first of all, of God-given authority. Recognizing it, accepting it, they then lent their full strength to it, and did everything in their power to make him—not them—*king*.

Christians—both men and women—recognize first the authority of Christ. They pray "Thy will be done." They set about making an honest effort to cooperate with what He is doing, straightening out the kinks in their own lives according to His wishes. A Christian woman, then, in submission to *God*, recognizes the divinely assigned authority of her husband (he didn't earn it, remember, he received it by appointment). She then sets about lending her full strength to helping him do what he's supposed to do, be what he's supposed to be—her *head*. She's not always trying to get her own way. She's trying to make it easier for him to do his job. She seeks to contribute to *his* purpose, not to scheme how to accomplish her own.

If this sounds suspiciously like some worn-out traditionalist view, or (worse) like a typical Elisabeth Elliot opinion, test it with the straightedge of Scripture. What does submission to Christ mean? "Wives, submit yourselves to your husbands, as to the Lord." Compare and connect. •

A Little Lesson about Things Temporal and Eternal

I am upset when things are lost. Even small things. I like to know that things have places and are in them. It's much worse when something like a manuscript is lost. I had worked for a

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number of weeks on a certain piece, and when I went to do the final rewriting it was gone. It just wasn't anywhere. I looked, then Lars looked, then we both looked. In all the likely and all the unlikely places. We prayed about it, of course, together and separately, but we could not find it. At last I told the Lord that if I did not find it today I would begin again from scratch, as the deadline was closing in. That day Uncle Tom, who is eighty-nine and was staying with us, became very ill. There was no time to think of manuscripts. The next day we happened to move a piece of furniture and discovered that moths were doing their dastardly work underneath it. Lars went out and bought a can of moth spray and proceeded to fumigate every nook and cranny. The manuscript was behind a desk. It had fallen down and lodged standing up on the baseboard. If Uncle Tom had not gotten sick I would have done a day's unnecessary work on that piece that I was so worried about. If the moths had not taken it into their tiny heads to chew my carpet, we probably would not have turned up that sheaf of papers until next spring. It was not for nothing that the collect in my church that Sunday (the eighth after Pentecost) was: "O God, the protector of all who trust in you, without whom nothing is strong, nothing is holy: Increase and multiply upon us your mercy, that, with you as our ruler and guide, we may so pass through things temporal, that we lose not the things eternal; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen." ●

Recommended Reading

Vernard Eller: *The Language of Canaan and the Grammar of Feminism* (Eerdmans). "Although the feminist grammar surely is not deliberately anti-rhetorical, it is most deliberately *political* [italics his]. Its linguistic innovations (such as 'chairperson,' 'humankind,' 'God gives us God's grace,' 'he or she') are code symbols, each a little red flag bearing the letters FA [Feminist Approved]." (page 3)

"The gospel, the biblical message, *requires* the language of Canaan. . . . It must have a grammar powerful enough to enable us to think and say what the biblical languages were intent to com-

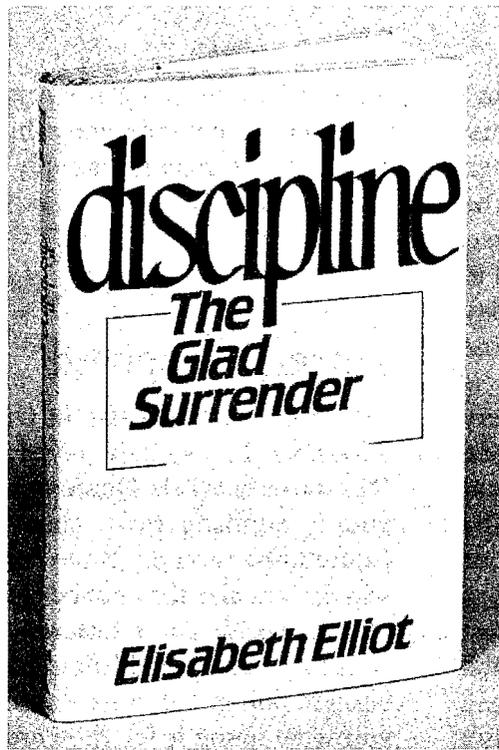
municate in the first place. And as seems clear, the grammar of contemporary humanism (whether feminist or otherwise) simply has not that capability." (page 48)

Letters Received

FROM A YOUNG MOTHER: "In *Discipline: The Glad Surrender* I especially loved the chapter, 'The Discipline of Work.' Homemaking can sometimes entail mundane tasks that need to be done. Contending with my three small children day in and day out also may not be glamorous in the eyes of the world, but I lettered and hung up the Scripture you quoted from Colossians, 'Whatever you are doing, put your whole heart into it, as if you were doing it for the Lord and not for men.' The Lord has given me *much joy!* I am blessed with a wonderful husband who loves the Lord. He is a police officer in the New York subway system. Your chapter on 'The Discipline of Place' made me think of him and the way he treats people he comes in contact with with honor (even those the other officers call 'skells'). He has many opportunities to share Christ."

Prayer Requests

- Pray for the faithfulness of husbands and wives—to each other, to their children, to God and His word.
- Let's pray for one another, that we may do as the writer to the Hebrews tells us, "arouse others to love and active goodness, encouraging one another" (Heb 10:24-25, New English Bible).
- Pray for the mothers of young children, that they may be given eyes to see the glory of their task—a humble task, of course, but seen by angels, assigned by God, and leading to tremendous influence if these children are nurtured and admonished in the Lord.



Discipline The Glad Surrender

Elisabeth Elliot points the way to a joyous life of obedience. She explains what Christian commitment really is and how each individual can achieve that commitment. The subject is personal discipline, based on obedience to a loving and sovereign Master, touching on such practices as praying and fasting, the discipline of the mind, the feelings, the body, and of one's time, work, and possessions.

Special price to newsletter readers: \$8.00 (Publisher's retail price \$8.95)

Other Books and Tapes by Elisabeth Elliot

(To order, fill in the enclosed form)

Through Gates of Splendor—the story of how Jim Elliot and four other missionaries were killed by Auca Indians in the jungles of Ecuador. \$3.50

Love Has a Price Tag—essays based on Elisabeth Elliot's experiences as wife, mother, widow, missionary, and teacher. \$4.95

These Strange Ashes—the story of Elisabeth Elliot's first year as a missionary. Touches on the question of suffering and loss. \$4.95

The Jim Elliot Story—includes Jim's voice, telling a witch doctor story. (tape) \$5.00

Videotape

A seven-part series on denial, forgiveness, relinquishment, pruning, acceptance, exchange, guidance. Available by calling toll-free 1-800-647-2284, or writing Video Dynamics, P.O. Box 20330, Jackson, Mississippi 39209.

Recommended Reading

The Language of Canaan and the Grammar of Feminism, Vernard Eller—Examines the theological, anthropological, and philosophical bases underlying modern feminism's use of language. \$3.95

Travel Schedule: April-June 1983

April 15-17 Winning Women of the Midwest, Mrs. Peg Emmons, 309-452-0917, Holiday Inn of Decatur, Normal, Illinois.

April 19 St. Andrew's Episcopal Church, Fort Worth, Texas.

April 25 Women's Bible Society Spring Luncheon, Mrs. Hazel Bateman, 212-581-7400, ext. 288, New York City.

April 27-28 Ashland Theological Seminary, Ashland, Ohio.

April 29-30 Kirk in the Hills, Bloomfield, Michigan.

May 6-8 First Presbyterian Church Women's Retreat, Boulder, Colorado.

May 9 New Life Center Auxiliary Prayer Breakfast, Mrs. Ruby Danielson, 701-235-4453 or 235-0649, Fargo, North Dakota.

May 10 Olivet Nazarene College, Kankakee, Illinois.

May 20-22 Women's Retreat, Mrs. C.A. Tompkins, Jr., 5785 E. Camino del Celador, Tucson, Arizona.

June 3-4 Women's Retreat, Betty Jones, 605 Rosewood Cres., Thunder Bay, Ontario.

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The Elisabeth Elliot Newsletter

May / June 1983

The Weapon of Prayer

News came one day recently which indicated that a matter I had been praying about had deteriorated rather than improved. What good are my prayers, anyway? I was tempted to ask. Why bother? It's becoming a mere charade. But the words of Jesus occurred in my Bible reading that very morning (and wasn't it a good thing I'd taken time to hear Him?): "If you, bad as you are, know how to give your children what is good for them, how much more will your heavenly Father give good things to those who ask him!" (Mt 7:11, New English Bible).

Are you as often tempted as I am to doubt the effectiveness of prayer? But Jesus prayed. He told us to pray. We can be sure that the answer will come, and it will be good. If it is not exactly what we expected, chances are we were not asking for quite the right thing. Our heavenly Father hears the prayer, but wants to give us bread rather than stones.

Prayer is a weapon. Paul speaks of the "weapons we wield" in 2 Corinthians 10:4-5. They are "not merely human, but divinely potent to demolish strongholds." The source of my doubts about its potency that morning was certainly not the Holy Spirit. It was the unholy spirit, the Destroyer himself, urging me to quit using the weapon he fears so intensely.

*Satan trembles when he sees
The weakest saint upon his knees.*

An Old Prayer

Christians in the Orthodox Church use a prayer called the Jesus Prayer. Sometimes they pray it in the rhythm of breathing, learning in this way almost to "pray without ceasing." The words are simple, but they cover everything we need to ask for ourselves and others: Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on us.

The Lord did not say we should not use repetition. He said we should not use vain repetition. A prayer prayed from the heart of the child to the Father is never vain.

The Very Reverend Kenneth R. Waldron, a priest of both the Ukrainian Orthodox Church and of the Anglican Church, wrote to me of his having had surgery. "The last moment of consciousness before the anaesthetic took over, I heard my surgeon repeating in a whisper: HOSPODI POMILUY, HOSPODI POMILUY, HOSPODI POMILUY [Dr. Waldron put the Russian words into phonetic spelling]—Lord, have mercy on us. . . . It is wonderful to drift off into unconsciousness hearing these words on the lips of the man whose hands you trust to bring you out of your troubles. It is great to have a surgeon who knows how to pray at such a time. Think of the comfort and help that this simple prayer has brought to thousands through the years, a prayer that was a big help to me in January 1982. Some of my hospital friends thought they would not see me alive again, but the good Lord had a bit more work for this old priest to do."

The Jesus Prayer was one my husband Add and

I often used together when he was dying of cancer and we seemed to have "used up" all the other prayers. I recommend it to you.

A Note to Fathers

Are you depriving your son of his sonship? "Hey! Hold it. What...?" Hebrews 12:7 says, "Can anyone be a son who is not disciplined by his father? If you escape the discipline in which all sons share, you must be bastards and no true sons." Do you love your son or daughter enough to say no—and hold to it? Would you, by cowardliness that fears to make a rule (perhaps because "nobody else" believes in it), treat your child as though you cared no more about him than you would care about a bastard?

But there are some words of caution. "Fathers, don't over-correct your children, or make it difficult for them to obey the commandment. Bring them up with Christian teaching in Christian discipline." (Eph 6:4, J.B. Phillips)

This reminds me of the way in which the Lord teaches us. He is so patient with us who are such "fools and slow-of-heart." The Shepherd does not make it hard for the sheep to walk in the right paths. He is always trying to make it easier for them, but they balk, they wander off, they don't listen. Children as well as adults are like sheep. They go astray. Fathers are meant to be shepherds. Don't over-correct. "You fathers must not goad your children to resentment, but give them the instruction, and the correction, which belong to a Christian upbringing" (same verse, New English Bible). It's balance that is needed. Correct them, teach them. Don't go to extremes. Ask God for wisdom. It's too big a job for any ordinary human being. Look at God as a Father. How does He deal with us? Try to follow His pattern.

A Note to Mothers

If you have small children, you have the toughest, most demanding, exhausting, consuming job in the world. You need help! Watching my daughter Valerie with her three children shows

me that keeping them happily occupied while she does her necessary housework is no small matter. Have you thought of giving even tiny children work to do? It doesn't have to be all play. They can learn very early to do small tasks: put away the silverware, store paper bags when you come home from grocery shopping, empty waste paper baskets, pick up toys and clothes and put them where they belong, straighten shoes on the closet floors, wipe baseboards with a damp rag, sweep under the radiators with a small dustbrush, pick up sticks from the lawn, take everything out of a drawer or shelf so that you can clean it, then put it back. Of course you can do it better and faster. But if you patiently show a child how to do these things and then patiently (!) let him do them, he will: 1) learn to work, 2) be taught responsibility, 3) have the pleasure of being useful, 4) learn that actions have consequences, 5) feel himself an important member of the household, 6) know he is needed, 7) enjoy cooperating with mother, and 8) be busy. A few weeks or months of patience on your part, provided you start early enough, will result in an ordered home, where each person contributes to the others' happiness as a matter of course. I think most parents are way behind their children's development—in other words, they are saying, "Oh, he's not old enough for that. He can't understand that yet," when the truth is the child is well able to understand and perform much better than his parents give him credit for. I've seen evidence of this on occasions when I have taken care of other people's children. They've done for me (simply because they saw that I expected it) what they "could not" do for their parents (because they knew that the parents did not expect it). This lesson is one the Indian mothers taught me years ago in the jungle. Survival demanded that children take far more responsibility than is ever required of them in our country. They did it. They did it without complaint or protest of any kind. They took care of baby brothers and sisters, went hunting or fishing or gather-

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ing food when food was needed, crossed rivers, climbed steep hills, made their way on rugged and muddy trails, built fires, carried water. It was expected. Children generally live up to expectations. Expect them to be helpless—they will be.

How Can I Say Thanks?

Wonderful letters have come from many of you, expressing appreciation for the newsletter. "Who'd want to read an Elisabeth Elliot Newsletter?" I had asked, and you've cheered me immensely. Sometimes writing seems like dropping pebbles down a gopher hole—"disappeared without a trace." But if a gopher pops up now and then, you know a pebble touched. Thank you, from my heart. A lady in Florida said she would love to hear about Valerie and the other families of the men killed in Ecuador in 1956. "We still have the *Life* magazine from January of that year," she said.

The epilogue to the 25th-anniversary edition of my book *Through Gates of Splendor* includes recent news and photographs of the families.

Valerie is now twenty-eight, wife of Walter D. Shepard, Jr., pastor of Trinity Presbyterian Church in Laurel, Mississippi. They have three children. Five-year-old Walter told me last summer that the thing he wanted more than anything else in the world was "to be a good brother." Elisabeth, at age three, is direct, decisive, and daring. Shortly after her third birthday she climbed behind the wheel of a large van, turned the ignition key, shifted from "park" to "drive," and drove down a steep hill. Val and a friend watched (helplessly) but prayed (effectively). "He shall give His angels charge over thee . . ." Those assigned to Elisabeth must be specially nimble and attentive. There was very minor damage to the van, none at all to Elisabeth or to the two children who were passengers. One of them was Christiana, Elisabeth's six-month-old sister. The other was a seven-year-old boy who had gotten into the van to talk to Elisabeth. A recent phone call from Val reported that Christiana is now walking and trying very hard, with long sentences in original gibberish and with much intonation and body language, to talk. She was a year old on December 29.

Where in the World Shall I Go?

People often ask me how to investigate possibilities for Christian service, in this country or overseas. Do you know about Intercristo? It is an organization specializing in Christian careers—all vocations, all locations, thousands of openings available now. Call Intercristo toll-free, 800-426-1342. Tell them you read about their organization here.

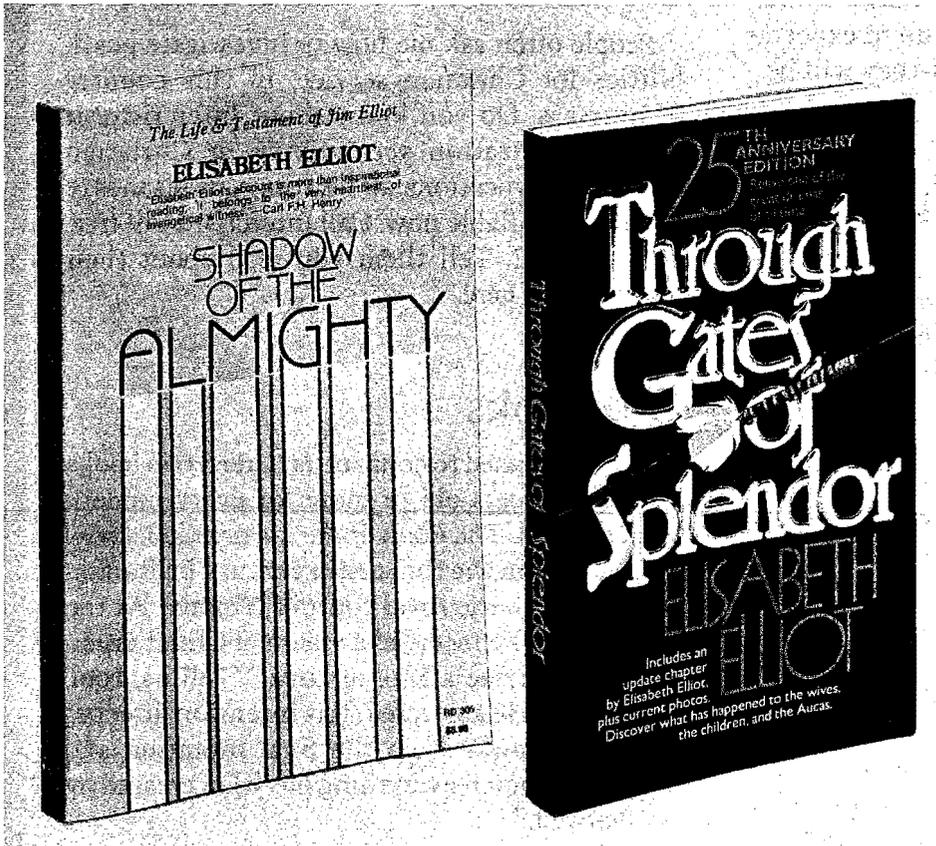
Old Books

My father used to counsel us to read two books a hundred years old or more for every modern book we read. *The Book of the Lover and Beloved* was written in the thirteenth century by Ramon Lull, a page in the royal court of Majorca. At the age of thirty he received a vision of Christ crucified, and became a *Fool of Love*. "Tell us, Fool, what is sin?" He answered, "It is intention directed and turned away from the final Intention and Reason for which everything has been created by my Beloved."

From The Imitation of Christ (attributed to Thomas à Kempis): "He that is not always ready to suffer, and to stand fully at the will of his beloved, is not worthy to be called a lover; for it behoveth a lover to suffer gladly all hard and bitter things for his beloved and not to decline from his love for any contrarious thing that may befall him." (Book III, chap. VI)

Prayer Requests

- Pray for Christians who face costly moral decisions, for example, a judge who, because he stands against abortion, or a minister who, because he will not agree to women's ordination, may be "defrocked." Ask God to give them wisdom, humility, and courage. (Acts 4:29)
- Pray for the unemployed who need and want work—that God will enable them to find it, and, until they do, to learn new lessons in trusting him. (Mt 6:31-34)



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Travel Schedule: May-July

May 10 Olivet Nazarene College, Kankakee, Illinois.

May 20-22 Women's Retreat, Mrs. C.A. Tomkins, Jr., 5785 E. Camino del Celador, Tucson, Arizona.

June 3-4 Women's Retreat, Betty Jones, 605 Rosewood Cres., Thunder Bay, Ontario.

July 1-4 Montreat, North Carolina, Covenant Fellowship of Presbyterians, 704-669-2911.

July 13-16 Bellingham, Washington, The Firs, Women's Conference, Mrs. Richard Eley.

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The Elisabeth Elliot Newsletter

July/August 1983

Working Mothers

Sue Horner, wife of the president of Barrington College in Rhode Island and herself the director of the Center for Women's Concerns in that college, in a recent interview in *New England Church Life*, said, "Men have always been able to be involved in creative, self-actualizing work." She would like to see more women released from traditional women's work "to be involved in creative work." Creative work, in Mrs. Horner's view, does not seem to include homemaking and mothering. *Why not?* I would like to ask. And who, for heaven's sake, is going to do the homemaking and mothering? Mrs. Horner says she felt confused and frustrated when she was doing it, and "struggled with fulfilment." Many women feel as she does. I meet them often. What I long to help them to see is that if homemaking and mothering are the tasks God has assigned to them at present, it will be in the glad offering up to Him of *those tasks* that they will be truly "creative" and find real fulfilment.

There's an eternal spiritual principle here. It ought to be enough reason for anybody. Is there any other reason why I am always telling young mothers to stay home? Yes, two absolutely unarguable ones, and a third interesting one which you can argue about if you want to.

First, the Bible clearly tells *me* (an older woman) to teach younger women "how to work in their homes" (Ti 2:5, Jerusalem Bible), or to be "busy at home" (New English Bible), or "domestic" (Revised Standard Version).

Second, children need their mothers. They

need quantity time. None of this "quality time" nonsense. Any time which a Christian mother who loves her children gives them should be "quality."

Third, it's very possible that a working mother's income is not nearly so "extra" as may at first appear. Take a look at a study done by Wayne Coleman of Austin, Texas. I think his estimates are very modest. From weekly earnings of \$175, subtract:

\$17.50	tithe
35.00	withholding tax
11.00	social security
20.00	transportation (20¢ mile, 10 miles to job)
7.50	lunch (this will have to be dieter's special!)
12.50	clothes, shoes, dry cleaning
35.00	child care for one
5.00	hair and cosmetics
1.00	office collections, gifts, entertainments
2.00	coffee breaks, miscellaneous
10.00	extra for bring-home meals (pick up a Stouffer's casserole, along with eggs and L'eggs?)

Net income weekly: \$18.50. If you subtract from this the things a woman may buy which she would not have bought if she didn't have "her own income," or that she may feel she deserves because she's working, how much "extra" is there

for the necessities that convinced her she needed the job?

Here's a testimony from a young woman in Texas who has no children yet. "The struggle I'm having is even though I work only part-time, there doesn't seem to be time to keep house, be with other women, reach out to the needy and lost. I know the pressures of the world, pushing for 'upward mobility,' figure more into the picture than I realize, making my struggle quite a fight. A part of me wants to quit the job, another part of me isn't that free yet!"

Please—if you're a mother of young children, considering getting a job, will you consider these questions first?

Will your income really be worth it?

Will it increase your husband's tax burden?

Are you giving your best to your family and/or your employer? (Golda Meir said that a working mother is torn apart—when in the office she's thinking of all she didn't get done at home, and when at home she's thinking of all she didn't get done at the office.)

What are your real motives for wanting to work? Could it be social pressure, boredom, acquisitiveness, pride, an unwillingness to do humble things? Are you trying to prove something?

I know some mothers of young children who in the face of genuine economic necessity have asked God to show them work they can do at home. Then they've gone to the library and read about businesses that can be engaged in at home, or they've been given an "original" idea. It's amazing to hear the answers God has given. "Your heavenly Father knows that you have need of all these things."

New England Spring

There's no way around it. If I'm going to write about springtime in New England for the newsletter, you'll have to read about it in the heat of summer. That's the way the scheduling of these things works.

Springtime in New England is unrecognizable most of the time. Year after year we look forward to it, long for it, and when March and April arrive feel we have a right to it. It gives us a little nod once in a while. The peepers, I have to admit, never fail us. No matter what else refuses to budge, those tiny frogs emerge from the mud and set up their tiny whistling, "whee, whee, whee, whee, whee," a gleeful piccolo orchestra undaunted by the cold. Usually there will be a day or two, like last Saturday, when the sun comes up early and stays up and thaws things and actually makes the terrace warm enough to sit on. My mother-in-law from Palm Beach, who thinks anything below 74 degrees is arctic, sat in the sun on the chaise longue (pronounced "chase lounge" by most folks now, I notice) which Lars had dusted off and carried up from the basement. He proceeded to haul brush while I raked some millions of last fall's beech and elm leaves. We soon had a glorious inferno going in the middle of the yard (yes, we had gotten a permit and as instructed had called the emergency number in advance to inform the city that the fire on Bay Road was on purpose). There is nothing quite so satisfying as a Saturday at home when you can clean house, bake, wash clothes and hang them outdoors, and then spend the rest of the day raking and burning. Can anyone top that for real recreation—or should I say re-creation and fulfilment?

Every morning I have studied the pussy willow outside my window, not wanting to miss the pussies this year as I have done in years past because I always look too late. Nothing is happening. A few tulips have begun, the lilac leaf buds are swelling just enough to be visible, but it's cold. That's the long and short of it. Much too cold to ride a bike without my down coat and fur hat and mittens. Can't sit in the back yard this week. Next time we try it, however, if things go as they usually do here, it will be too hot. Oh, I do love New England. I wouldn't leave for anything in the world.

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(I might though. Lars is a Southerner, loves Atlanta and Palm Beach and Mississippi and thinks Massachusetts winters are entirely too long.

Infanticide

In March the Department of Health and Human Services issued a regulation requiring hospitals to post notices in their nurseries and in the delivery, maternity, and pediatric wards which read, in part, "Any person having knowledge that a handicapped infant is being discriminatorily denied food or customary medical care should immediately contact the Handicapped Infant Hotline . . . 800-368-1019 (available 24 hours a day)." Perhaps if this had happened sooner, the baby in Bloomington that I wrote about last January/February might not have died. (Note: A federal judge has recently ruled that this regulation cannot be implemented. The decision is being appealed, and the hotline remains in operation.)

Amniocentesis

The president's Commission for the Study of Ethical Problems in Medicine and Biomedical and Behavioral Research would like to see more physicians providing the service of amniocentesis for women well under thirty-five. This procedure involves the insertion of a needle into the amniotic sac to withdraw fluid which can be tested to reveal certain abnormalities in the fetus. If they are found, abortion is often recommended. I was stunned to find this statement by Richard Doerflinger of the Bishops' Committee on Pro-Life Activities (quoted in *Action Line*, March 31, 1983): "Amniocentesis performed on a woman of 32 is *four times* as likely to induce a miscarriage in the second trimester as it is to detect a child with Down's syndrome. The Commission argues that 'whether the benefits outweigh the risks' in such a situation 'is largely a matter of personal values.'"

"Inasmuch as you have done it unto one of the least of these My brethren, you have done it unto Me," Jesus said.

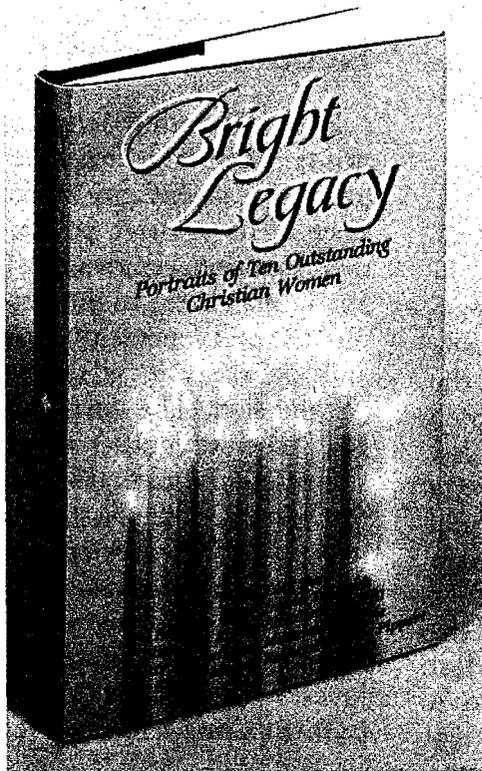
Recommended Reading

Evelyn Underhill: *School of Charity* (now out of print). "Pain, or at least the willingness to risk pain, alone gives dignity to human love, and is the price of its creative power. Without this, it is mere emotional enjoyment. It costs much to love any human being to the bitter end; and on every plane a total generosity, a love that includes pain and embraces it, is the price of all genuine achievement. The son of man must suffer, in the last desperate conflict between supernatural and self-giving and natural self-love. The Cross means the ultimate helplessness and dependence of man, when he comes up to his own limit and has nothing left but charity; and his willing acceptance of that helplessness and limit, because it throws him back upon the God he trusts and loves. So here, by the Crucifix and what it means to them, Christians must test their position."

Prayer Requests

Prayer without sound theology is prayer without foundations, without certainty. It is an illusion. We need constantly to study the Bible in order to learn what to pray for.

- Please pray the prayer of Psalm 69:6 for me and for those who may look to me for help and example: "Let none of those who look to thee be ashamed on my account, O Lord God of Hosts; let none who seek thee be humbled through my fault."
- Pray for Christian nurses and doctors, that God will minister His love through them to the suffering people; that they may also be given the courage to refuse unethical or unchristian practices.
- Pray for the fall speaking schedule, and a proposed trip to London to do research for my next book. It looks too big a task for me, but I think I've been "called" to do it. (It's always possible to do what you're called to do!)



Bright Legacy

Portraits of ten outstanding Christian women

Elisabeth Elliot, Karen Burton Mains, Gladys Hunt, and several other well-known Christian authors write affectionately about the women they admire, including Amy Carmichael, Catherine Marshall, and Mother Teresa of Calcutta. \$10.95

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Travel Schedule

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July 20-August 5 England, to do research for a book.

September 13 Memphis, Tennessee, First Baptist Church Women's Luncheon, Elizabeth Linder, 901-454-1131.

September 14-15 Knoxville, Tennessee, Cedar Springs Presbyterian Church, Mrs. Donald Hoke, 615-693-6132.

September 19-20 Wayne, Pennsylvania, Church of the Savior Women's Seminar, Mrs. Pam Snyder, home—215-964-9810, church—688-6302.

October 7-9 Sierra Madre, California Congregational Church Women's Retreat, Mrs. Mary C. Upham, 1102 Bungalow Place, Arcadia, California 91006, 213-357-3471.

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The Elisabeth Elliot Newsletter

September/October 1983

Ungodly Counsel

Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly" (Psalm 1:1, Authorized Version).

At a recent women's convention a young woman told me that her husband had wanted a divorce, but consented to see a Christian counselor before making it final. A member of the team in the counseling center told him that he himself was divorced and very happily remarried. That was all the husband needed. The man to whom he looked for help set the example he was hoping to find. Of course he went ahead and divorced his wife.

The twenty-third chapter of Jeremiah describes what is happening in our country today. The land is full of adulterers. Pastures have dried up. Powers are misused. Prophet and priest alike are godless, doing evil even in the Lord's house. Jeremiah's description of the prophets seems terribly fitting for some of those from whom Christian people are seeking guidance: "The vision they report springs from their own imagination. It is not from the mouth of the Lord... To all who follow the promptings of their own stubborn heart they say, 'No disaster shall befall you.' But which of them has stood in the council of the Lord, seen him and heard his word? Which of them has listened to his word and obeyed?" (Jer 23:16-18, New English Bible)

Here is a good test to apply to any of whom we seek counsel. Has he stood in the council of the Lord? Has he seen Him? Has he heard His word? Has he listened and obeyed? Note the few who have actually paid a price for their obedience (like

Jeremiah who was flogged, imprisoned, dropped into a pit of slime, etc.). These few are the ones to follow.

The chapter goes on to describe prophets who speak lies in God's name, dream dreams, give voice to their own inventions, concoct words of their own, and then say, "This is his very word." They mislead with "wild and reckless falsehoods."

"If a prophet has a dream, let him tell his dream; if he has my word, let him speak my word in truth. What has chaff to do with grain? says the Lord." (vs. 28)

Beware of those who are afraid to quote scripture, who say it's too "simplistic," doesn't apply here, won't work. Beware of the counselor who is "nondirectional." Be cautious when the advice given makes you feel comfortable when you know you're really wrong. "Do not my words scorch like fire? says the Lord. Are they not like a hammer that splinters rock?" (vs. 29)

It wasn't only the awesome prophets of the Old Testament who spoke this way. Think of the words of Jesus. Though often He spoke "comfortable words," words that brought peace and hope, He spoke also those words that seared like fire ("Depart from me, I never knew you"; "Get behind me, Satan") and splintered rock ("You will never get out until you have paid the last farthing"; "Whoever wants to be first must be the willing slave of all").

"The form of words you shall use in speaking amongst yourselves is: 'What answer has the Lord given?' or 'What has the Lord said?'" (Jer 23:35)

This applies, of course, only to those who care what the Lord wants. Those who have already decided to do their own thing need not apply for truly godly counsel.

Teach Your Children to Choose

Lars and I had breakfast with our friend Barb Tompkins in Tucson. She brought along two-year-old Katy, who behaved very well throughout most of the meal. She interrupted at one point, and pestered her mother, who said quietly, "Katy, you are not in charge here. But would you like to be in charge of Baby Flo?" Baby Flo was a tiny doll she had with her.

I plied Barb with questions about how she rears her children (she has two older boys also). She said she had been helped by Paul Meier's book *Happiness Is a Choice*, and had determined to teach her children how to make good choices.

When Katy was about eighteen months old, Barb decided to teach her to stay within the boundaries of their own property, although there was no fence. She set aside a day for this lesson and walked the boundary with the baby, pointing out where she could and could not go, explaining that to step over the line meant a spanking. Barb then sat down in a lawn chair with a book and told Katy she could play. It was not long, of course, before Katy tested the line, then stepped over. In a normal tone of voice Barb called, "Katy, would you come here, please?" That lesson had been learned long before, so Katy came. "Katy, honey, I see you have chosen a spanking," said the mother, and proceeded to give her one. Then she went over the lesson again, explaining why the spanking had been necessary. It was Katy's choice.

Barb teaches her children such maxims as "People are not for hitting, they're for loving" and "When people say they can't it usually means they won't."

It's important, she says, not to label a child *naughty* or *good*, but to point out exactly what he did that was naughty, or what he did that was good. When correction is necessary, Barbara tries always to affirm the child in some way afterwards—"I like the way you picked up your toys this morning."

Barb does not always use spanking for punishment. Sometimes she gives the child "time out,"

which means she is put into a Port-a-Crib for a little while in order to meditate on her disobedience. If the child climbs out she has "chosen" a spanking. Barb thinks it is very important that the "time out" place not be the child's own bed or bedroom. She doesn't want her children to associate those places with punishment.

Katy whined for something, and Barb turned to her and said "Katy, you need to make a request." Katy said, "May I please . . ."

When Katy pulled a pen out of her mother's purse, Barb said, "That is not a choice. But these things are—which would you like to play with?"

I wrote all this in a letter to my daughter Valerie. She was thrilled. She has started using the method on her three little ones, and says it works and that I should put it in my newsletter. So here you have it.

Who Is Lars Gren?

He's my husband. I'm Mrs. Lars Gren, but because I've been writing under the name of Elisabeth Elliot for more than a quarter of a century, he lets me use that name on my books and newsletter. But I want to introduce him. He was born in New York, but went to Norway very soon afterwards and was there until he was ten. Didn't know a word of English when he came back, went right into public school, and got zeros for several months till he learned enough English to pass. Has spent most of his life in Mississippi and Georgia. Was a salesman of many different products, most recently of women's clothing. Traveled as a manufacturers' representative from Washington, D.C., to Dallas, covering all the southeast. Then, in mid-life decided he did not want to spend the rest of his life selling clothing

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and came to Gordon-Conwell Seminary in South Hamilton, Massachusetts. The story of how we met is told in my book *Love Has a Price Tag*. We thought, when we were married, that he'd be a hospital chaplain, for which he had trained, but he began to travel with me on a part-time basis, handling me, the travel arrangements, books, and tapes. In short order it became a full-time job, so that's what we do now, together. It's been a wonderful thing to see his gifts unfold in this way, and for me, the protection and authority of a godly husband have liberated me in a way I did not know during all the years I traveled as a widow. God does have the most unexpected things up His sleeves!

Forgot to say that Lars is tall, ruddy-faced, blond, blue-eyed. Not surprising—his father was Swedish, his mother (who lives in Palm Beach, a widow) is Norwegian. Lars speaks not with the accent of either parent, but pure Georgia cracker. Calls me "Lisbeth," or "dahlin,'" says, "Ah'm'on teach you how to talk."

"Moral education is impossible apart from the habitual vision of greatness."

—Alfred North Whitehead



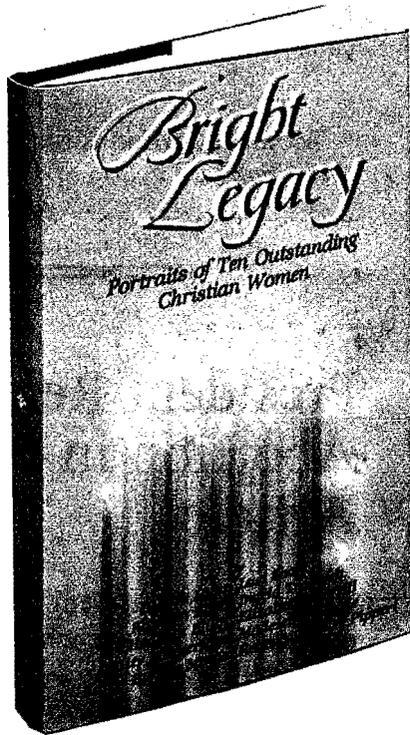
President Reagan Hits Abortion in Magazine Article

Last April President Reagan did what few presidents have done while in office. He wrote a full-length article for a journal of opinion (*The Human Life Review*). "The real question is not when human life begins, but, *What is the value of human life?* [italics his] The abortionist who reassembles the arms and legs of a tiny baby to make sure all its parts have been torn from its mother's body can hardly doubt whether it is a human being. The real question for him and for all of us is whether that tiny human life has a God-given right to be protected by the law—the same right we have."

Prayer Requests

Be Thou my stronghold, whereunto I may always resort; thou hast promised to help me, for thou art my house of defence, and my castle (Psalm 71:2, Prayer Book Version).

- The wife of a seminary student wrote, "Please, for the sakes of people like myself, continue to run the race Christ has set before you in sharing your life and lessons with others." Will you pray that I'll do that? We need to pray for each other, that each will run the race set before him, for each race is different. Remember that we have the same Source and Goal for our faith (Heb 12:1-2).



Bright Legacy

Portraits of ten outstanding Christian women

Elisabeth Elliot, Karen Burton Mains, Gladys Hunt, and several other well-known Christian authors write affectionately about the women they admire, including Amy Carmichael, Catherine Marshall, and Mother Teresa of Calcutta. \$10.95

Other Books

by Elisabeth Elliot

Love Has a Price Tag—Includes an autobiographical sketch and brings into focus the everyday occurrences of life—in the home, at work, with one's children and spouse. \$4.95

Shadow of the Almighty—The life of Jim Elliot, including his personal journals and letters, his love story, and his missionary experience. \$5.95

The Savage My Kinsman—The true story in text and pictures of the author's life with the same Indians who had killed her husband Jim Elliot nearly three years earlier. Includes over thirty-five photos, most of which were taken by the author. \$5.95

Discipline: The Glad Surrender—The subject is personal discipline, based on obedience to a loving and sovereign Master, touching on the discipline of the mind, the feelings, the body, and of one's time, work, and possessions. \$8.95

Tapes

The Jim Elliot Story—Includes Jim's voice telling a witch-doctor story. \$5.00

Series on Christian Discipleship
No. 1 (Disciplines of Mind, Will, Feelings) (2 cassettes) \$9.00

No. 2 Forgiveness, Relinquishment, Acceptance, Guidance (3 cassettes) \$12.00

No. 3 Oblation, Prayer, Clay Pots, Witness (2 cassettes) \$9.00

Travel Schedule September/October 1983

September 11 Roslindale, MA, Roslindale Baptist Church, The Rev. John L. Bayles, 617-327-5262.

September 12 Milleken University, Decatur, IL, Religious Life Series, Peoples Church of God, Dr. William Ellis, 217-877-7224.

September 13 Memphis, TN, First Baptist Church Women's Luncheon, Elizabeth Linder, 901-454-1131.

September 14-15 Knoxville, TN, Cedar Springs Presbyterian Church, Mrs. Donald Hoke, 615-693-6132.

September 17 Calvary Memorial Church, Philadelphia, PA, Mrs. Jane Rebsamen, 215-332-1676.

September 19-20 Wayne, PA, Church of the Savior Women's Seminar, Mrs. Pam Snyder, home—215-964-9810, church—688-6302.

September 27 Medfield MA, United Church Women's lunch, Miss Linda Cain, 617-359-7037.

October 7-9 Sierra Madre, CA, Congregational Church Women's Retreat, Mrs. Mary C. Upham, 1102 Bungalow Place, Arcadia, CA 91006, 213-357-3471.

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The Elisabeth Elliot Newsletter

November/December 1983

Where Will Complaining Get You?

When we were in Dallas a few months ago, we were the guests of our dear friend Nina Jean Obel. As we sat one morning in her beautiful sunshiny yellow and pale green kitchen, she reminded us of the story in Deuteronomy 1 of how, when the Israelites were within fourteen days of the Promised Land, they complained. Complaining was a habit which had angered Moses, their leader, to the point where he wished he were dead. "How can I bear unaided the heavy burden you are to me, and put up with your complaints?" he asked. They headed for Horeb, but when they reached the hill country of the Amorites they refused to believe the promises and insisted on sending spies to see what sort of a land it was. The spies came back with a glowing report, but the people didn't believe that either. Never mind the lovely fruit the land offered. There were giants there. They'd all be killed. There were huge fortifications towering to the sky. How would they ever conquer them?

It was the neurotic's attitude. No answer would do. No solution offered was good enough. The promises of God, the direction of Moses, the report of the spies—all unacceptable. The people had already made up their minds that they didn't like anything God was doing. They "muttered treason." They said the Lord hated them. He brought them out only to have them wiped out by the Amorites. O God, what a fate. O God, why do you treat us this way? O God, how are we going to get out of this? It's your fault. You hate us. Moses hates us. Everything and everybody's against us.

Nina Jean said she made up her mind that if complaining was the reason God's people were

denied the privilege of entering Canaan, she was going to quit it. She set herself a tough task: absolutely no complaining for fourteen days. It was a revelation to her—first, of how strong a habit it had become, and second, of how different the whole world looked when she did not complain. I get the impression when I'm around Nina Jean that the fourteen-day trial was enough to kick the habit. I've never heard her complain.

It's not just the sunshine and the colors that make her kitchen a nice place to be. It's that Nina Jean is there. I'd like to create that sort of climate for the people I'm around. I've set myself the same task.

Note: Nina Jean's husband, Arne, lost his life in a plane crash in mid-October. Please pray for their friends and family.

What If My Wife Doesn't Feel Called?

This question is often asked by men who are preparing to be ministers or missionaries. I've never heard it asked by anyone who was headed for the insurance business, medicine, or an airline pilot's career. The ministry and the mission field are the ones to which people somehow believe there has to be a special call, separate and distinct from all other vocations, requiring a powerful spiritual revelation of some kind for the wife as well as for the husband. And if she hasn't got it, there's just nothing he can do about it except change his plans.

Not to try to answer the question about *his* call—that is a different kind of question—I would

make one or two suggestions to the wife if she would let me. Because Eve was made especially for Adam—to be his responder, his adapter, his help (“meet,” suitable, fit) for his need—it follows that it is the woman who is God’s gift to the man (not vice versa, in this special sense). He is the wooer, the initiator, the *head*, under God. When a woman consents to marry a man, she (if she’s a Christian) should think about the relationship between Christ the Bridegroom and the Church, His Bride. The Church responds to His call. The Bride relinquishes her independence, her name, her destiny, her plans for “a life of her own” (remember Jesus’ words: “If anyone wants to follow me, let him give up his right to himself”), her family, her home, and perhaps even her country to join the life of this man. She accepts his destiny, his name, his future, and everything else as her own. If she is called to be his wife, she is called to support and encourage him in the work God gives him to do. (The source of these perorations is not *Why I Feel Good about Being Submissive*, by Elisabeth Elliot [don’t order it—there is no such book], but the Book of Books—check out what it says about Christ and His Bride, and then ask Him to help you live by that paradigm. I’m asking every day.)

Common Courtesy

Talking with a group of seminary students I mentioned that the common rules of courtesy are often overlooked nowadays, especially by those who grew up in the past two decades, an era in which all conventions and traditions were suspect. “Mere convention” came to mean “pure hypocrisy.” If a thing was labelled “traditional” it had to be discarded as no longer “relevant,” “meaningful,” or even intelligent. If a man had the temerity to hold a door open for a woman, he was sometimes labelled “sexist.” My point in bringing up the subject of courtesy was simply that it is a small way of demonstrating that deep principle, central to our Christian faith, of “my life for yours.” I asked if any of the husbands in the room made a habit of helping their wives into their chairs at the table, even when company was not

present. A week later one of the men stopped me in the seminary hall.

“I just want to tell you that my behavior toward my wife has been altered since last week’s lecture. And you know what? It’s changed my attitude toward her as well as hers toward me. It’s really been revelatory! Just wanted to say thanks.”

I was immensely cheered. It’s always cheering to know somebody has had ears to hear, and has actually done something about what he’s heard.

What the Bible Meant to My Father

Today I had lunch in my mother’s kitchen, and as usual she had placed a few papers at my place, things she wanted to share with me. This time it was a copy of a commencement address given by my father (Philip E. Howard, Jr., editor of the *Sunday School Times*, a weekly magazine published in Philadelphia for more than a hundred years). This was his closing paragraph, a challenge to the men graduating from Faith Theological Seminary in Wilmington, Delaware, in 1941:

“The Bible is the bread of life that always satisfies; the staff that never breaks; the sword that finds the joints in the Enemy’s armor and drives him off; the chart in which there is no error; the compass that never deviates and always points to Christ; the telescope that gives a view of the whole course of human history; the microscope that explains the mysteries of life; the balm that soothes our pain; the medicine that cures our ills; the cordial that cheers our fainting spirits; the light that shines undimmed amid the darkness of this world and points the way to our Father’s house.”

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Letters

"Just read your article 'Working Mothers.' My daughter has a master's degree in education but has not taught school since her children came. It has been hard for them to live these six years on one salary, but they had agreed that she would stay home with the children. She loves it—keeping things in order, being available to do things as a family. They have very little money, but the Lord looks after them and they know it. Last winter little Patrick was in the hospital. Their insurance did not cover everything, and the father is working very hard to pay off the bills. Jeanie has lots of pressure from friends. Sometimes she wonders if she should go back to teaching, dropping her children off with a babysitter. In her heart, she knows she can't. She would be tired at night, have papers to grade, lesson plans to make, and her thoughts would be on tomorrow at school. Her own children—their baths and bedtime stories and prayers—would suffer. If a mother has to work I think the Lord will help if you rely wholly upon Him. But it's not easy, letting Him be in control and trying to balance a job and a family. Thanks for the article."

"I wish you could briefly address the question of wives being thankful for their husbands' gifts—acceptance, even praise for, the '90% that's right about the gift, not the 10% that's wrong'—size, color, etc. My husband gave me a box of cigars, an electronic pinball machine, and a miniature electric drill for our first Christmas. I've learned some valuable lessons about the nature of love since I burst into tears that Christmas. This year the gifts were the same, but the smiles and gratitude were genuine. I found that accepting his gifts with both hands helps me to see him grow taller and taller. It is not that I am blind to his faults, but my eyes are wide open to his virtues. Bless the Lord, I've found that 'ice water' is as deadly to husbands as it is to plants!"

My Vow.

Whatsoever Thou sayest unto me, by thy grace I will do it.

My Constraint.

Thy love, O Christ, my Lord.

My Confidence.

Thou art able to keep that which I have committed unto Thee.

My Joy.

To do Thy will, O God.

My Discipline.

That which I would not choose, but which Thy love appoints.

My Prayer.

Conform my will to Thine.

My Portion.

The Lord is the portion of my inheritance.

Teach us, good Lord, to serve Thee more faithfully; to give and not to count the cost; to fight and not to heed the wounds; to toil and not to seek for rest; to labor and not to ask for any reward save that of knowing that we do Thy will, O Lord our God.

(from *Gold Cord* by Amy Carmichael, 1867-1957, founder of the Dohnavur Fellowship of South India)

Prayer Requests

- Pray for ministers of the Gospel, that in spite of the decline of authority they may preach the Word without fear, aiming not for popularity for themselves, or for the congregation to "feel comfortable," but aiming to speak the truth and to speak it with grace and love. Pray that the people will be doers of the Word, not hearers or talkers only.
- Pray for those you heard about on the news this morning, or read about in the paper, who need prayers today. Ask God to bring to mind friends who need prayer—He knows why they need it.

Questions and Answers

When we suffer as a result of our own sins does it have the same "nobility" as suffering from "outside"—e.g., the death of a loved one, disasters, illness, persecution, etc? (This was asked in a recent seminar.)

There is no nobility in suffering itself. It is our response to suffering that determines its effect on character. We can, to use the words of J.B. Phillips' translation of James 1, resent trouble as an intruder or welcome it as a friend. It is quite impossible, apart from God's grace, to welcome trouble as a friend. It is possible, however, when we realize that it comes to test our faith and to produce in us the quality of endurance. The Bible gives us many other reasons for suffering (see for example Jn 14:31; 15:2; 2 Cor 1:6; Heb 12:10; Rom 8:29; 1 Pt 1:7; 4:13; Jn 12:24), but none will do us the least good if we do not respond in trust and acceptance. "Be careful that none of you fails to respond to the grace which God gives, for if he does there can very easily spring up in him a bitter spirit which is not only bad in itself but can also poison the lives of many others." (Heb 12:15, JBP)

If the suffering is the result of our own sin, let us first receive the forgiveness which God promises when we confess, and then let us, in humility and patience, bear whatever the human consequences may be, confident even in the midst of them that the Lord looks on us with love and tenderness. It is because He loves us that He must correct us.

The Elisabeth Elliot Newsletter

Servant Ministries, Inc.
Post Office Box 7711
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48107

The Reverend Theodore Williams of India says that the Greek name *paraclete*, used of the Holy Spirit, derives from the word for one who runs alongside a fainting soldier and cheers him to keep fighting. He keeps the one who is reaching the breaking point from breaking.

Travel Schedule November/December 1983

November 3-4 Edmonton, Alberta, North American Baptist College Divinity School, A.J. Petrie, 403-437-1960.

November 5-6 Linden, Alberta, Mennonite Brethren Church, Arnie Neufeld, 403-546-3877 or 3984.

November 11-12 Union Mills, North Carolina, Episcopal Renewal Conference, "PEWSACTION," Derek Hawksbee, South American Missionary Society, Union Mills.

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The Elisabeth Elliot Newsletter

January/February 1984

Why Christians Suffer

So often people make remarks such as, "Isn't it strange how God allows such awful things to happen—and she's such a *good* person." So far I've found twelve explanations in scripture. It isn't all mystery, though of course God's permission of evil in the world is fathomless to us mortals. He has told us all we need to know, however, about the why's, and I hope to write about each of the answers in forthcoming issues.

The apostle Peter writes, "My friends, do not be bewildered by the fiery ordeal that is upon you, as though it were something extraordinary. It gives you a share in Christ's sufferings, and that is cause for joy." (1 Pt 4:12-13 New English Bible)

When we remember that Peter was writing his letter to exiles, we can try to imagine all the various kinds of suffering that involved. Peter had been through a few mills himself, and understood deeply how they were feeling, and the quite natural human tendency to be bewildered when you're in the middle of trouble. Don't be, he says. He does not deny that it is "fiery." He calls it an ordeal. That's honest. But he tells them it's nothing out of the ordinary. It is what all of us ought to expect, in one form or another, as long as we're following Christ. What else should we expect? He said we would have to give up the right to ourselves, take up His cross, and follow. He said we would have to enter the Kingdom "through much tribulation." We bargained for a steep and narrow road—why should we be be-

wildered to find it steep and narrow? The thrilling, heart-lifting truth which Peter speaks of is that in this very "ordeal," whatever it is, we are being granted an unspeakably high privilege: a share in Christ's sufferings, and that, Peter says, is cause for joy.

Sometimes people wonder how on earth *their* kind of trouble can possibly have anything to do with Christ's sufferings. Ours are certainly nothing in comparison with His. We are not being crucified. Our burden is certainly not the weight of the sins of the world. No. But in all our afflictions He is afflicted. We are together in them. If we receive them in faith—faith that they are permitted by a Father who loves us, faith that He has an eternal purpose in them—we can offer them back to Him for His transforming. If, like Paul, we want to know Him and the power of His resurrection, we must also know the fellowship of His sufferings. The only way to enter that fellowship is to suffer. Can we say *Yes, Lord*—even to that?

Footnotes on Suffering

When I wrote the piece on page one, I wasn't suffering, nor was anyone close to me that I knew of. Today a few more paragraphs have been asked for because of a change in format. My thoughts have been full of my mother. A bad fall a couple of weeks ago, headlong onto the sidewalk, had resulted only in a broken tooth, it seemed.

Alarming symptoms developed last week. Today she is in a hospital in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, following cranial surgery.

Tomorrow I will see her. What will I say, I, who know next to nothing of physical suffering? I can't speak firsthand of that, but never mind. The Lord took on Himself *all* of our pains, so His word stands sure of all of them. I will read her the piece on page one if she can listen, and ask the Spirit of God to cheer her. She has known the Lord and loved His word for about seventy years. He will not fail her now.

Yesterday as I prayed for her I thought of the words, "In Him we live and move and have our being." Why yes, I thought—even now, in her weakness and confusion, lying there with head swathed in bandages, bewildered about what has happened, where she is and why, Mother lives (however tenuously), moves (however weakly), and has her being *in Christ*. Nothing has changed with Him. He holds her in His hands, the hands that were wounded for her. He will not forget her or let her go. She is safe.

I fished out of my files a letter I had from a little boy, with a picture of himself—such a sweet, wistful face. "My grandmother has a brain tumor," he wrote, "and only has about six months to live. I'm really upset. Could you help me about this?"

How to help a child trust God in the face of fathomless mysteries? I couldn't *explain* the thing. I could only tell him that the Lord loves his grandmother more than he does. He loved Daniel and Joseph and Stephen and His own son, the Lord Jesus, and He let some terrible things happen to them *because* He had wonderful things in mind that were beyond men's most shining dreams. To go into a den of fierce lions, to be sold into slavery and then imprisoned, to be pelted with rocks or nailed to a cross—why? God gave us *some* explanations for those terrible things. You can find them in the Bible. He gives us hints about things like even a dear grandmother's tumor. "Make your requests known to me, my child," He says. "I'm listening. I love you. I love her. Then trust me to do the very best thing. In the end, you'll see—it's better than shining dreams." You must wait patiently for the Lord. He will strengthen your heart.

From *Passion and Purity*

How shall I speak of a few careless kisses as sin to a generation nurtured on the assumption that nearly everybody goes to bed with everybody? Of those who flounder in the sea of permissiveness and self-indulgence, are there any who still search the sky for the beacon of purity? If I did not believe there were, I would not bother to write.

Purity, I fear, has gotten mixed up in people's minds with the caricature of Puritanism, which, in the popular imagination, is a dour, brittle revolt against all the pleasures of the flesh. Puritans were in fact very earthy people, robust in their affirmation of life, not by any means "Victorian" (another word grossly misunderstood today in being made a synonym for all that is negative). Neither the concept of purity nor the doctrines of the Puritans deny life. Rather they refer back to the very Giver of Life Himself. Purity means freedom from contamination, from anything that would spoil the taste or the pleasure, reduce the power, or in any way adulterate what the thing was meant to be. It means cleanness, clearness—no additives, nothing artificial—in other words, "all natural," in the sense in which the Original Designer designed it to be.

Can I say categorically that a kiss is a sin? I can say that it might be. I can say that it might take the edge off, spoil the taste and the pleasure later on. It might reduce power. It might distract the heart.

It is a powerful lie that, because sexual desire is natural, healthy, and God-given, anything I do because of that desire is natural, healthy, and God-given. "How can anything that feels so good be so bad?" "Intimacy is an act of worship," "Denying yourself the expression of that desire is dangerous—it's repression, it'll lead to perversion, etc." "Nobody can control all that fire when he's young." Lies, all of them.

Christians who are buying such rubbish today

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are without honor. They have lost the notions of fidelity, renunciation, and sacrifice—because nothing seems worth all that.

A sampler of chapters from *Passion and Purity*

- What Women Do to Men
- Me, Lord? Single?
- Passion Is a Battleground
- How Much Can a Kiss Tell You?
- Oozing Ache
- What to Do with Loneliness
- Honor above Passion

News of the Aucas

A clipping was sent to me last summer telling of the Ecuadorian government's granting title to the Auca Indians of some 66,000 hectares. This means that they will be allowed to live, hunt, and fish in that area. The Indians, said the newspaper, had "refused to understand" that the government would "give" them property which had always been the absolute possession of their ancestors. I can well imagine the bewilderment. I can picture the attempt to get them to participate in the official program when the Minister of Agriculture presents the title to them. It's a rerun, I'm afraid, of North American history. As a tribe the Aucas are doomed.

Dear Reader:

If you have experienced any difficulty with your subscription or with ordering books and tapes from *The Elisabeth Elliot Newsletter*, we sincerely apologize. Please contact us at your earliest convenience, and we will do everything possible to rectify matters. If you have any suggestions for the newsletter, we will be happy to hear these as well. We appreciate your continued interest and look forward to serving you in the future.

Recommended Reading

William Kirk Kilpatrick: *Psychological Seduction*, Thomas Nelson, 1983

This is a book I've been waiting for. The author shows how psychology and Christianity are not by any means always compatible. Psychological jargon has infected the thinking of many Christians ("self-image," for example, has become as important as salvation; theism has been replaced by me-ism). Our society, Christian and otherwise, Kilpatrick shows, has been seduced. I want to say to everybody, "Drop everything and read this!" We need to be alerted to the ways in which the world around us squeezes us into its own mold. We need to start over and learn to think "Christianly."

Letters Received

"You'll be happy to know that I turned over my tardy habits to my Sunday School class to the Lord. That alone was a struggle. But He has helped me one Sunday at a time to be on time. So I have not been late since the conference. So I now I am trying to add next Sunday to the list."

Prayer Requests

- Pray for Lars and myself as we go to Australia in January for three weeks of speaking under the auspices of the Church Missionary Society in Katoomba and Melbourne, and under the Australian Fellowship of Evangelical Students in Canberra.
- We'll be visiting in February the work established in South India by Amy Carmichael, called the Dohnavur Fellowship. I am writing a new biography. The task seems overwhelming (every line she wrote is publishable, and she wrote hundreds of thousands of lines)—but I do believe that when the Lord assigns a job, He furnishes everything needed to accomplish it. Pray that I may be where He wants me to be to receive it.

Questions and Answers

From a California seminar:

"What are the three or four books which have had the greatest impact on your life besides the Bible?"

Four very important books (I can't be sure they're the most important) are:

Amy Carmichael, *Toward Jerusalem*
George MacDonald, *Salted with Fire*
C.S. Lewis, *A Preface to Paradise Lost*
Romano Guardini, *The Lord*

"Please explain exactly how you 'commit' a person or a situation to God. Is it saying the words and choosing to believe against all odds that He will do it? e.g. an adult child's salvation, a young adult on drugs, a homosexual nephew."

This question implies that when a person has been "committed," God will do exactly what the one who prays hopes for, viz. save the child, cure the drug habit or the homosexuality. To me, commitment means handing a person or situation completely over to God: "Here, Lord. I give this to You, trusting You to do exactly what You want to do. I'm sure that will be the best thing." We are commanded to make our requests known to God (Phil 4:6). This means we pray about things we would like to see done or changed, but the trusting soul knows his requests may be "impossible" (see Mt 26:39, 42), so he leaves them

peacefully with God. God has given us freedom to choose. He will not retract that gift. The one prayed for may still refuse His offer of grace, as did many in Jesus' days on earth. Yet we are encouraged to be importunate in prayer. We must trust the Spirit of God to lead us—to continue praying, or, in some cases, to stop (1 Jn 4:16-17).

Travel Schedule

January/February 1984

January 9-13 Katoomba, Australia, Church Missionary Society

January 14-19 Canberra, Australia, Australian Fellowship of Evangelical Students

January 27-30 Melbourne, Australia, Church Missionary Society

February 2-5 Bangalore, India, Indian Evangelical Mission

February 6-15 Donhavur Fellowship, South India

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The Elisabeth Elliot Newsletter

March/April 1984

Why Christians Suffer—Part 2

Steadfastness, Soundness, Hope

Suffering is the Christian's boot camp. Those who are preparing to be soldiers must give evidence that they've got what it takes. A grueling course of endurance tests is set for them which some survive and some don't. Some decide early in the game that it's not really worth it, and drop out.

In his wonderful "Grace Chapter," Romans 5, Paul tells us that we've entered the sphere of God's grace and can therefore exult in the hope of the divine splendor that is to be ours. "More than this, let us even exult in our present sufferings, because we know that suffering trains us to endure" (vs. 3).

No normal person enjoys suffering. To "exult," however, is an action verb. It means to leap for joy, to be jubilant. It is said that when St. Francis of Assisi was persecuted he literally danced in the street for joy. He was simply being obedient to Jesus' command to rejoice when men revile you and persecute you. You can only rejoice if you take the long view, however,—the view which sees the great reward in heaven. You certainly don't rejoice if all you can see is the persecution.

I've never been in an army boot camp. I've seen pictures, and it looks awful. I can't imagine anybody enjoying some of the endurance tests that are required, *except* as the goal is kept in mind: I'm going to be a soldier. I'm going to prove myself. I'll lick this thing if it kills me.

"Endurance brings proof that we have stood the test, and this proof is the ground of hope. Such a hope is no mockery because God's love has

flooded our inmost heart through the Holy Spirit he has given us." (Rom. 5:4-5, New English Bible)

My father took us mountain-climbing when we were growing up; we were thrilled with the chance to stand the test. My brothers were certainly not going to beat me at it, nor would I dream of letting them slow down just for me. There is an exhilaration in endurance. Often I see it on the face of small boys in airports. They've just met Daddy at the plane, and insist on lugging his attache case or even his suitcase. "Sure I can, Dad!" they say, and their faces shine.

We are under the mercy of an infinitely loving Father. He will never allow us to suffer beyond what He knows is the proper measure. In the middle of it the suffering is *real*, not to be compared, of course, with the small boy with the suitcase. I think of those, for example, who are tortured because of their faith, or tortured by cancer. At such a time one desperately needs the Everlasting Word to fall back on—the Word which stands forever, which nothing on earth or in heaven can ever change: Divine splendor *is* to be ours. The soldier thinks of pleasing his commanding officer, receiving a commission, perhaps, and some day winning a victory. "Such a hope is no mockery" for the Christian who suffers. He can be absolutely sure there is reason and purpose behind it all. Phillips' translation of the passage has *steadfastness, soundness, and hope* as the reasons. In that the soldier can legitimately exult.

About My Mother

The last newsletter told of my mother's having had cranial surgery. I spent Thanksgiving weekend with her in the hospital. It was hard to see her thin, weak, and disoriented—she whom

I think of as quick-witted and alive. She will be eighty-five in June, and that kind of surgery took a great deal out of her.

Early in the morning on Thanksgiving Day I woke in her lovely little apartment at the Quarryville Presbyterian Home (she was in a hospital in nearby Lancaster, Pennsylvania). I looked around the room, so filled with her character (pictures, curios, everything exquisitely neatly arranged), I could not help wondering if she would be able to come back there. On the desk her piles of Christmas cards were lying, family letters stacked nearby, ready to be answered, and a little scrawled note to herself, reminding her of the number of her grandchildren and great-grandchildren, to whom she planned to send several crisp new dollar bills apiece.

My psalm for the day was the sixty-third: "Thy true love is better than life; therefore I will sing thy praises. . . . When I call thee to mind upon my bed, and think on thee in the watches of the night, remembering how thou hast been my help and that I am safe in the shadow of thy wings, then I humbly follow thee with all my heart." I told myself that I *must not dwell* on things seen, but on things unseen, and a lovely reminder of some of those things unseen, a verse specially for Mother, came when I turned to Psalm 45:13, "In the palace honor awaits her. She is a king's daughter, arrayed in cloth-of-gold richly embroidered."

When I went to see her later that morning, I read her the passages. I asked what reasons for thanksgiving she could think of, and she came up with quite a long list. We sang together some of her favorite hymns, such as "Beneath the Cross of Jesus," "All the Way My Savior Leads Me," "Praise the Savior, Ye Who Know Him," and "Jesus, Lover of My Soul." She couldn't quite reach the tunes now and then, but she remembered nearly every word of every stanza. The Lord was there. I was sure of it, and I was strengthened. I think she was too.

As I write now (early December) she is out of the hospital and in the convalescent wing of the Quarryville Home, improving a little every day, looking forward to returning to her own apartment.

Women of Like Passions

The leader of a women's conference asked me if I would be able to talk privately with a young woman who was in deep sorrow. She didn't want to "bother" me, the leader said, didn't feel she ought to take my time when there were hundreds of others who needed it. In fact, she was scared of me. Of course I said I'd be very glad to talk with her, and please to tell her I was not fierce.

After the talk, the young woman went to report to the leader.

"Oh, it wasn't bad after all! I walked in—I was shaking. I looked into her eyes, and I knew that she, too, had suffered. Then she gave me this beautiful smile. When I saw that huge space between her front teeth, I said to myself, 'it's o.k.—she's not perfect!'"



My daughter Valerie teaches a women's Bible class in Laurel, Mississippi. Recently she lost her place in her notes as she was speaking. She tried to find it while continuing to speak, realized she couldn't, apologized and paused to search the page. The pause grew agonizingly long. At last she gave up and ad-libbed through the rest of the lesson. She couldn't find the application, couldn't find the conclusion. Leaving the platform afterwards, she was on the point of tears because of what seemed an abysmal failure. A lady came to her to say it was the best class so far. Later someone called to thank Val for things which had helped her.

"Mama," she told me on the phone, "I couldn't understand why this had happened. I had prepared faithfully, done the best I could. But then I remembered a prayer I'd prayed that week (Walt told me it was a ridiculous prayer!)—asking the Lord to make those women know that I'm just an ordinary woman like the rest of them and I need His help. I guess this was His answer, don't you think?"

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"Yes," I said, "And guess what I prayed on that very morning? I asked God to help you to say exactly what He wanted you to say, and not to say anything He didn't want you to say. It's not by might nor by power nor even, finally, by faithful preparation—but 'by my Spirit, saith the Lord.'"

Weather

Everybody keeps saying "What strange weather we've been having." I came upon a possible explanation—not from the meteorologists, but from—of all people—the prophet Jeremiah. "This people has a rebellious and defiant heart, rebels they have been and now they are clean gone. They did not say to themselves, 'Let us fear the Lord our God, who gives us the rains of autumn and spring showers in their turn, who brings us unfailingly fixed seasons of harvest.' But your wrongdoing has upset nature's order, and your sins have kept you from her kindly gifts." (5:23-25)

Modern minds will admit of no explanation for anything but the "scientific." This is the dogma that replaces religious dogma. Thus we have no need anymore of the Living Word—it doesn't apply in this, it doesn't apply in that, it doesn't apply at all—except where we need a little comfort, and you don't find much of that in science.

Letters

"I don't know if you will remember me. You sat beside me on the train going to Belfast. . . . I didn't have time to tell you, but I was going to visit my brother, he is in prison for stealing but he is on remand, he hasn't been tried yet. Since going into prison he has become a born-again Christian, he shares a cell with a man who is also a born-again Christian. The day I met you on the train, I arrived at the prison to find that my brother and his friend had been reading about you in a book, isn't that a marvelous coincidence? I was wondering if you could possibly find time to write to them a few cheery words to help them along the

path to God? These are the addresses . . ."

Will some reader of the Newsletter pray for these prisoners!

Prayer

If the frightened chirp of a falling sparrow reaches the Throne Room of the Lord of the Universe (and the Bible says it does) we can be sure He is not too high to pay attention to our smallest prayer.

Learn to talk to God about *everything*. It saves so much energy to obey Paul's word in Philippians 4—"Have no anxiety, but in everything make your requests known to God in prayer and petition with thanksgiving. Then the peace of God, which is beyond our utmost understanding, will keep guard over your hearts and your thoughts, in Christ Jesus."

Spread before Him in the morning all that you have to do that day, all the decisions that "hang over your head" for the next week or next year, the shopping, the interviews, the children, the boss, the lawn and garden, the neighbors, school-work, boyfriends, money—you name it, but be sure to name it to Him. Peace will be the result, if you name it with thanksgiving.

Prayer Requests

- Pray for help for me as I write a new biography.
- Pray for Valerie—for a safe delivery and a healthy child, who will be #4, due in April. Walter is now nearly seven, Elisabeth is four, Christiana is two.
- Pray for crisis pregnancy centers which are offering help to troubled women, to encourage them not to abort their babies, and to find for them shelter and comfort.
- Pray for the Marie Sandvik Center in Minneapolis, a city refuge for all sorts of needy people, including teen-agers, children, mothers, American Indians and others. Lars and I visited there recently and were deeply impressed with what Marie and her colleague Doris Nye are doing.

Questions and Answers

Several times this question has come: "What do you do when your husband wants you to go to work and you still have children at home and do not believe you should give that responsibility to others?"

It's a crying shame that many Christian husbands have slid into patterns of the world's thinking. They are unwilling to assume full support of the family, a God-given assignment. Sometimes they have not the courage to stand up to criticism of women who are "only" housewives. Sometimes plain greed is the motive, sometimes it's prestige, social pressure, ambition. What do you do?

Pray, first of all. Ask God to open the man's eyes to his true responsibility as husband and father.

Be quiet, chaste, reverent, gentle (see I Peter 3:1-6).

Take the matter to your church. The pastor and/or elders or deacons should be willing to discuss this from the scriptural standpoint with your husband. It's their place, not yours, to teach him.

Do not be afraid. Trust God. He may have an answer you can't even imagine. Take the risk of faith, one day at a time.

Travel Schedule

April/May 1984

April 14 Lake Wales, Florida, First Presbyterian Church woman's retreat.

April 15 Lake Wales, Florida, First Presbyterian Church, Sunday school.

April 28 Del Rio, Texas, Christian Women's Conference, Mrs. Karol Green, 305 Enchanted Way.

May 18 Grabill, Indiana, Missionary Church, 219-627-2962.

May 19 Huntington, Indiana, Huntington College Commencement, 219-356-6000.

May 20 Idaho Falls, Idaho, Community Bible Fellowship, 208-524-5433.

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The Elisabeth Elliot Newsletter

May/June 1984

Christians Suffer—Part 3

Strength Out of Weakness - Why

Corrie ten Boom was a woman of strong faith and a radiant face. Why? She had suffered as most of us Americans can hardly imagine. She had responded to that suffering (in a concentration camp during World War II) with trust. Learning the depth of human helplessness and weakness, she turned to the only One who could be to her a strong tower. He was faithful to His promises. One of the most soul-fortifying pictures I have of her in my mind is of her getting up in the morning, standing up in her cell, and singing in a loud voice so that other prisoners could hear, "Stand up, Stand up for Jesus!"

"Oh, I could never have survived!" we say. The truth is that we could *if* the Lord allowed us to be put in her position, and *if* we looked to Him for the strength needed. I mean that we could "survive" spiritually. As Martin Luther wrote, "The body they may kill, God's truth abideth still."

It is the experience of weakness that puts us in the position of seeking another's strength. Paul had a "sharp physical pain which came as Satan's messenger to bruise" him. "This was to save me from being unduly elated. Three times I begged the Lord to rid me of it, but his answer was: "My grace is all you need; power comes to its full strength in weakness." (2 Cor. 12:7-9 New English Bible)

The refusal of grace is what causes breakdown. Acknowledge weakness, confess need, and come in humility to Him who promises to supply plenty of grace. It's all we need.

Visit to Dohnavur

Because I have been invited to write a new biography of Amy Carmichael of Dohnavur, last February Lars and I visited the work she founded in South India. We arrived on their monthly prayer day in time to attend the evening meeting. The House of Prayer is a beautiful terra cotta-colored building with red tile roof and a tower which holds the chimes that play a hymn at 6 A.M. and 9 P.M. There is no furniture inside except a few chairs for older ones and decrepit foreigners such as we who aren't used to sitting on the floor. Everyone filed in in perfect silence, bare feet moving noiselessly over polished red tile floors, and sat in rows according to age, the tiny ones up front, dressed in brightly colored cotton dresses. Behind them sat the next age group, girls in skirts and blouses; then came those in skirts, blouses, and half-saris; finally the *accals* (older ones who look after the younger) in blue or purple or green saris. All had smoothly combed and oiled black hair, many of them with flowers in it. An Indian man played the little pump organ while they sang several traditional hymns in English, as well as songs written by "Amma" (the Tamil term of respect, used for Amy Carmichael). There was Scripture reading, then a prayer of thanksgiving for the new child who had just come, a little girl of two whose mother could not keep her. Her new mother, an *accal*, carried her to the platform and stood holding her while they prayed and then sang "Jesus Loves Me."

At another service in the House of Prayer, Lars and I sat in the tiny balcony which leads up to the tower. We looked down on the lovely scene, made even brighter this time because the smallest children had been given colored flags to wave in time to the music of certain songs, a custom instituted by Amma which I think should be adopted by every Sunday School and church, for it

enables the tiny ones to participate by doing something even when they are too young to know the words by heart. Older ones played tambourines, triangle, and bells, while one drummed softly with a leather flap on the mouth of a clay pot.

I was allowed to use Amma's room for my reading and writing. Called the Room of Peace, it is spacious, has high ceilings and tiled floors, many doors and windows opening onto a verandah on three sides where there is a walk-in bird cage. A brick runway leads from the verandah to a platform under the trees where, following the accident which disabled her for the rest of her life, Amy Carmichael used to be taken to sit in the cool of the evening. Glass-doored bookcases, filled with her beloved books, stood around the walls of the room. Above them hung paintings of snowcaps by her friend, Dr. Howard Somervell of Everest fame. There were hand-carved and painted wooden texts, "Good and Acceptable and Perfect" (referring to the lesson she found so hard to learn after the accident, of acceptance of the will of God), "A Very Present Help," "By one who loveth is another kindled" (from St. Augustine), and, the largest of all, blue letters on teak, "God hath not given us the spirit of fear." Also on the walls are a mounted tiger head, a pendulum clock, and one of the very few photographs ever taken of Amma.

In that Room of Peace I was glad not to be wearing shoes (nobody wears shoes in the houses of Dohnavur)—it seemed holy ground as I studied the marginal notes and underlinings of her favorite books, read the handwritten notebooks in which she explained for members of the Dohnavur Fellowship the "pattern shewn," the principles and practices which the Lord had given her at the inception of her work. I thumbed through worm-eaten ledgers, clippings, photographs—priceless documents that trace the day-by-day history of a task accepted for the Lord, the rescuing of little girls from temple prostitution and little boys from dramatic societies in which they were used for evil purposes. In later years the work included children in other kinds of need.

The most powerful witness to the quality of the service Amma rendered is to be seen in the Indian men and women who were reared there and who have remained to lay down their lives for others. Pungaja, for example, lives in the compound called Loving Place, where some of the

mentally handicapped are cared for.

"I have no professional training," she told me. "The Holy Spirit gives me new wisdom each day to deal with them. Some are like wild animals, but the Lord Himself is my helper. I can't see on one side, but even in my weakness He has helped me. 1 Corinthians says that God has chosen the weak things of the world to confound the mighty, that no flesh should glory in his presence.

"One day I went to Amma with a burdened heart, but when she hugged me all my sorrow went.

"What work are you doing?" Amma asked me. I told her.

"Do you find it difficult?" I said yes.

"These are soldiership years," she said.

"Now it is my joy to serve these very difficult people."

She spoke quietly, looking out into the courtyard where some of them went back and forth. She had lost an eye as a child, and her face revealed suffering, but I saw the joy she spoke of written there, the joy of a laid-down life. I saw it in very many faces in Dohnavur. They do not mention that there are no diversions, no place to go, no time off (except two weeks per year—I asked about that). They do their work for Him who came not to be ministered unto.

We came away smitten, thinking of Amma's own words from her little book *If*, "then I know nothing of Calvary love." The meaning of the living sacrifice, the corn of wheat, the crucified life, had been shown to us in twentieth century flesh and blood. Please pray that we may never be the same again. Pray, too, for help as I try to write the book. If I try to do it alone, I shall most certainly fail. It is divine help of the sort Pungaja draws on that I need.

Elisabeth Elliot's newest book *Passion and Purity* was excerpted in the January/February issue. Introduced at the 1983 Campus Crusade Convention in Kansas City, It sold several thousand copies at the conference alone. To purchase a copy, write: the Servant Book Express, P.O. Box 8617, 840 Airport Blvd., Ann Arbor, MI 48107.

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Can Birth Be Wrong?

The wildest science fiction cannot exceed in outrage some of the legal precedents that have been set in recent years. More than a year ago I read in a magazine (*Advance*, Spring 1983) about "wrongful birth" suits, in which parents sue a physician because their child was born as a result of practitioner negligence, for example a failed vasectomy, failed abortion (a "failed" abortion, don't forget, means one in which the child destined for the scrap heap happens to be born alive and kicking, so to speak), or failure by the physician to provide parents with adequate contraceptive methods.

There are also "wrongful life" suits in which the child sues the physician because he would have been better off not to be born at all. His very life is "wrongful." The child, in other words, had a right not to be born. How, exactly, does the court measure damages in the case of a healthy child, though there have been awards if there were defects.

The only good news in this appalling article was that in a wrongful birth case in Illinois in 1979 the court held that the birth of a healthy child is an esteemed right and not a compensable wrong. In England, at least up until the spring of 1983, the decision has been that entry into life should not be the basis for legal action.

"O Lord my heart is not proud, nor are my eyes haughty," wrote the psalmist (131:1), "I do not busy myself with great matters or things to marvelous for me." I am afraid we tamper far too much with the mysteries of life and death, instead of leaving them to Him who holds the keys.

Ever Been Bitter?

Sometimes I've said, "O Lord, you wouldn't do this to me, would you? How could you Lord?" I can recall such times later on, and realize that my perspective was skewed. A scripture passage which helps me rectify it is Isaiah 45: "Will the pot contend with the potter, or the earthenware with the hand that shapes it? Will the clay ask the potter what he is making? . . . Thus says the Lord,

would you dare question me concerning my children, or instruct me in my handiwork? I alone, I made the earth and created man upon it." He knows exactly what He is doing. I am *clay*. The word humble comes from the root word *humus*, earth, clay. Let me remember that when I question God's dealings. I don't understand Him, but then I'm not asked to understand, only to trust. Bitterness dissolves when I remember the kind of love with which He has loved me—He gave Himself for me. He gave Himself for me. *He gave Himself for me*. Whatever He is doing now, therefore, is not cause for bitterness. It has to be designed for good, because he loved me and gave Himself for me.

Letters

"It's six A.M., the baby's been up, fed, diapered. There's nothing like a crying, hungry baby with an oozing diaper to jolt you out of your dreams. Normally I get in bed as soon as I can and try to squeeze every last minute of sleep possible. But today was different. I decided to read God's word before the day started (that's when I need it) not after it's over. You're an example of the power of scripture in one's life. I want to thank you for taking time to speak God's clear simple message. . ."

(following several paragraphs in which the woman describes her childhood with a paranoid schizoid mother and later her marriage to the leader of a Christian organization. Her husband proved to be both homosexual and financially irresponsible.)

"Now I am in the middle of an annulment, putting the pieces of my life back together. Why do I share this? you may ask. Because for the first time I see that I cannot weigh God's love for me based on circumstances. It is *not* God's fault. God's working in me is to humble me, to test me, and to make me prosper. I realize deep within me that I truly want the will of God, not mine, and will again pray, *whatever the cost, Lord*. I see developing within me a deep inner strength only developed through suffering, and I'm willing to suffer again if I can manifest the deep inner strength I see. . .in our Lord. God is sufficient to meet our needs, and does truly love us.

"Trust and obey, for there's no other way."

Questions and Answers

Considering the fact that you worked with Indians in the jungles of Ecuador and now live in an academic community in Massachusetts, you obviously have experienced many changes. What things should one keep in mind when facing change?

Circumstances make no difference at all to:

1. Jesus Christ, who is the same yesterday, today and forever
2. His power, always available through prayer
3. His purpose for me—that I reflect His image, live for his glory
4. My job—to love Him and make Him loved

Paul wrote, "I have learned to find resources in myself whatever my circumstances. I know what it is to be brought low, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have been very thoroughly initiated into the human lot with all its ups and downs—fullness and hunger, plenty and want. I have strength for anything through Him who gives me power." (Phil. 4:11-13, New English Bible)

I have found, too, that when the Lord opens a new door, He closes the one behind. I must leave it closed, forget what is behind, press on toward the goal, "the prize of the high calling of God." Those who refuse to let go of the past stultify present opportunities, and stunt spiritual growth.

The rules Andrew Murray made for himself have helped me:

1. He brought me here, it is by His will I am in this strait place: in that fact I will rest.
2. He will keep me here in His love, and give me grace to behave as His child.

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3. He will make the trial a blessing, teaching me the lessons He intends for me to learn, and working in me the grace He means to bestow.
4. In His good time he can bring me out again—how and when He knows. Let me say I am here:
 - 1) by God's appointment
 - 2) in His keeping
 - 3) under his training
 - 4) for His time.

We want to thank those who contributed to the continuation of our newsletter and those who responded to our request for suggested changes. We're following some of those suggestions.

Travel Schedule May/June 1984

June 3-4 St. Louis, Missouri, Central Presbyterian Church, 314-727-2777

June 12 Wenham, Massachusetts, Gordon College Writers Conference, 617-927-2300

June 9-13 Columbia, South Carolina, Columbia Bible College. Course entitled "Christian Womanhood: Gifts, Responsibilities, Freedom." Larry McCullough 803-754-4100

June 14-15 Marion, Indiana, Wesleyan Church Festival of Missions, 317-674-3301

How to Receive This Newsletter

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The Elisabeth Elliot Newsletter

July/August 1984

Does God Allow His Children to Be Poor?

God allows both Christians and non-Christians to experience every form of suffering known to the human race, just as He allows His blessings to fall on both. Poverty, like other forms of suffering, is relative, as Lars and I were reminded while we were in India. Our country's definition of the "poverty level" would mean unimaginable affluence to the girls we saw working next to our hotel. For nine hours a day they carried wet concrete in wooden basins on their heads, pouring it into the forms for the foundation of a large building. They were paid thirty cents a day.

On my list of scriptures which give clues to some of God's reasons for allowing His children to suffer is 2 Corinthians 8:2: "Somehow, in most difficult circumstances, their joy and the fact of being down to their last penny themselves, produced a magnificent concern for other people." It was the Macedonian churches that Paul was talking about, living proof that it is not poverty or riches that determine generosity, and sometimes those who suffer the most financially are the ones most ready to share what they have. "They simply begged us to accept their gifts and so let them share the honors of supporting their brothers in Christ."

Money holds terrible power when it is loved. It can blind us, shackle us, fill us with anxiety and fear, torment our days and nights with misery, wear us out with chasing it. The Macedonian Christians, possessing little of it, accepted their lot with faith and trust. Their eyes were opened to see past their own misery. They saw what mattered far more than a bank account, and, out of

"magnificent concern," contributed to the needs of their brothers.

If through losing what this world prizes we are enabled to gain what it despises—treasure in heaven, invisible and incorruptible—isn't it worth any kind of suffering? What is it worth to us to learn a little bit more of what the Cross means—life out of death, the transformation of earth's losses and heartbreaks and tragedies?

Poverty has not been my experience, but God has allowed in the lives of each of us some sort of loss, the withdrawal of something we valued, in order that we may learn to offer ourselves a little more willingly, to allow the touch of death on one more thing we have clutched so tightly, and thus know fullness and freedom and joy that much sooner. We're not naturally inclined to love God and seek His kingdom. Trouble may help to incline us—that is, it may tip us over, put some pressure on us, lean us in the right direction.

A New Grandchild

In the March/April Newsletter I asked for prayer for Valerie, for a safe delivery and a healthy child. Both requests were granted, as well as another: older brother Walter, who is seven, had been asking the Lord for a brother if that was all right with Him (two sisters were enough for a while). James Elliot Shepard was born on April 18 in Laurel, Mississippi, weighing nine pounds ten ounces. Elisabeth, who is nearly five, said "Yip-pee!" I don't know what Christiana said. She is two, and has a way of filling in the blanks between the words she can say with "hm-hm" as in, "Mama, Lolly hm-hm my teddy-bear." (Lolly

seems to be the best she can do to say Elisabeth. Nobody knows where she got that.)

For little James (I think he'll be Jimmy as was his grandfather until he reached high school) I pray the prayer of Jacob for his son Joseph, "By the power of the Strong One of Jacob, by the name of the Shepherd of Israel, by the God of your father—so may he help you, by God Almighty—so may he bless you with the blessings of heaven above." (Gn 49:24,25).

An Unaborted Gift

An African Christian wrote a friend in the U.S.: "We have six children. We had agreed to stop having other children. We even started family planning after the last born, but (and a big 'but') we found out that C. was pregnant. I don't know what really happened. My wife and I started crying because we did not know what to do. We have been asking God and telling Him that six children were enough for us. However we were later comforted by God Himself because He said that He will never leave us and will protect us with the young ones. I therefore ask you to pray for us. C. is expecting the child in about three months. Remember we were not ready for this baby. Pray that we will be able to joyfully receive the baby as a gift from the almighty God. It is my prayer that my wife will be able to bear all that burden and that the baby will be a blessing to us. You know we have two boys with sickle cells. Please pray with us that God will not give us such another child. Brethren, I have been suffering with these sick boys and we don't like another one of that type. It will just finish us. We have many sleepless nights every year because of these sons when they are in pains. . . . With all that I am happy to tell you that there is nothing which will separate me from the Love of God. . . . Pray, pray for us. God bless you all."

I don't know this man, but I have prayed for him, and for all others who, with what the world would call "good reasons for abortion," receive the child from Him who made it, and who said, "Whoever receives a little child in My name, receives Me."

Note: Readers might be interested in attending the first international convention of Concerned Women for America in Washington, D.C., September 14-15. Speakers include Bev and Tim La Haye, Dee Jepsen, and Mary C. Crowley. For information call 619-440-1267 or write: CWA, P.O. Box 5100, San Diego, CA 92105.

Lord of All Seasons

Last April I spoke to a group of women in Florida about Jesus Christ being "Lord of All Seasons." The topic was their choice, and I found myself, as usual, tested along the very lines on which I was going to speak. During the previous week, Lars and I had learned that all twenty-eight of the nice new (and very expensive) windows we had installed in our new house *leaked*. I was anxious about many things—my mother's health (she has had more falls lately, forgets things more), my coming grandchild, a new word processor, which I wasn't sure I was smart enough to learn to use, and (alas!) a tooth which seemed about to fall out. What a list of varied things to worry about.

But Jesus died for me! He's risen and coming again! He has given me an inheritance that nothing can "destroy or spoil or wither" (1 Pt 1:4) and a kingdom which is unshakable (Heb 12:28). That's the gospel. Has it anything to do with leaking windows, computers, grandchildren, teeth? Well, I told myself, if it hasn't, you've got no business getting up in front of those women and opening your mouth at all. If I can't give thanks, trust, and worship the Lord in every "season," in the face of any set of facts which may touch my life, I am not really a believer. It is here, in my corner (or your corner) of God's earth, that I am assigned my lessons in the School of Faith.

P.S. Later: They fixed the windows for us, but now we find that all four of the outside doors must be fixed. God isn't finished with us yet.

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"If I profess with the loudest voice and clearest exposition every portion of the truth of God except precisely that little point which the world and the devil are at that moment attacking, I am not confessing Christ, however boldly I may be professing Christ. Where the battle rages, there the loyalty of the soldier is proved, and to be steady on all the battlefield besides, is mere flight and disgrace if he flinches at that point."

—Martin Luther

Letters

"The Newsletter has more solid content per word than any other subscription publication we receive. I hope it will not be discontinued." (from a reader in Maryland).

The mother of a baby who may have Down's Syndrome writes: "We will receive the results of her chromosome study on Thursday at 10 A.M. Should God bring your minds to our need, please pray for us to respond in faith, not bitterness. Nothing will change that day. God will reveal the reality of His limits, but our destiny will remain the same: to be like Him. 1 Peter 1:23 says, 'For we are not just mortals but sons of God; the live, permanent Word of our living God has given us His own indestructible heredity.' We love Him and are committed to receive what He has for us. We have so much to be grateful for to Him!"

Recommended Reading

Herbert Schlossberg: *Idols for Destruction*, Thomas Nelson. A stunning treatment of the ways in which idolatry corrupts the modern Christian's thinking. Secularization connotes a turning away from Christian faith, but Schlossberg clearly shows what it is that we turn to as substitutes for God: nature, mankind, power, history, social or political systems. In his chapter, "Idols of Humanity," he writes: "In its refusal to acknowledge will and responsibility in those over whom it establishes its protection, humanitar-

ianism could be speaking of cocker spaniels or Chevrolets rather than people.

"This view of humanity is a twisted and deformed travesty. It is ironic that for humanitarians only poor people, minorities, and those who have run afoul of the law are assumed to be shaped by the iron grip of circumstance. If we look at the villains—the police, politicians, social workers, businessmen—instead of at the victims, we find that the humanitarians have given them free will. They do not speak about the industrialist's tyrannical father, the loan shark's miserable childhood in an orphan home, the politician's neurotic mother. Those people are responsible for their acts, and therefore are human. Humanism thus awards its enemies the status of human beings while taking that status from its wards." (p.83)

Prayer Requests

- Pray for families. They are being attacked on every side. This is not surprising, since the family is the only firm foundation for any society and is therefore the target of satanic weapons. Pray for faithfulness to the vows of husband and wife, for wisdom for parents, for strength to stand alone, for the love described in 1 Corinthians 13.
- Pray for Christian schools, that they may be allowed to continue without government interference.
- Pray for mothers of young children especially, that they may have the courage to stay home in spite of the criticism of those who wonder why they don't do something "important."
- Pray for ministers of the Gospel, that they may stick to the Word no matter whether it helps their popularity or not. (Popularity is not usually one of the "perks" for those who are faithful. See Jn 15:20.)
- Pray for the national convention of Concerned Women for America, to be held in Washington, D.C., September 14 and 15.

Questions and Answers

Can you share some ideas to help us learn how to teach obedience to our children?

Here are some which my parents used on the six of us, and which I found effective in teaching my only child:

1. Establish trust. Never make an empty threat or an empty promise. Carry through. Love is very patient, very kind, and very inexorable.
2. Speak in a normal tone of voice, and speak once. (Be sure you have the child's attention first—look straight at him, let him know he has your attention.) If you repeat every command two or three times, you are teaching him that he needn't listen the first time.
3. Obey the Bible and use a rod for correction (See Prov 13:24;20:30;23:13) If you start this *soon* enough (a small switch for a small child) you'll not need to use it often.
4. Following punishment, repentance, and the resultant obedience, assure the child of your love. Never argue with him. Explanations should *follow*, not precede the command when dealing with a small child. Training, as my mother used to say, comes before teaching.

Travel Schedule Aug.-Oct. 1984

August 15-17 Clearwater, Florida, Summer Missions Program of World Outreach Fellowship, Clearwater Christian College. Dr. Clifford Baird, 305-339-8184

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August 30 Hanover, New Hampshire, Campus Crusade Staff Conference. Jan Gilliam, 806-792-9115

September 14-16 Escondido, California, women's retreat for Emmanuel Faith Community Church. Mrs. Mary Strauss, 619-747-0473

September 17 Dallas, Texas, Southern Methodist University. Kyle Talkington, 214-692-3353

September 22 Olathe, Kansas, Fall Festival for College Church Women's Ministries, 913-764-4575

September 29 Lexington, Massachusetts, Grace Chapel Singles Group

October 19 Bolton, Massachusetts, Missionary conference, Trinity Church, Congregational. Mrs. Clara May Dickerson, 617-779-2774

October 26-28 Amherst, Ohio, Women Anew Conference. Sharon Engram, 216-984-3100

October 29 Ft. Wayne, Indiana, Ft. Wayne Bible College. Mr. Robert V. Jones, 219-456-2111

October 30-31 Edina and Roseville, Minnesota, Grace Church Missions Festival. Woody Phillips 612-926-1884 or 633-6479

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The Elisabeth Elliot Newsletter

September/October 1984

The World Must Be Shown

When Jesus was speaking with His disciples before His crucifixion, He gave them His parting gift: peace such as the world can never give. But He went on immediately to say, "Set your troubled hearts at rest and banish your fears. . . . I shall not talk much longer with you, for the Prince of this world approaches. He has no rights over me, but the world must be shown that I love the Father and do exactly as He commands." (Jn 14:27, 30-31, NEB)

A few weeks ago a young mother called to ask for "something that will help me to trust in the Lord." She explained that she has several small children, she herself is thirty years old, and she has cancer. Chemotherapy has done its hideous work of making her totally bald. The prognosis is not good. Could I say to her, "Set your troubled heart at rest. God is going to heal you"? Certainly not. Jesus did not tell His disciples that He would not be killed. How do I know whether God will heal this young woman? I could, however, remind her that He would not for a moment let go of her, that His love enfolded her and her precious children every minute of every day and every night, and that underneath are the Everlasting Arms.

But is that enough? The terrible things in the world seem to make a mockery of the love of God, and the question always arises: *why?*

There are important clues in the words of Jesus. The disciples' worst fears were about to be realized, yet He commanded (yes, *commanded*) them to be at peace. All would be well, all manner of thing would be well—in the end. In a short time, however, the Prince of this world, Satan himself, was to be permitted to have his way. Not

that Satan had any rights over Jesus. Far from it. Nor has he "rights" over any of God's children, including that dear mother. But Satan is permitted to approach. He challenges God, we know from the Book of Job, as to the validity of His children's faith. God allows him to make a test case from time to time. It had to be proved to Satan, in Job's case, that there is such a thing as obedient faith which does not depend on receiving only benefits. Jesus had to show the world that He loved the Father and would, no matter what happened, do exactly what He said. The servant is not greater than his Lord. When we cry "Why, Lord?" we should ask instead, "Why not, Lord? Shall I not follow my Master in suffering as in everything else?"

Does our faith depend on having every prayer answered as we think it should be answered, or does it rest rather on the character of a sovereign Lord? We can't really tell, can we, until we're in real trouble.

I haven't heard more from the young woman. I neglected to ask her address. But I have been praying for her, asking God to enable her to show the world what genuine faith is—the kind of faith that overcomes the world because it trusts and obeys, no matter what the circumstances. The world does not want to be *told*. The world must be *shown*. Isn't that part of the answer to the great question of why Christians suffer?

Reprove, Correct, Exhort

A woman in West Virginia writes of a pastor who has decided that it is an infringement of people's "rights" to call things sin. Within the Body of Christ, he says, there must be no judging

of one another. Hence he has given the church's approval to a man who deserts his wife and children. The pastor says the man's "gut feelings" may be the voice of God.

Who takes responsibility nowadays to reprove, exhort, and correct Christians who are acting irresponsibly?

Whose business is it to inquire into private lives when it becomes known that Christians are not "walking worthy of the Lord" and thereby are causing others to stumble?

Who will submit to questioning or follow godly counsel?

We shudder to think of being "cross-examined," "judged," called to account for what we say is nobody's business but our own. Am I suggesting some sort of police state in the church, a Big Brother Watch? No. I am asking not for legal action but for Christian love, the kind that cares enough to obey Scripture, to risk its own reputation for kindness, in order to help another carry his load. "We must not be conceited, challenging one another to rivalry, jealous of one another. If a man should do something wrong, my brothers, on a sudden impulse, you who are endowed with the Spirit must set him right again very gently. Look to yourself, each one of you: you may be tempted too. Help one another to carry these heavy loads, for in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ." (Gal 6:2-3) (How different that law is from politics which has an eye only for its own success!)

"My brothers, if one of your number should stray from the truth and another succeed in bringing him back, be sure of this: any man who brings a sinner back from his crooked ways will be rescuing his soul from death and cancelling sins." It is important to note that this was written by the same man, in the same epistle, as this: "Who are you to judge your neighbor?" (Jas 4:12; 5:19-20)

Jesus said we are to judge *righteous* judgment. Look at the fruits of a man's life. Take the log out of your own eye before you try to take the splinter out of another's—but when you've removed the log, you must remove the splinter.

"Instruct and admonish (warn, caution against specific faults, reprove mildly, advise, exhort) each other with the utmost wisdom." (Col 3:16)

"If anyone disobeys our instructions given by

letter, mark him well, and have no dealings with him until he is ashamed of himself. I do not mean treat him as an enemy, but give him friendly advice, as one of the family." (2 Thes 3:14-15)

Of men who were "out of control, talking wildly," Paul told Titus to "pull them up sharply," for such men were ruining whole families.

Please don't write and ask me for details as to how individuals or churches ought to put these precepts into practice. I confess I am far from sure. I only know that both Old and New Testaments clearly teach the godly man's responsibility to try to help others be obedient to God. Whatever we can do to make that obedience a delight rather than a chore we ought to do. When real love requires confrontation, we ought to lay down our lives to do it. "Encourage one another so that no one of you is made stubborn by the wiles of sin." (Heb 3:13)

Letters

From a friend whose son, two and a half, had to have surgery for a cyst (always a worrisome sign). "The cyst was benign! We are so grateful! We set the Lord before us so we will not be shaken for the living of life. Our goal is not to be comfortable and have everything turn out fine but to be godly and make an impact on our dying world and its values. . . . May God continue to refine your life message as 'he keeps you from willful sins as His servant; may they not rule over you.' (Ps 19:13). Barrett [my son] memorized Genesis 4:7, and as he faces temptation he says the verse. He is learning to make wise choices and to be obedient. . . . We have not spared the rod on him but it has really worked. He says 'the rod drives out my foolishness.'"

That letter came on the same day that I was reading Hannah Whitall Smith's *Everyday*

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Religion, soon to be reprinted by Revell under the title *The Commonsense Teaching of the Bible*. She quotes George MacDonald. His words illuminate what Barrett's mother wrote.

"Man has a claim on God, a divine claim for any pain, want, disappointment, or misery that will help to make him what he ought to be. He has a claim to be punished, and to be spared not one pang that may urge him toward repentance; yea, he has a claim to be compelled to repent; to be hedged in on every side, to have one after another of the strong, sharptoothed sheep-dogs of the Great Shepherd sent after him, to thwart him in any desire, foil him in any plan, frustrate him of any hope, until he come to see at length that nothing will ease his pain, nothing make life a thing worth having, but the presence of the living God within him; that nothing is good but the will of God; nothing noble enough for the desire of the heart of man but oneness with the eternal. For this God must make him yield his very being, that He himself may enter in and dwell with him."

Questions and Answers

Could you mention some things you think are important about raising children?

First, and of primary importance, remember what God commanded Israel: "You shall take these words of mine to hear and keep them in mind. . . . Teach them to your children, and speak of them indoors and out of doors, when you lie down and when you rise. Write them up on the door posts of your houses." (Dt 11:18-20)

My daughter Valerie began reading the psalms aloud to her son Walter on the day she brought him home from the hospital. We do not know when a child begins to absorb what is important to his parents, but wouldn't it be lovely if his first memory is of hearing the Bible read to him? The priorities set by his father and mother make a huge difference in a child's thinking. "Give us a child until he is seven," says the Catholic Church, "and we will have him for life."

My parents read Scripture aloud to us morning

and evening with the family gathered together, and individually when we were put to bed. They took turns putting us to bed at night when we were small, and always prayed with us when they tucked us in. When we went for walks with our father on Saturday afternoons, he taught us to observe things—birds, flowers, ferns, acorns, brooks, squirrels. He often quoted Scripture to us, imitated the songs of birds, quizzed us on what we saw, helped us look through his binoculars. So—the second suggestion I would make is to teach your children to observe. Television will not help much with this. They must learn to see firsthand.

Third: Give them work to do, even when very small. Show them that everybody in the family has work to do for the good of the family. Besides routine work such as picking up clothes and toys, helping to put away dishes and laundry, picking up sticks in the yard, weeding the garden, etc., try to provide optional jobs which a child may do to earn money also. This can begin by the time he is five or six, and should be clearly distinguished from the other work, lest he begin to expect payment for his routine jobs. It is a good thing for him to learn early what the price of an ice-cream cone, for example, represents in terms of money earned.

Fourth: All time spent with mother or father will be "quality time" if the child knows beyond a shadow of a doubt that he is loved and enjoyed. Hug him, compliment him for kindness shown to a brother or sister, for work well done, for cheerfulness and thoughtfulness. Tell him he

Prayer Requests

- Pray for young couples who have been recently married. As the hard realities of living together begin to make themselves felt, and as the enemy of souls tries to destroy their unity, pray Paul's prayer for the Romans for them: "May the God who inspires men to endure, and gives them constant encouragement, give you a mind united with one another in your common loyalty to Christ Jesus. And then, as one man, you will sing from the heart the praises of God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." (Rom 15:5-6)

looks nice, his room is neat. Let him know that you see him as a gift from God and are grateful for him. This will help him to understand, also, that his parents are God's gift to him, and he can learn to be thankful for the things money can't buy.

Travel Schedule
September/November 1984

September 29 Lexington, Massachusetts, Grace Chapel Singles Group

October 19 Bolton, Massachusetts, Missionary conference, Trinity Church, Congregational. Mrs. Clara May Dickerson, 617-779-2774

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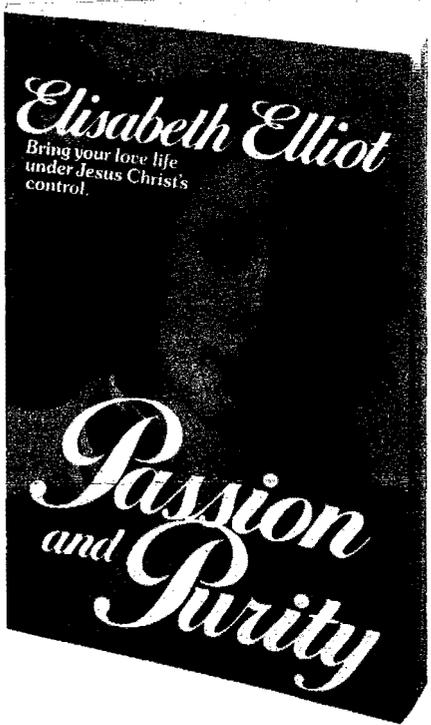
November 1 Same as for October 30-31 Also: chapel at North Central Bible College, Mr. Falley 612-332-3491

November 9-11 Solvang, California, women's retreat. Marge Peterson, 805-969-4568

November 16-17 Princeton, New Jersey, Alpha Pregnancy Center. Ken Smith, 609-921-1020

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November/December 1984

Crowned Because He Suffered

Each newsletter of 1984 has had a meditation on some of the why's of a Christian's suffering. Now it is nearly Christmas time. We don't usually think of suffering during this glad season if we can help it. "It's Jesus' birthday!" we tell tiny tots, and we set about making cookies and gifts and trimming the house and the tree.

The very joyfulness of Christmas makes it especially hard for those who suffer. It seems incongruous that celebrations should go on as always when one's own roof has fallen in. Whatever the cause of the roof's collapse, Christmas can be far more than just a birthday. That birthday is the Feast of the Incarnation, of the Word made flesh—the happy morning when the myths about gods coming to earth in the form of men actually came true. This was "glorious news of great joy," not only for poor shepherds but for all people. Can it be *that* for someone two thousand years later who is nailed to a bed by pain, or who has lost something most precious, or been humiliated to the very dust? Perhaps it can if we think of what that glorious news entailed for the baby Himself. Richard Crashaw (1613-1649) described it far more beautifully than I can:

That the Great Angel-blinding Light should
shrink
His blaze to shine in a poor Shepherd's eye;
That the unmeasured God so low should sinke,
As Pris'ner in a few poor rags to lye;
That from his Mother's Breast he milk should
drinke,

Who feeds with Nectar Heaven's faire family,
That a vile Manger his low Bed should prove
Who in a Throne of stars thunders above;
That He whom the Sun serves, should faintly
peepe
Through clouds of Infant Flesh! That He, the
old
Eternall Word should be a Child, and weepe;
That He who made the fire, should fear the
cold,
That Heaven's high Majesty His Court should
keepe
In a clay cottage, by each blast control'd;
That Glories self should serve our Grieffs and
feares,
And free Eternity submit to years,
Let our overwhelming wonder be.

Crashaw shows us a little of the relinquishment, the limitation, the humiliation that it meant for God to become a baby. "In Jesus we see one who for a short while was made lower than the angels, crowned now with glory and honor because he suffered death" (Heb 2:9). "We are God's heirs and Christ's fellow-heirs, if we share his sufferings now in order to share his splendor hereafter" (Rom 8:17). Let us measure our sufferings by the sufferings of the Son of Man. Let us think, then, of the glory and honor He received *because* He wailed as a newborn in the straw of a stable and was fixed with nails to a cross. Let us think of His glory and honor and remember the incredible promise that that glory will be ours too. Ours? Yes, ours—we are fellow-heirs, if we share his sufferings. His splendor hereafter is what they are for. Let us think on these things, think on the crown, and have a very merry Christmas.

A New Medical Breakthrough and an Old Question*

Some time ago I read of a new medical triumph involving unborn twins. Amniocentesis had shown that one of them had Down's syndrome. The mother decided she did not want that child, so with the simple expedient of piercing the heart of the baby with a long needle, it was killed in the womb. She carried the twins to term and delivered one child alive—the one she wanted to keep—and one child dead—the one she didn't want to keep. This was hailed as a remarkable breakthrough. I would ask you to pause for a moment here and consider this question: what was it, exactly, that was killed? What was it that was not killed? The answer to both questions, of course, is—a child. They were both children. They were twins. I used plain, ordinary words to tell the story—the words the news report used. Nothing ambiguous. Nothing incendiary.

I read the following week in the same magazine about another medical breakthrough. This time doctors had used an instrument inserted into a womb not to kill a child but to save one. This child had a serious heart anomaly which they were able to correct with intrauterine surgery. Can any honest and reasonable person fail to make the comparison here? In the second case, the instrument in the surgeon's hand enabled the tiny heart to keep on working. In the first case, the needle in the surgeon's hand made the heart quit working. What, exactly, should we call that? The intrauterine surgery was called *lifesaving*, because they fixed a baby's defective heart. What language are we allowed to use when we speak of destroying a heart that's working perfectly? There is a simple and obvious word, but we are not allowed to use it. Well, what about life-destroying? Is that permissible for this neat and efficient

technique? Well, not really. Because the word life is explosive. Life is not relevant here. It's the mother's life that we are supposed to consider, nobody else's. The other isn't a life—not one worth living, anyway, not one worth the mother's suffering for. So we must not use the ordinary words. They're too emotional. They're loaded. The fact is they stopped the heart. That's all. Just made it quit beating.

I was glad that the writer of the article on the baby whose heart was corrected acknowledged the possibility that fetal surgery might raise an ethical question which the medical world thought it had laid to rest. Might it be necessary, in view of these advances, to ask all over again whether a fetus is a person?

This is the issue today. It is, in the final analysis, the only question that needs to be considered when we speak of the unborn. Is the thing disposable? Is it an object with no life of its own, a bit of tissue which belongs to a woman who has the right to do with it what she chooses? If she needs it and wants it, she keeps it. If she doesn't need it and doesn't want it, she throws it away. So what's all the shouting about?

Truthfulness is the willingness to accept facts. Truth-tellers are always regarded as either ridiculous, or so dangerous as to deserve death. "No truth," wrote Hannah Arendt, "that crosses someone's profit, ambition, or lust, is permissible. Unwelcome facts possess an infuriating stubbornness that nothing can move except plain lies."

Here are the unwelcome facts. We were talking about children: the twin who was saved, the child with the defective heart who was also saved, and the twin whose heart was pierced with a needle. They were children. Choices were made regarding those children: deliberate, conscious choices. One, to allow a child to live. Another, to intervene surgically so that a child might live who would otherwise die. (Would the surgeon who performed that operation have dreamed of telling the mother that her baby was not a person? He saved its life,

* The text of a talk given at a coalition for life rally in the State House in Boston. The chief organizer and chairman was Jeanine Graf. (Other speakers included Archbishop Bernard Law.)

and the mother was grateful.) But in the other case, what was the choice? It was to kill a child. These are the unwelcome facts, but they are infuriatingly stubborn. They will not go away. It was a child. It was killed. Nothing will move those facts except lies.

I ask you earnestly to look at the little creature with eyes and hands and beating heart, held in that safest of places, the mother's womb. No woman who holds such a thing within her doubts that she holds a child. No doctor who extracts it by whatever swift and putatively safe means can deny that what he extracts is a human being, and that what he does is to kill it.

I ask you for God's sake to look at the truth. And I ask you, finally, to think about what Jesus said: "I tell you solemnly, in so far as you did this to one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did it to me." Jesus will not forget.

Aucas

Last January I reported that the Auca Indians of Ecuador had been granted title to a certain portion of what had been thought of as their territory. I am told that what the government "gave" them is actually one thirty-second of their original land. I also hear that the New Testament has been translated, only rough-draft so far, into the Auca language.

Come, Holy Spirit

My friend Mari Jones, wife of a Welsh shepherd, not only helps John with the sheep. She is also a hard-working farm wife in every way, and a harpist and a poet. Every letter she writes to me contains some lovely "figure of the True." This was in her most recent: "When the tide is out every shrimp has its pool, but when the tide comes in there is no trace of the different pools—the Coming in of the Tide is our greatest need in Wales." Yes, and in America, too.

Recommended Reading

James I. Packer: *Keep in Step with the Spirit* (Fleming H. Revell, 285 pp.)

An eminently lucid and practical study of the Holy Spirit and His work. Many things which had confused me about the life of holiness, the fruits of the Spirit, legalism, the Spirit's gifts, and the application of these truths in our own time, were wonderfully sorted out and clarified for me in this book. Drop everything and get it. Here's a sample:

"All the Christian's human involvements and commitments in this world must be consciously based on his awareness of having been separated from everything and everyone in creation to belong to his Creator alone. Ordered, costly, unstinting commitment for the Lord's sake to spouse, children, parents, employers, employees, and all one's other neighbors, on the basis of being radically detached from them all to belong to God—Father, Son, and Spirit—and to no one else, is the unvarying shape of the authentically holy life. Other lives may be exceedingly religious, but to the extent that they fail to fit this description, they are not holy to the Lord." (pp. 104-105)

Prayer Requests

- Pray for the Inter-Varsity Missionary Convention to be held at Urbana, Illinois, between Christmas and New Year's. Seventeen thousand students are expected.

Pray for them and for the speakers and missionary organizations that will be presenting their work.

- Pray for the newly elected president of our country.

- Pray for Jeanine Graf who has a daily call-in radio show in Boston. She is a fearless Christian who speaks out clearly and powerfully against many forms of evil, and provides a platform for other Christians to do so too. The station is WEZE. Jeanine is on from 1-3 P.M.

Questions and Answers

I have a question about submission. I agree that a wife should submit to her husband, but is there a point of carrying it so far that the wife loses her identity?

I don't think so. The submission the Bible talks about is voluntary, wholehearted, and *for the Lord's sake*. Did Jesus lose His identity by submitting Himself to the Father? You'll say, "Oh, but it's a different thing when you have to submit to a sinner!" Yes, it is, in one sense, yet when we do so in obedience to the Lord (see Eph 5:22; 1 Pt 3:1, 5:5; Ti 2:5) we will not only not lose our identity, but we will in fact find it. "Whoever cares for his own safety is lost, but if a man will let himself be lost for my sake, he will find his true self" (Mt 16:25).

TO GO FORWARD IS TO DIE
TO GO BACK IS TO DIE
LET US GO FORWARD

—Zulu warrior's motto

A New House

It's finished. Well, not entirely, but enough for us to move into in late July, and, three weeks later we had a kitchen. We cooked on a hot plate in the bathroom in the meantime. Today the carpenters left, and I miss them. I don't know how I'll get along without those three delightful workmen. They worked together in a harmony

that was wonderful to see, and were endlessly cheerful and patient and ready to make changes and add extras as we went along. "Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it." It wasn't done on my time schedule, but I believe the Lord built it. We are very, very, very grateful. Lars, bless his heart, is still painting. For about ten (sometimes twelve) hours a day he paints—every inch of every room, inside and outside, three coats, all by himself. He wants the job done right!

Travel Schedule

December 1984/February 1985

December 4 Little Rock, Arkansas, First Baptist Church. Mr. Chris Elkins, 501-227-0010

December 27-31 Urbana, Illinois, Intersociety Missionary Convention. 608-257-8855

January 14-17 Kerrville, Texas, Laity Lodge Women's Retreat. Howard Hovde, 512-896-2505

January 17-18 Uvalde, Texas, Women of St. Philip's Church. Mrs. Phyllis McNelly, 512-278-5236

January 19-20 Burnaby, British Columbia, Mission Fest '85. Richard Dodding, 604-430-4154

February 19 San Jose, California, Bethel Church. Marylyn Drake, 408-246-6790

February 22-24 Sedona, Arizona, Women's Retreat. Mary Malouf, 602-840-0024

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The Elisabeth Elliot Newsletter

January/February 1985

Our Share of Suffering

Most of us know next to nothing about real persecution or what it's like to be in chains. When Paul wrote his letter to the Philippians, they were being severely persecuted, and he himself was actually chained between two guards in a Roman prison, somewhere between 61 and 63 A.D. Even though we may not know the first thing about that kind of suffering, what the apostle has to say about the subject applies to our kind, too, whatever it may be. For, you see, we have been given two gifts: the privilege of believing in Christ, and (here's that mystery again) the privilege of suffering. Amy Carmichael, missionary to India, told of how God had impressed on her mind those two phrases from Philippians 1:29, "not only . . . but also." She was in anguish over some matter which she did not reveal, but she was given eyes to see this truth: that everyone who believes must also suffer for Christ.

"For Him?" you say, "But this thing I'm going through—what has that got to do with what Paul meant? I'm not in prison for speaking the truth. I'm not being 'persecuted for Christ's sake.'" Not all are given those privileges, of course, but it seems to me that any kind of suffering, if accepted for Christ and from Christ, may be seen as our *share*. In Colossians 1:24 there is a hint that there is some sort of "quota" of suffering that must be endured, and each of us may bear a part of that if we're willing to take it from Christ's hand. "It is now my happiness to suffer for you," Paul wrote. "This is my way of helping to complete, in my poor human flesh, the full tale of Christ's afflictions still to be endured, for the sake of His body which is the Church." It isn't that we add to the *redemptive* work of Christ. Not that at all. But in

some unexplained way we are allowed to "fill up" His suffering on behalf of His Body. I don't pretend to understand it. It's enough for me to know that suffering is a part of belonging to Christ, part of what it means to be a true believer, and a high privilege to be received with joy because, in ways we can't even imagine now, it *matters* to all the rest of the glorious company of God's people.

Hints for Quiet Time

Having a quiet time with the Lord every day is absolutely essential if you expect to grow spiritually. But you have to plan it. It won't "just happen." We're all much too busy. Early morning is best, and there are plenty of scriptural precedents for that (Jesus rose "a great while before day"; the psalmist said, "In the morning shalt Thou hear my voice"). If you meet the Lord before you meet anybody else, you'll be "pointed in the right direction" for whatever comes. God knows how difficult it is for some to do this, and if you have a reason you can offer *Him* why early morning won't work, I'm sure He'll help you to find another time. Sometimes the children's afternoon nap time can be quiet time for a mother. At any rate, plan the time. Make up your mind to stick with it. Make it short to begin with—fifteen minutes or so, perhaps. You'll be surprised at how soon you'll be wanting more.

Take a single book of the Bible. If you're new at this, start with the Gospel of Mark. Pray, first, for the Holy Spirit's teaching. Read a few verses, a paragraph, or a chapter. Then ask, What does this passage teach me about: (1) God; (2) Jesus Christ;

(3) the Holy Spirit; (4) myself; (5) sins to confess or avoid; (6) commands to obey; (7) what Christian love is?

Keep a notebook. Write down some of your special prayer requests with the date. Record the answer when it comes. Note, also, some of the answers you've found to the above questions, or anything else you've learned. Tell your children, your spouse, your friends some of these things. That will help you to remember them. You'll be amazed at what a difference a quiet time will make in your life.

A Word for Fathers

While at Columbia Bible College in South Carolina last summer I found a little book called *Father and Son* in the library, written by my grandfather, Philip E. Howard. He writes:

"Do you remember that encouraging word of Thomas Fuller's, a chaplain of Oliver Cromwell's time? It's a good passage for a father in all humility and gratitude to tuck away in his memory treasures:

"Lord, I find the genealogy of my Savior strangely checkered with four remarkable changes in four immediate generations. (1) Rehoboam begat Abijah; that is, a bad father begat a bad son. (2) Abijah begat Asa; that is, a bad father begat a good son. (3) Asa begat Jehoshaphat; that is, a good father a good son. (4) Jehoshaphat begat Joram; that is, a good father a bad son. I see, Lord, from hence that my father's piety cannot be entailed; that is bad news for me. But I see also that actual impiety is not always hereditary; that is good news for my son."

In another chapter Grandpa Howard tells this story.

"A sensitive, timid little boy, long years ago, was accustomed to lie down to sleep in a low 'trundle-bed,' which was rolled under his parents' bed by day and was brought out for his use by night. As he lay there by himself in the darkness, he could hear the voices of his parents, in their lighted sitting-room across the hallway, on the other side of the house. It seemed to him that his parents never slept; for he left them awake when he was put to bed at night, and he found them

awake when he left his bed in the morning. So far this thought was a cause of cheer to him, as his mind was busy with imaginings in the weird darkness of his lonely room.

"After loving good-night words and kisses had been given him by both his parents, and he had nestled down to rest, this little boy was accustomed, night after night, to rouse up once more, and to call out from his trundle-bed to his strong-armed father, in the room from which the light gleamed out, beyond the shadowy hallway, 'Are you there, papa?' And the answer would come back cheerily, 'Yes, my child, I am here.' 'You'll take care of me tonight, papa, won't you?' was then the question. 'Yes, I'll take care of you, my child,' was the comforting response. 'Go to sleep now. Good night.' And the little fellow would fall asleep restfully, in the thought of those assuring good-night words.

"A little matter that was to the loving father; but it was a great matter to the sensitive son. It helped to shape the son's life. It gave the father an added hold on him; and it opened up the way for his clearer understanding of his dependence on the loving watchfulness of the All-Father. And to this day when that son, himself a father and a grandfather, lies down to sleep at night, he is accustomed, out of the memories of that lesson of long ago, to look up through the shadows of his earthly sleeping place into the far-off light of his Father's presence, and to call out, in the same spirit of childlike trust and helplessness as so long ago, 'Father, you'll take care of me tonight, won't you?' And he hears the assuring answer come back, 'He that keepeth thee will not slumber. The Lord shall keep thee from all evil. He shall keep thy soul. Sleep, my child, in peace.' And so he realizes the twofold blessing of a father's goodnight words."

That story, says Grandpa, came from his own father-in-law, my great-grandfather, Henry Clay Trumbull. I have a hunch that Trumbull was that little boy, and the father my great-great-grandfather.

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Letters

"I must admit I feel a lot of pressure with two children under two years of age. I am committed to do it until they are in school, however, and feel it is God's will. At times like this—when I wonder if I will even be able to finish this letter with both of them screaming for something—or when I miss going to lunch or getting dressed up, everyday life seems a drudgery. I worked hard to get through college—to be a scrubwoman, ha!"

I understand this mother's cry. So does the Lord. He has given us this word: "No temptation has come your way that is too hard for flesh and blood to bear. But God can be trusted not to allow you to suffer any temptation beyond your powers of endurance. He will see to it that every temptation has a way out, so that it will never be impossible for you to bear it" (1 Cor 10:13, J.B. Phillips' translation).

"A 'way out?'" I can hear her say, "What mother has a way out?"

The New English Bible translation throws light on this: "a way out, by enabling you to sustain it." Think, too, of Jesus' words, "My yoke is easy and my burden is light." He is willing to bear our burdens with us if only we will come to Him and share the yoke, His yoke.

I saw this principle in operation when I visited the Dohnavur Fellowship in India. There, day after day, year in and year out, Indian women (most of them single) care for little children, handicapped children, infirm adults, old folks. They don't go anywhere. They have none of our usual forms of amusement and diversion. They work with extremely primitive equipment—there is no running water, for example, no stoves but wood-burning ones, no washing machines. In one of the buildings I saw this text, "There they dwelt with the King for His work." That's the secret. They do it for Him. They ask for and receive His grace to do it. I saw the joy in their lovely faces.

"Just finished reading *Passion and Purity*. Thank you for writing this book. I am twenty-four years old, single, and was wondering if I was the only one out here 'floundering in the sea of permissiveness and self-indulgence,' and recently decided that the 'beacon of purity' I had been

searching for had vanished completely, maybe at the turn of the century." This girl goes on to tell me how the man she was absolutely positive was God's choice for her suddenly disappeared. She was "borderline suicidal," but the Lord set her feet on a Rock. Then she was asked to serve as hostess for this man's wedding. "You guessed it," she wrote, "the bride is one of my best friends. So here is my opportunity for selfless love and servitude that we Christians speak of so freely. . . . This is so you can tell them, Elisabeth, that there's living proof out here in America of life after death. . . . It's worth it all just to be conformed to His image, to know His abiding mercy and love."

And I would add, it's worth it to have written the book when somebody like that has had "ears to hear." Thank God.

Prayer Requests

- Pray for our new president, that God will give him wisdom, courage, humility, and a consciousness of his need to seek the help of the Lord.
- Pray for a young couple, recently married, who are suffering the agonies (both mental and physical) of chemotherapy for one of them. Pray for all couples who are tempted to question or even to give up when the realities of those solemn marriage vows ("for better or for worse, in sickness and in health") begin to hit them hard.
- Valerie is teaching two of her children in home school. Walter is in second grade; Elisabeth is in kindergarten. Don't ask me what Val does with the eight-month-old and the three-year-old during school time, but I'm sure she needs your prayers! So do all other mothers. What an all-consuming job it is, and how incalculably important.
- Pray for Sanctity of Human Life Sunday, January 20, an effort of the Christian Action Council to educate churches on the subjects of abortion, infanticide, and euthanasia which are being practiced in our nation's health-care facilities.

Why Not?

Some parents say, "We will not influence our children in making choices and decisions in matters of religion."

Why not?

The ads will, the press will, the radio will, the movies will, the neighbors will, the politicians will, television will, the devil will.

(From the *Manchester Union-Leader*)

Fetal Pain

Joseph Sobran, a well-known author and columnist, wrote in the *Human Life Review*, Spring 1984, "A woman can say, 'My stomach hurts.' She can't say, 'My fetus hurts.' The fetus feels its own pain. It has its own identity, its own nervous system, and therefore its own separate claim on our attention. Some abortion advocates say we must balance the rights of the mother against those of the fetus; and even though they are up to no good when they say that, they have at least come to acknowledge that the fetus *does* have rights of its own. The very admission that two parties are involved is a significant victory for the opponents of abortion."

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The Suffering of Divorce

Many Christians now seem to regard divorce as an option, even when adultery is not involved. If they are not "comfortable" with their spouse, if they are "under too much pressure," if the grass looks greener elsewhere (which, given our usual distorted view of happiness, it generally does), they simply opt out. Untold suffering is always the result. As I travel around, I meet many of the victims. What can I say to them? I've never been divorced. I can only watch the effects, listen to the tragic tales, try to give help and comfort as it is asked for. One thing I can say with confidence to these suffering people is, "I don't know what you're going through. But I know the One who knows."

I also know from scripture, from reading the works of many who have walked the pathway of suffering and learned from it, and from some experiences of my own, that the Lord wants to transform every form of human suffering into something glorious. He can redeem it. He can bring life out of death. Every event of our lives, even so terrible a thing as divorce, provides an opportunity to learn the deepest lesson anyone can learn here on earth: "My present life is not that of the old 'I,' but the living Christ within me" (Gal 2:20, J.B. Phillips). In order for Christ to live His life in me, the self-life must be brought down to death. Death comes to us in many forms before we actually breathe our last, but as in the case of the wheat seed which falls into the ground, God's marvelous purpose is to bring life out of that buried thing. He can do it. Only He can do it. But He asks our acceptance of the painful process and our trust that He will indeed give resurrection life.

Indecision

It is painfully obvious that young people today have an awful time making up their minds about anything. They're not "really sure" what college to go to, what to major in, whom to room with, what career to prepare for, whether or whom to marry, whether to bother with children if they do marry, when to bother with them, what to do with them if they get them, whether to attempt to instill any "values" in their children (not to make up your mind on this issue is, of course, already to have instilled a value in the mind of the child).

Gary Trudeau, author of the cartoon "Doonesbury," has noticed this prevalent indecision. In a recent strip he has a young man appearing for an interview with the president of an advertising company.

"So you want to be an ad man, eh, son?" says the executive.

"Well, I think so, sir," says the youth. "I mean, I can't be certain, of course, but it seemed worth looking into, you know, to see if it worked out, if it felt right and . . . I . . . uh . . ."

I guess there's nothing new about indecision. James wrote about it in his epistle, and he shows that the remedy for it is trust. He tells us to ask for wisdom if we don't know what to do. "But when you ask him, be sure that you really expect him to tell you, for a doubtful mind will be as unsettled as a wave of the sea that is driven and tossed by the wind; and every decision you then make will be uncertain, as you turn first this way and then that. If you don't ask with faith, don't expect the Lord to give you any solid answer" (Jas 1:6-8, LB).

Questions and Answers

Please share some ideas of how to encourage intellectual pursuits with our children.

A friend who has four boys, the oldest of whom is eight, prints a different hymn and several scripture verses each week and posts them on a large, stiff cardboard in the breakfast nook. The whole family learns the hymn and verses. She has a chart showing each child's chores. This may not sound very intellectual, but the orderly doing of household chores forms habits of an orderly life, and orderly lives and orderly minds go together. This same mother bought a microphone and small public address system. She has each child stand up at one end of the living room, while the others sit in a row like an audience and listen to him recite a verse, a hymn, a poem, or make a short speech. This teaches poise, articulation, the art of speaking up, standing still, keeping the hands relaxed, etc. The same thing could probably be accomplished with a pretend microphone—an ice cream dipper, for example.

Teach your children to memorize! Their ability to quickly pickup anything you repeat often enough is nearly miraculous. Last week I was with my grandchildren for four days. The seven-year-old and the five-year-old learned to repeat the Greek alphabet almost perfectly in that time. I didn't make a federal case out of it, but merely repeated it now and then at odd moments. The five-year-old was quickest to learn it, probably because she thought it was fun while her brother thought it was kind of crazy.

Ask questions at the table which will make children think, e.g., God answers prayer—does that mean that God always gives us exactly what we ask for? Help the child to find the answer in Bible stories.

Read aloud to children. My father did this for us as long as we lived at home. He would bring a book to the table and read a paragraph, or share something in the evening as we all sat in the living room reading our own books.

Buy a microscope or a magnifying glass. Study a housefly's leg or the dust from a moth's wing, etc.

Have a globe on which they can find any

country they hear named in the news or in conversation.

Teach them to see illustrations of abstract truth in concrete objects. This is how Jesus taught—by the use of parables.

Boswell tells how when Samuel Johnson was still a child in petticoats, his mother put a prayer book into his hands, pointed out the collect for the day, and said, "Sam, you must get this by heart." She went upstairs, leaving him to study it. By the time she had reached the second floor, she heard him following her. "What's the matter?" she said. "I can say it," he replied, and repeated it distinctly, though he could not have read it more than twice.

Was he a genius at that age? Perhaps. But I think it more likely that his intellectual powers owed much to his parents' expectations and patient instruction. Expect little and you'll surely get it.

I've "blown it"—my virginity, that is—do you think it would be wrong for me to ask a girl who is a virgin to marry me? Sometimes I think it would—doesn't she deserve somebody who hasn't blown it!

It's heartening to find there's some chivalry left in the world. I applaud the nobility of your feeling there is something precious in her virginity, and your recognition that you've squandered yours. But I could not say it would be wrong for you to propose to the girl. If you are both Christians, you know that to be in Christ is to be a new creature. In the Corinthian church there were people who had been fornicators, idolaters, adulterers, homosexuals and other things. None of those, Paul said, would "possess the kingdom of God. . . . But you have been through the purifying waters; you have been dedicated to God and justified through the name of the Lord Jesus" (1 Cor 6:10, 11). The blood of Christ covers all kinds of sin. In other words,

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even though those church members had been among the sinners Paul names, they were now pure. He goes on to exhort them to honor God in their bodies (vs. 20). You can start over once you've confessed your sin and received God's forgiveness. "All alike have sinned, and are deprived of the divine splendor, and all are justified by God's free grace alone . . . He justifies any man who puts his faith in Jesus" (Rom 3:23, 24, 26 NEB).

Why Bother to Pray?

If God is sovereign, and things will be as they are going to be anyway, why bother to pray? There are several reasons. The first is really all we need to know: God has told us to pray. It is a commandment, and if we love Him, we obey His commands.

Second, Jesus prayed. People sometimes say that the only reason for prayer is that we need to be changed. Certainly we do, but that is not the only reason to pray. Jesus did not need to be changed or made more holy by praying. He was communing with His Father. He asked for things. He thanked God. In His Gethsemane prayer, He besought His Father to prevent what was about to take place. He also laid down His own will.

Third, prayer is a law of the universe. God ordained that certain physical laws should govern the operation of this world. Books simply will not stay put on a table without the operation of the law of gravity. There are spiritual laws as well. Certain things will not happen without the operation of prayer. God could cause books to stay on tables by what theologians call "divine fiat." Everything we pray for could occur in the same way, but that is not how things were arranged. Pascal, the great French thinker, said that in prayer God gives us "the dignity of causality."

Bible reading should shape our prayers. Here is a passage from Colossians (3:12-14, J.B. Phillips) which hits me between the eyes and shows me very clearly some changes I need God's help to make:

"As God's picked representatives of the new humanity, purified and beloved of God himself,

be merciful in action, kindly in heart, humble in mind. Accept life, and be most patient and tolerant with one another, always ready to forgive if you have a difference with anyone. Forgive as freely as the Lord has forgiven you. And, above everything else, be truly loving, for love is the golden chain of all the virtues."

HELP! Lars and I are contemplating having my mother come to live with us. We need someone to live here and help us care for her. She is very frail, but still ambulatory and does not need a trained nurse. You would receive board, room with private bath, and modest salary. Please write us c/o the Newsletter, or call 617-525-3653.

Prayer Requests

My nephew Gene Howard and his wife Terry and baby Heidi are on their way to Nepal as missionaries. The following list of prayer requests is from their recent letter. It is a good list for all of us to ask for ourselves as well as for others:

- That we will serve the Lord with an undivided heart. There are so many things to divide our allegiance.
- That we will persevere in the race He has marked out for us, as we fix our eyes on our Lord. There is always the temptation to slack off, but "those who have been given a trust must prove faithful"
- That we will always make the one needful thing the top priority of our lives, that is, time at the feet of Jesus. It is easy to allow busyness, even in doing the King's work, to keep us from spending time with the King Himself.

I know that many of you pray for me, and I am very thankful for that. I realize that I have no special claim on your prayers, but if the Lord brings my name to mind, please ask Him to give me fresh draughts from the well of Life to give to others. Regular writing and speaking can become pretty dusty and parched.

A Christian Woman's Service

A reader in Barbados asks that I include suggestions in the Newsletter for opportunities for women to serve outside the confines of the church. I like the list she herself gave:

- mixing with the poor or elderly within their environment;
- assisting with community projects—even if it's no more than toting a Red Cross or Poppy Day collection tin;
- sharing oneself and one's resources with neighbors, e.g., stop at the bus pole and give a lift to as many as the car will hold ("I'm not talking about casual hitchhikers and strangers," she adds);
- giving aid to non-Christian neighbors after the birth of a baby.

Thank you, Ann Gale. These seem to be in harmony with the list of women's work found in Titus 2:3-5, a passage largely forgotten now that even Christian churches are joining the world's pressure to get women into careers, as though women have no special, God-given responsibilities and are quite free to pursue money, status, prestige, fulfillment in any way they like. I'm afraid we're sowing the wind, and will one day reap the whirlwind.

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Travel Schedule March/April 1985

March 22-24 Los Gatos, California, Los Gatos Christian Church, Ruth Rohrbaugh, 408-268-1411

March 26-28 Wheaton, Illinois, Wheaton College, Dennis K. Massaro, 312-260-5076

April 6 Eugene, Oregon, Oregon Pacific District Women's Ministry, Mrs. Judy Bauer, 503-341-3460

April 17-21 Alberta, Canada, Prairie Bible Institute, Missions Conference, Ted S. Rendall, 403-443-5511

April 23 Ann Arbor, Michigan, Michigan Christian Association, 313-994-3286

May 1 Rockport, Massachusetts, Pigeon Cove Chapel, Patricia Fife, 617-546-2277

May 15 Lancaster, Pennsylvania, Manor Brethren in Christ Church, Darlene Sands, 717-393-6174

May 17-19 Seattle, Washington, Bethany Community Church, Bruce Howell, 206-524-9000

June 10-14 Hickory Corners, Michigan, Gull Lake Bible and Missionary Conference, Mrs. Eunice B. Slightly, 616-671-5155

June 16 Millersburg, Pennsylvania, David's United Church of Christ, W. Richard Solberg, 717-692-4407

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May/June 1985

What Kind of Power Do Women Want?

"Today's women are the victims of the second biggest con game in history. (The first was when the serpent persuaded Eve she needed to upgrade her lifestyle and become 'like God')." So writes Mary Pride, in her new book *The Way Home (Beyond Feminism—Back to Sanity)*. Mrs. Pride's credentials are awesome—she has a B.A. in electrical engineering, an M.A. in computer systems engineering, has studied theology, and is the mother of three children, whom she is teaching at home. Her conversion to Christianity from the religion [her word] of radical feminism brought a complete change in her perspective.

Not long ago I was asked to speak to a group of 150 pastors' wives. I found that 80 percent of them are working full-time. The consensus among Christians nowadays seems to be that careers for women are not only permissible but to be encouraged. Few are prepared to stand up to the pressures of society and reject the lifestyle of their neighbors.

But why should we? We shouldn't, unless there is a radically different pattern laid down for us in scripture. As disciples of Jesus we are bound by whatever his word tells us, and, although not many women pay much attention to them anymore, the New Testament pattern for women compromises at least eleven responsibilities:

1. faithful marriage
2. the care of children
3. hospitality
4. washing the feet of God's people

5. supporting those in distress (these five are from 1 Tm 5:10)

6. presiding over a home (1 Tm 5:14)

7. reverence in bearing

8. not scandal-mongers

9. not slaves to drink

10. setting a high standard

11. schooling younger women to be loving wives and mothers, temperate, chaste, kind, to stay home, and to respect the authority of their husbands. (Ti 2:3-4)

A careful and prayerful study of this pattern will give a different shape to our lives than that which society is pressing on us. If we study it and ask the Lord how we are to line up with it, most of us will find that it's a full-time job. Women who have no children, or whose children have grown up, often think they are free to do anything that strikes their fancy—something "creative," getting a degree, a job, a facelift, learning computer programming, macrame, French cooking, going on a cruise, building a gazebo. Am I saying that those things are *sinful*? Not in themselves. I am saying that they may be indulgences, because they may leave no time for obedience to God's pattern of women's work. They may make it impossible for us to be available as spiritual mothers. A mother is *available*—to do what needs to be done. If you are one of those who work, you are thankful for the one mother on your block who is available because she has stayed home. Your children can play in her yard.

"Are you kidding?" I hear some readers say. "In the 1980s you're telling us women shouldn't work?" I didn't write the list. Is it an impossibility? Before we say that it is, let's quietly ponder the sort of work the list includes and the sort of

women who would do such work. Imagine the effect in our world if we would be obedient. Have we the freedom to ignore this pattern simply because it's (odious word!) "traditional?"

Dr. Mildred Jefferson is a black physician who came from a poor family in east Texas. She speaks out very courageously against the idea of mothers working and putting their children in day-care centers. When challenged with the usual question, What about economic necessity? she smiles and asks, "Let's look at this 'necessity.' Just what are these needs which are so much greater than the need of the child for his mother?"

Your Heavenly Father knows what you need. "Necessity" is highly relative, isn't it? One woman's necessity is another's luxury. Talk over your needs with God. Face the question honestly. If money is really needed, perhaps He will show you a way to make some without leaving home. Shirley Eichenberger's book, *Mother's Day Out*, tells how God answered prayer along that line. (Orders can be sent to Box 25024, Corporate Woods, Overland Park, KA 66225)

An editorial in *Christian Century* in October, 1982, says that the real issue for women is power. The author quotes Henry Adams' *Democracy*, the story (written in 1880!) of a beautiful, brilliant woman who moved to Washington D.C. "Here, then, was the explanation of her restlessness, discontent, ambition—call it what you will. It was the feeling of a passenger on an ocean steamer whose mind will not rest until he has been in the engine room and talked with the engineer. She wanted . . . to touch with her own hand the massive machinery of society. . . . What she wanted was POWER."

Jeremiah the prophet wrote, "Do you seek great things for yourself? Seek them not" (Jer 45:5). Jesus said, "If anyone wants to be first, he must make himself last of all and servant of all" (Mk 9:35). Are there some women with ears to hear this message? May God help us each one to answer his call.

*Lord, do Thou turn me all into love,
and all my love into obedience,
and let my obedience be
without interruption.*

(Quoted by Amy Carmichael)

My Spiritual Mother

Katherine Morgan has been a missionary in Pasto, Colombia, for fifty years. She has been a friend of mine for thirty-four of those years and has done for me what Paul said Onesiphorus did for him: refreshed me often. Katherine's husband died when they had been married only six years, but she carried on their missionary work and reared their four little girls. To Katherine I owe more than I can ever tell. She more or less booted me to Ecuador. I was a missionary candidate without a field, didn't know quite how to find one, talked to her, and within months found myself in Quito. She had had me in her home many weekends, giving me previews of coming attractions—what not to expect from "supporters," what to expect from them, what to expect from Ecuadorians and from jungle Indians, what to take (a sense of humor, for one thing), what not to take (a sense of smell, a trunkful of inhibitions and Plymouth Brethren prejudices, an inflated idea of my own importance, and the notion that people are longing to hear the gospel). At times all of us—her daughters were in junior high and high school then—would be nearly rolling on the floor with laughter. One evening we had a hat show. Katherine had come home from a missionary meeting with a shopping bag full of hats that a lady told her the Lord had "laid on my heart to give to the missionaries."

She called me this morning from Pennsylvania where she is visiting a daughter. She just wanted to chat while it's still easy to chat, since she'll be going back to Colombia in a few weeks. Asking about a mutual friend who has been in the hospital, she told me to tell her to jump up and praise the Lord. She mentioned a gift sent to her which had been designated for a retired missionary. "Me—retired? I haven't even thought of retiring." She sent it back. We talked about "travailing" for people who have fallen away from

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the Lord. I reminded her of 2 Corinthians 4, the passage about bearing "death in our bodies" in order that life may work in others. Yes, she agreed, that's in the Bible, all right, but she couldn't think of herself in that way—"I'm too cheerful"—even though I happen to know she has suffered many kinds of death for the sake of other people (and has had her own life threatened a number of times, including being stoned and doused with gasoline more than once).

Dear Katherine! "A merry heart doeth good like a medicine." Hers has been an elixir for me. She's one of those who bring forth fruit in old age—though she'd hit me for suggesting she's anywhere near that category. May God make me like her.

How Annoyances May Be Vanquished

In John Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, Christian has a conversation with three women in the House Beautiful: Piety, Prudence, and Charity. He describes his journey and the reasons for it. Prudence questions him about temptation to dwell on the past.

"Can you remember by what means you find your annoyances at times as if they were vanquished?"

"Yes," says Christian, "when I think what I saw at the Cross, that will do it; and when I look upon my broidered coat,* that will do it; and when I look into the Roll* that I carry in my bosom, that will do it; and when my thoughts wax warm about whither I am going, that will do it."

"And what is it makes you so desirous to go to Mount Zion?"

"Why, there I hope to see Him alive that did hang dead on the Cross; and there I hope to be rid of all those things, that, to this day, are in me an annoyance to me; there they say there is no death,

*and tells of meeting Three Shining Ones at the foot of the Cross who give him a "broidered" coat (the righteousness of Christ) and a Roll (the Scriptures).

and there I shall dwell with such company as I like best. For, to tell you truth, I love Him, because I was by Him eased of my burden. And I am weary of my inward sickness; I would fain be where I shall die no more, and with the company that shall continually cry, Holy! holy! holy!"

A Child's Prayer

I had already written the suggestion for prayer for one's children's future spouses when I received a letter from my son-in-law. "Your grandchildren are terrific. Christiana [who is three] was swept away by a wedding witnessed in Louisiana. Lying beside her last night when putting her to bed I asked, 'What'd you like best about the wedding?' She thought . . . then said, 'The blue girls.' Then, in an awed whisper, 'When I get big, Daddy, I want to be a mama and get *married!*' Her little face just beamed. I said, 'Well, we'll have to pray that the Lord grows you up to be a big girl who marries the right Christian man.' And she said, very quickly, 'Pray *now!*' So we did!"

Prayer Requests

- Katherine Morgan told me that when her daughters were born, she began to pray for the mothers of the men they would marry. I had never thought of such a prayer, but I recommend it to you mothers of young children. Probably your children's spouses are growing up now, too. Will their mothers (and fathers) do a good and faithful job as parents? What a difference it will make in the homes your children establish if they do! (Katherine told me that if God had given her leave to go all over the world and personally pick out her sons-in-law, she could not have picked better men than those the Lord gave her. God answers prayer.)

For Our Children

Father, hear us, we are praying,
Hear the words our hearts are saying,
We are praying for our children.
Keep them from the powers of evil,
From the secret, hidden peril,
From the whirlpool that would suck them,
From the treacherous quicksand pluck them.
From the worldling's hollow gladness,
From the sting of faithless sadness,
Holy Father, save our children.
Through life's troubled waters steer them,
Through life's bitter battle cheer them,
Father, Father, be Thou near them.
Read the language of our longing,
Read the wordless pleadings thronging,
Holy Father, for our children.

*And wherever they may bide,
Lead them Home at eventide.*

(From Toward Jerusalem, Amy Carmichael)

Four Ways God Answers Prayer

1. No, that's not the best for you.
2. No, not yet.
3. Yes, I thought you'd never ask.
4. Yes, and there is much more.

(from Linda Schuck, Phoenix)

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October 4, 5 Memphis Tennessee, Central Church, Mrs. Peggy Person, 901-365-4673

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November 1, 2 New York, Hephzibah House, Mrs. Lois Ewald, 212-787-6150

November 16 Madison, Wisconsin, Real Women Seminar, Georgeanne Cusic, 4102 Council Crest, Madison 53711

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But Also to Suffer

Amy Carmichael once spent a day in solitude in a cave in Japan, wrestling in prayer over some secret matter which she never fully revealed to anyone. It seems she feared loneliness. The words which were given to her then in answer to her cry were Paul's to the Philippians when he was in prison and they were being persecuted: "Unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, *but also to suffer* for his sake" (Phil 1:29 AV). She understood then that the Lord was not promising escape from the thing she feared, but assurance that whatever He might allow of suffering in her life would be a privilege and a gift—a thing given to her to give to Him, something which she could expect would accompany her faith. To believe in Christ is to suffer for Him.

In Jesus' last discourse with His disciples He explained the same truth. John 14 records His wonderfully comforting words, "Set your troubled hearts at rest" (NEB), His description of where He was going and why, His clear teaching on obedience as the only proof of love, and the promise of His gift of peace. In the next two chapters we find His prediction of the suffering His disciples should expect—hatred, persecution, their words ignored, their entrance into the synagogues refused, even death. "A servant is not greater than his master," He said. "It is on my account that they will treat you thus" (15:20, 21).

Some newsletter readers will be suffering on the very day that this arrives in the mail. The message it brings is not a new one. Jesus knew that His disciples would often need reminders of the things He had taught them while He was with them. Suffering would tempt them to wonder if the whole thing had been for nothing—their original decision to follow Him, the three years of listening and trying to learn, the price they had paid to be

disciples. Amy Carmichael, alone in that cave, must have been filled with similar questions, although her suffering was of a different kind from the disciples'. Had she missed His call? Was her work all for nothing? What to do with this fear that haunted her?

Don't be afraid to bring your questions to the Lord and hear His loving assurances: "Your grief will be turned into joy. . . . For the moment, you are sad at heart; but I shall see you again and then you will be joyful and no one shall rob you of your joy. . . . I have told you all this so that *in me* you may find peace. In the world you will have trouble. But courage! The victory is mine; I have conquered the world" (Jn 16:20, 22, 33 NEB). Peace is to be found in Him who entered into all our sorrow, knows it from the inside, and asks us to accept the hardest thing as a privilege, a gift, yes, even as an honor—because we have put our trust in Him.

A Sentimental Journey

An invitation to speak for Missions in Focus Week at Wheaton College (Illinois) last April gave me an opportunity to live over again in vivid memory some important crises in my own student life.

Edman Chapel is new since my time, but there were the same eager, earnest, hopeful, uncertain, longing, dubious, shy faces turned up to me that we turned up to chapel speakers in the 1940s. How strange to be on the platform of Pierce Chapel in the evenings, saying the same things I heard when mine was one of the hopeful, uncertain faces. Strange to look up to the balcony where Jim Elliot always sat; to visit my old room in Williston Hall (the one described in the opening chapter of *Passion and Purity*) where I

prayed and dreamed of Jim; to go to Alumni Gym where he used to wrestle; to walk the sidewalks we walked from dorm to class to chapel. Strange—and wonderful—today, to receive a letter from a sophomore at Wheaton, a young man: “Mrs. Elliot, I sit here in my dorm room with books and papers strewn around me, buttressed by the challenge you left with us—‘If you’re a student, the will of God for you is to study. Have you ever thought of that?’ Ha! Yes, I had thought of it. . . . I am prompted to lay down my books for a few minutes, though, to do something I think is important: thank you, thank God, for something else you said while here.” He refers then to my talks on bringing one’s lovelife under Christ’s control (the theme of the above-mentioned book). “I don’t really care if what you said is ‘old-fashioned,’ I’m convinced that it is right on target. . . . The principles make sense to me. I can’t help but feel that if we had let ourselves hunger without being fed we would be much happier, and much more mature in Christ. . . . I thank you for bearing a message that was heard and is being heeded (by God’s grace) as well as possible by at least one Wheaton student. . . . In as small a way as it may be, for me this is ‘fellowship in His sufferings.’ Paul’s words in 2 Corinthians 16:13, 14, and 2 Corinthians 5:7 have special significance to me now. Thank the Lord Elisabeth Elliot is old-fashioned!”

Child-Care

A business which is “old hat” in England is new and rapidly growing in America—the training of nannies, women whose profession is the care of other people’s children. Most of the nannies are young, but it is of particular significance that many of them are middle-aged women who have left careers. They have had ample opportunity to find that the business world can be an awful bore, but, as one of them said, “Nothing is as interesting as babies.” What a shame that the mothers of these children are out chasing money, freedom, power, a cosmopolitan lifestyle, or who-knows-what and missing out on the most demanding, consuming, rewarding, ful-

filling, and certainly the most *creative* job in the world. If only they’d listen to the older women they’re about to hire! Those women could tell them that the glamor is false, and the mothers could save themselves \$300 a week, look after their own babies, and the babies—bless ‘em—wouldn’t be motherless.

One is reminded of the description of the ostrich which has neither sense nor wisdom: “She treats her chicks heartlessly as if they were not hers, not caring if her labour is wasted . . . while like a cock she struts over the uplands” (Jb 39:16-18 NEB).

Dr. T. Berry Brazelton of Harvard and Dr. Edward Zigler of Yale, speaking of the latent damage to infants caused by sensory deprivation and separation from the mother, compared it to the effects of a drug which caused gross deformities in Europe in the 1960s. They said, “We might be handing out psychological thalidomide.”

Are you one of those mothers who has no choice but to work? There is help for you. Remember, first of all, that your Heavenly Father knows what you need (Mt 6:33), and “My God will supply all that you need from his glorious resources in Christ Jesus” (Phil 4:19 JBP). There is excellent practical advice in Mary Pride’s book, *The Way Home*. You may find a way to earn money and stay home. Never limit what God may do in response to faith and obedience.

Recommended Reading

Hannah Whitall Smith: *The Christian’s Secret of a Happy Life* (Word Books, Waco, Texas). This classic has been in print for over ninety years and comes now in paperback with an introduction and built-in study guide which I was delighted to write at the publisher’s request. The book is full of lucid, practical, thoroughly scriptural wisdom. Excellent for group or individual study.

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Notes from a Grandmother's Diary

ELISABETH (age five): "Come outside, Granny. I want you to play with me."

GRANNY: "In a few minutes, sweetheart. I've got a few things to do here in the kitchen."

ELISABETH: "Oh, don't worry about all that housework, Granny. Leave it to Mama. She's used to it."

In Sunday School the children were singing "I've Got a Home in Glory-Land," with gestures. When they came to the stanza, "I took Jesus as my Savior, you take Him too!" Elisabeth, instead of pointing forward as everyone else did, pointed straight back over her shoulder at her eight-year-old brother, Walter.

How I Got the Job Done

Last week I received a fat package in the mail which I was not specially eager to open. The galleys of a new book. I was going to the west coast so I had to do the proofreading and correcting in two days in order to return them by the deadline. I feel as Flannery O'Connor felt about reading galleys—it's like chewing all day on a horse blanket, or eating stewed Kleenex—pretty tasteless stuff that I've worked over for years and can't believe anybody in the world will find readable. I have to make myself sit down at the desk and go to it. This time it seemed worse than ever. The only way I got the job done was to set myself small goals—ten pages at a time, then a break: write a letter. Ten more pages: make a phone call. Ten more: walk to the post office. Ten more: another letter. I did it. I got through the 230 pages and put it in the mail before I left for the airport. The title of the book? I'm afraid to tell you! You might say, when you see it on the shelf next fall, "Oh, that's the one she said was like stewed Kleenex."

"My character as a mature woman will generally be shaped less by big decisions than by small decisions I make daily in disciplining my life right now." (From a letter from Allison McNeese, Iowa)

My Mother

In April my mother fell and broke her hip. It's a miracle it hasn't happened sooner—she has fallen many times. The surgery to insert a pin and plate was successful, and she is recovering. There have been several offers of help in response to my request, so we trust the Lord will make our way plain in His time. We count on your prayers.

Prayer Requests

Prayer is preparation for receiving the blessings we ask. It brings us, like little children, to the Father's knee. We need things; we want things for ourselves and others; we ask Him for them. But He is perfect Love, and for that very reason will not always give what we ask. If we trust Him, we will receive with thanksgiving whatever He gives, whether it fits our notions of what we need or not.

Some pointers for prayer:

- For Christian leaders to whom others look for example, that they may be given grace to obey their Master at any cost, even at the cost of popularity (see Jn 15:19, 20).
- For fathers, that they may take Christ's yoke upon them and learn of Him who is meek and humble in heart. Their burdens of responsibility are too heavy to bear alone. Sharing Christ's yoke makes them bearable.
- For lonely children who think that they are sometimes not much more than a nuisance and an obstacle to the lifestyle their parents desire.

"Watch Thou, dear Lord, with those who wake, or watch, or weep tonight, and give Thine angels charge over those who sleep. Tend Thy sick ones, O Lord Christ. Rest Thy weary ones. Bless Thy dying ones. Soothe Thy suffering ones. Pity Thine afflicted ones. And all for Thy love's sake. Amen." (St. Augustine)

Questions and Answers

How do we reconcile God's promises for protection with the fact that so many evil things do happen in our lives? Can we believe God for protection?

This question comes up often, and no wonder, since there are many promises in the Bible about protection, including (especially in the Old Testament) physical protection. We must be careful to interpret Scripture with Scripture, and if we examine the record we find that God did not by any means always protect His people from harm. He has absolute power to keep us safe, both physically and spiritually, but His engineering of the universe made room for man's freedom to choose—that is, freedom to will to obey or to disobey Him. This is a deep mystery. Man's disobedience brought evil into the world, and all of us are subject to it. God does not cancel out its effects, even for His choicest servants (John the Baptist, Stephen, those nameless victims of Hebrews 11:35-37, for example). Nevertheless, we have the promises. Romans 8:35-39 is one of my most reread passages. I believe we can rest assured that we are invulnerable so long as God does not give permission for us to be hurt. If He gives that permission, He will not leave us alone. He goes with us through the valley, the deep water, the furnace. He will never, absolutely never, leave us or forsake us.

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How to Discover What God Wants

A young woman came in great perplexity to a Scottish preacher, asking how she could resolve the question of her own desires when they seemed to be in such contradiction to the will of God. He took out a slip of paper, wrote two words on it, handed it to her with the request that she sit down for ten minutes, ponder the words, cross out one of them, and bring the slip back to him. She sat down and read: *No Lord*. Which to cross out? It did not take her long to see that if she was saying *No* she could not say *Lord*, and if she wanted to call Him *Lord*, she could not say *No*.

No question comes up more often among Christian young people who face what seem to be limitless options than this one of how to discover what God wants them to do. What, exactly, is one's calling?

There are two very simple conditions to discovering the will of God. Paul states them clearly in his letter to the Romans, chapter 12. The first is in verse 1 (Jerusalem Bible): ". . . offering your living bodies as a holy sacrifice, truly pleasing to God." The place to start is by putting yourself utterly and unconditionally at God's disposal. You say *Yes Lord*. You turn over all the rights at the very beginning. Once that's settled you can go on to the second, in verse 2: "Do not model yourselves on the behavior of the world around you, but let your behavior change, modelled by your new mind." I said that the conditions were simple. I did not say they were easy. Exchanging a *No Lord* for a *Yes Lord* has often been painful for me. But I do want a "new mind"—one that takes its cues from the Word of God, not the mass media. I pray for a clear eye to see through the fog of popular opinion, and a will strong enough to withstand the currents—a will surrendered, laid

alongside Christ's. He is my model. This means a different set of ambitions, a different definition of happiness, a different standard of judgment altogether. Behavior will change, and very likely it will change enough to make me appear rather odd—but then my Master was thought very odd.

Paul goes on to say that these conditions are "the only way to discover the will of God and know what is good, what it is that God wants, what is the perfect thing to do." No wonder we scratch our heads and ask, "What is the secret of knowing the will of God?" We haven't started at the right place—the offering of that all-inclusive sacrifice, our very bodies, and then the resolute refusal of the world's values.

"Make Thy paths known to me, O Lord; teach me Thy ways. Lead me in Thy truth and teach me; Thou art God my Savior." (Ps 25:4, 5 NEB)

When we cannot see our way
Let us trust and still obey;
He who bids us forward go
Cannot fail the way to show.
Though the sea be deep and wide,
Though a passage seem denied,
Fearless let us still proceed,
Since the Lord vouchsafes to lead. (Anon.)

"If there is any man who fears the Lord, he shall be shown the path that he should choose" (Ps 25:12 NEB).

Disposable Children

A ruling of the Internal Revenue Service now allows parents a tax exemption if a child intended for abortion lives for any length of time. The breathtakingly fancy mental footwork necessary to justify such action goes something like

this: what was meant to be discarded is not a child. It is called a "p.o.c." (product of conception, which of course is what children and all the rest of us are). The bad news is that this disposable tissue, this mere scrap of Kleenex, turned out to be a child and (alas) was *born*. The good news is that you can get a tax exemption for a dependent child. The best news is that its dependence is only temporary. Call it a child, then, till you get your money. You need not go to the trouble of keeping it. You can call it tissue again and toss it out. Thus the abortionist's mistake becomes the taxpayer's windfall, and the doctor who orders the child abandoned (i.e., killed by neglect and sometimes by active means) is not charged with murder but paid for what is now called a post-natal abortion. Now will you stand up against the outrage called "pro-choice"? Now do you understand its implications? "Because they have not seen fit to acknowledge God, he has given them up to their own depraved reason. This leads them to break all the rules of conduct. They are filled with every kind of injustice, mischief, rapacity, and malice. . . . They are without natural affection and without pity" (Romans 1:28, 29, 31 NEB).

Letters

From Washington state: "I have felt in my heart since seventh grade that above all else I want to follow God. It might be hard or scary, but what better place to be than in God's arms when the road gets bumpy and dark? Thank you for encouraging me in this commitment."

From the midwest came a long letter, telling me the story of many ups and downs, off agains, on agains, with a certain man. "I read your book *Passion and Purity*, and vowed I would be that way . . . For the last nine months of our relationship we had intercourse. I knew it was wrong and felt guilty about it but I loved him and wanted to be with him . . . Suddenly he ups and decides to drop me and everything he ever had in Christ. How I wish I could change what I've done. I feel so

ashamed and foolish. Angry at him because I feel betrayed and used. I was so vulnerable, so trusting, and he just booted me right out of his life. . . . I've begun reading your book all over again. This 'lovelife' of mine has certainly been a 'crucial battleground.' . . . I feel so unclean, so impure, for having given away something so precious to someone so undeserving."

The warnings in my book were not enough. Perhaps the warnings in this young woman's letter—the voice of sad experience, authentic, all too familiar—will be enough to keep some reader out of bed till God gives him/her in marriage to the one of his choice. Virginity is the *gift you only give once*.

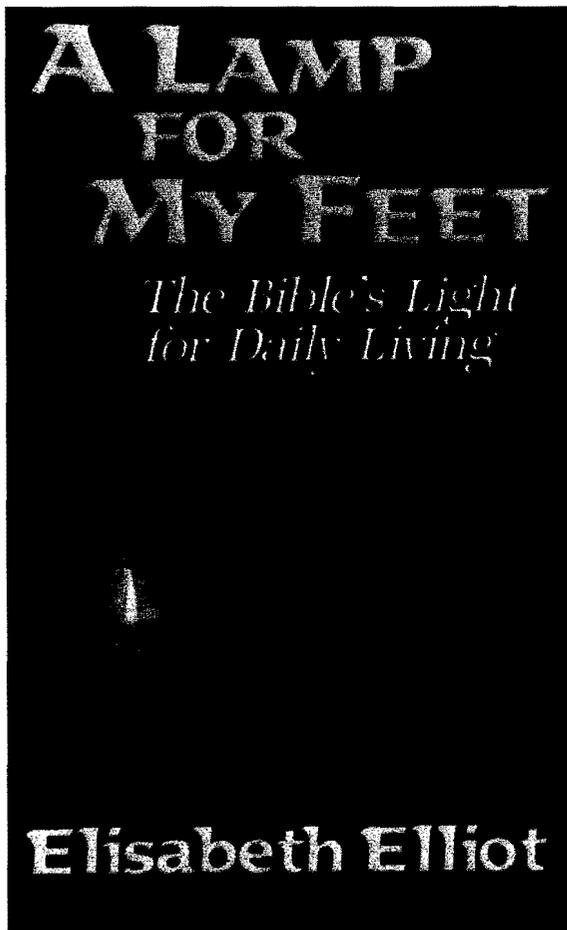
"A friend recommended *Passion and Purity*. I refused to read it at first, thinking a book with a title like that could only have been written by a thirteenth century nun or something! But the Holy Spirit was faithful to convict. It changed my heart and started me on a potato-chip syndrome through your books (i.e., I couldn't stop after just one)."

A Diet that Works

As you know, Lars and I travel often and eat out often. I have to work hard at keeping my weight down. I've found a diet that works. I didn't need to see a doctor for permission or a prescription. I never count calories. I don't require special foods. I need not embarrass a hostess by refusing items on her menu. The diet costs me nothing but a certain measure of self-denial. Want the secret? Send your check for whatever you think the secret is worth to you—no, don't send me any checks. I'd be arrested. Just read the next newsletter. I'll give away my secret.

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What's Happened to Grandmothers?

In the dim and distant past, when life's tempo wasn't fast,
Grandma used to rock and knit, crochet, tat, and babysit.
When the kids were in a jam, they could always count on Gram.
In an age of gracious living, Grandma was the gal for giving.

Grandma now is at the gym, exercising to keep slim;
She's off touring with the bunch, taking clients out to lunch,
Driving north to ski or curl—all her days are in a whirl.
Nothing seems to stop or block her, now that Grandma's off her rocker.
(Sent by a reader who didn't know the source. Can anyone identify it?)

A New Book

In August, *A Lamp For My Feet: The Bible's Light for Daily Living* was published by Servant Publications of Ann Arbor, Michigan. It is a collection of short scriptural meditations written in my "quiet time." It may be ordered in hardcover at \$9.95 by writing to *The Elisabeth Elliot Newsletter*. For a contribution of \$15.00 or more you will receive a copy of the book plus an additional year of the newsletter.

* * *

Printer's Error: In the May/June Newsletter, column one, page 1, *compromises* should have been *comprises*. The New Testament never compromises responsibilities!

* * *

Prayer

For all who have no intercessor,
For all who are at present in agony, extreme necessity, or affliction,
For all who are attempting any good work which will bring glory to the name of God or some great good to the Church,
For all who have ever been offended by me in either word or deed.
(abridged from Lancelot Andrewes' *Private Devotions*)

Free us, dear Lord, from the root of all evil—the love of money. Free us from the love of status symbols (in what we eat, wear, drive, watch, read, drink), from affectation in any form, and from the lust to possess and to impress. Make us content to receive what You have given. Deliver us from arrogating to ourselves what is not given. May it be the habit of our lives to be thankful for what we have rather than to complain about what we have not, for Christ's sake. Amen.

Train up a Child

Boswell tells how when Samuel Johnson was still a child in petticoats, his mother put a prayer book into his hands, pointed out the collect for the day, and said, "Sam, you must get this by heart." She went upstairs, leaving him to study it. By the time she had reached the second floor, she heard him following her. "What's the matter?" she said. "I can say it," he replied and repeated it distinctly, though he could not have read it more than twice.

Was he a genius at that age? Perhaps. But I think it more likely that his intellectual powers owed much to his parents' expectation and patient instruction. Expect little and you'll surely get it.

Travel Schedule

September 1985/ January 1986

September 27, 28

Gardiner, Maine, Women of Christ Church.
Mrs. Newell D. Squires.

October 3

Charlotte, North Carolina, Calvary Church.
Mrs. Sara Nader, 704-366-6560.

October 4, 5

Memphis, Tennessee, Central Church. Mrs.
Peggy Person, 901-365-4673.

October 15

Rockville, Indiana, Fellowship of Christian
Athletes. Jack Roberts, 816-921-0909.

October 18-20

St. Simons Island, Georgia. Mrs. Barbara
Murphy, 904-253-7327.

November 1, 2

New York City, Hephzibah House. Mrs. John
Ewald, 212-787-6150.

November 7

Cambridge, Massachusetts, Harvard Chris-
tian Colloquium, 45 Francis Ave., Cambridge,
Massachusetts 02138.

November 16

Madison, Wisconsin, Real Women Seminar.
Marita Menard, 40 Oak Creek Trail, Madison,
Wisconsin 53717.

November 22

Cambridge, Massachusetts, Campus Crusade
for Christ, Massachusetts Institute of
Technology.

December 6

Raleigh, North Carolina, Pregnancy Life Care
Center. Melinda Delahoyde, 919-847-9715.

January 12, 1986

Chicago Sunday Evening Club, 5 P.M. WTTW,
Channel 11.

January 13, 14

Auburn, Alabama, Covenant Presbyterian
Church.

January 23-25

Lincoln, Nebraska, Baptist Student Union.
Brett Yohn, 402-483-1451.

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The Elisabeth Elliot Newsletter

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Thanksgiving for What Is Given

Some people are substituting "Turkey Day" for Thanksgiving. I think it must be because they are not aware that there's anybody to thank, and the most important thing about the holiday is food. Christians know there is Somebody to thank, but often when we make a list of things to thank Him for we include only things we like. A bride can't get away with that. She writes a note to everybody, not only the rich uncle who gave the couple matching BMWs, but the poor aunt who gave them a crocheted toilet-paper cover. In other words, she has to express thanks for whatever she's received.

Wouldn't that be a good thing for us to do with God? We are meant to give thanks "in everything," even if we're like the little girl who said she could think of a lot of things she'd rather have than eternal life. The mature Christian offers not just polite thanks but heartfelt thanks that springs from a far deeper source than his own pleasure. Thanksgiving is a spiritual exercise, necessary to the building of a healthy soul. It takes us out of the stuffiness of ourselves into the fresh breeze and sunlight of the will of God. The simple act of thanking Him is for most of us an abrupt change of activity, a break from work and worry, a move toward re-creation.

I am not suggesting the mouthing of foolish platitudes, or evasion of the truth. That is not how God is glorified, or souls fortified. I want to see clearly what I have been given and to thank Him with an honest heart. What are the "givens"?

Thankless children we all are, more or less, comprehending but dimly the truth of God's fathomless love for us. We do not know Him as a gracious Giver, we do not understand His

most precious gifts, or the depth of His love, the wisdom with which He has planned our lives, the price He pays to bring us to glory and fulfillment. When some petty private concern or perhaps some bad news depresses or confuses me, I am in no position to be thankful. Far from it. That is the time, precisely then, that I must begin by deliberately putting my mind on some great Realities. What are these "givens"? What do I most unshakably believe in? God the Father Almighty. Jesus Christ His only Son. The Holy Ghost, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, the life everlasting. Not a long list, but all we need. "The necessary supplies issued to us, the standard equipment of the Christian." We didn't ask for any of them. (Imagine having nothing more than we've asked for!) They are *given*.

Take the list of whatever we're not thankful for and measure it against the mighty foundation stones of our faith. The truth of our private lives can be understood only in relation to those Realities. Some of us know very little of suffering, but we know disappointments and betrayals and losses and bitterness. Are we really meant to thank God for such things? Let's be clear about one thing: God does not *cause* all the things we don't like. But He does permit them to happen because it is in this fallen world that we humans must learn to walk by faith. He doesn't leave us to ourselves, however. He shares every step. He walked this lonesome road first, He gave Himself for us, He died for us. "Can we not trust such a God to give us, with Him, everything else that we can need?" (Rom 8:32 JBP) Those disappointments give us the chance to learn to know Him and the meaning of His gifts, and, in the midst of darkness, to receive His light. Doesn't *that* transform the not-thankful list into a thankful one?

Moonless Seas

Some of you are perhaps feeling that you are voyaging just now on a moonless sea. Uncertainty surrounds you. There seem to be no signs to follow. Perhaps you feel about to be engulfed by loneliness. There is no one to whom you can speak of your need. Amy Carmichael wrote of such a feeling when, as a missionary of twenty-six, she had to leave Japan because of health, went to China for recuperation, but soon thought God was telling her to go to Ceylon. (All this preceded her going to India, where she stayed for fifty-three years.) I have on my desk her original hand-written letter of August 25, 1894, as she was en route to Colombo. "All along, let us remember, we are not asked to understand, but simply to obey. . . . On July 28, Saturday, I sailed. We had to come on board on Friday night, and just as the tender [a small boat] where were the dear friends who had come to say goodbye was moving off, and the chill of loneliness shivered through me, like a warm love-clasp came the long-loved lines—'And only Heaven is better than to walk with Christ at midnight, over moonless seas.' I couldn't feel frightened then. Praise Him for the moonless seas—all the better the opportunity for proving Him to be indeed the El Shaddai, 'the God who is Enough.'"

Let me add my own word of witness to hers, and to that of the tens of thousands who have learned that He is indeed Enough. He is not all we would ask for (if we were honest), but it is precisely when we do not have what we would ask for, and *only then*, that we can clearly perceive His all-sufficiency. It is when the sea is moonless that the Lord has become my Light.

A Note of Thanks

Some time ago I mentioned that the Newsletter was "in the hole." Not any more. We're now breaking even. Thanks to you who have helped, some by paying for their own subscriptions, some by paying more in order to enable those who can't pay to stay on the list.

How to Stay on Our Mailing List

Hardly a week goes by without a letter from somebody saying, "For some reason I'm not getting your newsletter anymore." There is a simple explanation. After you had received five newsletters a note was sent asking whether you wished to stay on the list. If you did not return the form, your name was automatically deleted. It costs us six dollars per year per subscription. You can still get the letter without sending the money, but you can't get it without returning the form. We want to spare you one of our pet peeves—people put us on mailing lists we don't want to be on which are *impossible* to get off! Ours isn't.

* * *

It is His will that I should cast my cares on Him each day.

He also tells me not to cast my confidence away.

But oh, how foolishly I act, if taken unawares—I cast my confidence away, and carry all my cares.

Anon.

(1 Pt 5:7; Heb 10:35)

* * *

"All loneliness, angers, hatreds, envies and itchings. . . if rolled into one single experience and put into the scale against the least moment of the joy that is felt by the least in Heaven would have no weight that could be registered at all." C.S. Lewis, *The Great Divorce*.

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My Mother

Some of you have written to say that you've been praying for my mother. Thank you so very much. Since she broke her hip she has needed twenty-four-hour care, and it has become clear that it is out of the question for her to leave the Quarryville Presbyterian Home. We were able to bring her here for a few days' visit in July. Her disorientation was even more marked, her anxieties exacerbated. (She kept wondering how she would get "home, wherever that is," and whether she ought to try to make "train reservations.") Nothing I said could reassure her, for the brain mechanisms for receiving new information seem to be gone. Her trouble is a common one—arteriosclerosis. When we drove her back to Pennsylvania we saw a room full of women much worse off than Mother is, and I have been pondering how God may be glorified in such lives. I don't know. I only know He loves them, He has promised that those who trust Him will bring forth fruit in old age, and the mystery of suffering was dealt with on the Cross. I think of the wonderful words of the hymn, "Crown Him with Many Crowns":

Who every grief hath known that wrings the
human breast,
And takes and bears them for His own, that all
in Him may rest.

The Diet That Works

In the last newsletter I promised to reveal the secret of my miracle diet—costs nothing, doesn't count calories, includes all sorts of food, will work for the rest of your life, etc. It's so simple (I didn't say easy) it's simply ridiculous. Just draw a line with your knife straight through the middle of each portion on your plate. Eat half of it. (If you're serving up your own portion, of course, it makes more sense just to serve up half of what you consider normal.)

If Hurt, Bless

A friend writes of problems in the church and of the tough battle she has fought with the powers of darkness as she has prayed for her husband during certain crucial church meetings. He was not the pastor but happened to be in a place of responsibility, so he bore the brunt of the troubles. "Have been reading up on blessing," she wrote. "It has been clear that Joe and I would have to bless the ones who have hurt us so badly—at least that's what I kept finding in the Word. I realized I had no idea how to bless someone. I can pray for him, commend and commit him to the Lord, forgive him, etc., but how do I 'bless' him? When Christ took up the little children to bless them it doesn't say He taught or admonished them—He blessed them. I think blessing means turning a person so that God falls upon him. . . . Blessing people faces them the right way to *perceive* God's goodness falling on them. The definition works interpersonally, too. If I bless Jill before others, I am illuminating those aspects of her character which reflect God, instead of agreeing with the whisperers."

Prayer

Give me a pure heart
that I may see Thee,
A humble heart
that I may hear Thee,
A heart of love
that I may serve Thee,
A heart of faith,
that I may abide in Thee.
(Dag Hammarskjöld)

* * *

Please pray for help as I continue to work on the biography of Amy Carmichael. Sometimes progress seems fairly rapid, at other times I feel like the wheels of the Egyptian chariots, which "drave heavily" (Ex 14:25).

Candied Grapefruit Peel

Don't throw away those rinds! Take four halves, after you've eaten the insides, and cover them with cold water. Add a tablespoon of salt, bring to boil, boil thirty minutes, drain and rinse with cold water. Scrape out the membranes (don't scrape rinds too clean), slice thinly, cover with water again, add salt, boil thirty minutes. Drain and repeat once more. In heavy skillet or Dutch oven place rinds, 2 cups sugar, ½ cup water. Cook till nearly dry. Drain in colander. Roll each piece in granulated sugar and lay on waxed paper to dry for about twenty-four hours.

Old Christmas Cards

Some missionaries want old Christmas cards to give away. If you know some of them, by all means send them yours. Another alternative to discarding the cards is to cut them into neat little gift tags for next year. Why pay \$2.00 for a packet of six gift tags when you can have them for a few minutes' work with the scissors? I cut out angels, mangers, madonnas, even reindeer and holly wreaths from the cards and use the other side for the "To _____ From _____." The blank backs of white cards I put into a box in my desk for scratch paper.

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Travel Schedule

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November 22

Cambridge, Massachusetts, Campus Crusade for Christ, Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

December 6

Raleigh, North Carolina, Pregnancy Life Care Center. Melinda Delahoyde, 919-847-9715.

January 12, 1986

Chicago Sunday Evening Club, 5 P.M. WTTW, Channel 11.

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Lincoln, Nebraska, Baptist Student Union. Brett Yohn, 402-483-1451.

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Rules for Courtship

The following, which I wish we could shout from the housetops, was published in 1962 as a small leaflet entitled "Rules for Keeping Company." No author's name is given. It is reprinted here by permission from Liguori Publications, Liguori, Missouri 63057.

"A serious problem is presented to parents and other directors of youth in the wrong views of courtship that are prevalent today. Courtship usually means the association between a marriageable man and a marriageable woman as a mutual tryout of one another's character for marriage. It is so fraught with moral danger that the rules governing it should be strictly enforced:

1. Close association and friendship, or what is known as company-keeping (dating), between a man and a woman who cannot get married, or who do not intend ever to get married, or who should not think of marriage for some years to come, is always seriously wrong. Therefore: (1) nothing can justify company-keeping with a divorced or married person; (2) if one does not intend to get married, one has no right to keep another person from other opportunities to contract marriage, and no right to run the risks of company-keeping; (3) high school students and other young people for whom marriage is out of the question for many years have no right to steady company-keeping. The reason? Because the dangers in company-keeping are grave, and only a grave reason such as possibility of marriage can justify subjecting oneself to such dangers.

2. Company-keeping does not entitle man and woman to the right of long, private, unguarded interviews with one another, nor to any of the familiarities (better to be called sensual indulgences) that usually arise from

such lonely trysts. Company-keeping is safe only when it is kept for the most part out in the open, i.e., in such a manner that others may or could observe it at all times and see nothing wrong.

3. Company-keeping must not be too prolonged. It does not require several years for a man and woman to ascertain whether they are suited to one another for marriage. If it is possible, it is, after a reasonable time (six months to a year), obligatory on the man to speak of getting married before long. If there be obstacles to marriage within that time, they must do all the more to keep out of occasions of sin (such as lonely meetings) if they are to be allowed to continue going together.

The world is doing all in its power to make company-keeping an inevitable source of sin for young people. Many parents have taken sides with the world. The above rules should be explained early to Catholic (and to all Christian) young men and women, and then duly enforced by those who have them in charge."

My Mother

In the last letter I said that it was out of the question for Mother to leave the Quarryville Home. A brief visit with us in July reinforced our conviction that the Home was where she was most contented, but in September my brother Dave Howard took her to Illinois for a three-week visit. She was so happy there that he and Phyllis decided to keep her indefinitely. Although still forgetful and confused as to chronology and geography, she eats better, walks with a walker, and can play a mean game of Scrabble. Thank you for praying. This is an answer "exceedingly abundantly above" anything I had asked. "O ye of little faith! Wherefore didst thou doubt?"

Instructions for Shepherds (and Sheep)

St. Paul's second letter to the young pastor Timothy is packed with practical advice. Most of it applies to all of us who call ourselves Christians. Check this sampling:

- Take your share of suffering 2 Tm 1:8
- Take strength from the grace of God 2:1
- Take your share of hardship 2:3
- Remember Jesus Christ..... 2:8
- Try hard to show yourself worthy 2:15
- Avoid empty and worldly chatter 2:16
- Turn from wayward impulses 2:22
- Pursue justice, integrity, love, peace 2:22
- Have nothing to do with foolish speculations 2:23
- Do not be quarrelsome 2:23
- Be kindly towards all 2:24
- Be a good teacher, tolerant, gentle 2:24
- Keep clear of men who put money and pleasure in the place of God 3:6
- Stand by the truths you have learned.... 3:14
- Keep calm and sane at all times..... 4:5
- Face hardship 4:5
- Do all the duties of your calling 4:5

Most of us, I believe, will find that we do not score very high on this test. Would your pastor? Thank God it isn't up to us to give him a grade, but it is certainly up to us to pray for him. He carries a tremendous burden of responsibility to God and to the flock God has assigned to him as shepherd. Shouldn't we be praying regularly for our pastors? Shouldn't we ask God to show us ways to make their burdens lighter? One of the ways, surely, would be for *us*, the flock, to obey these injunctions. Don't they apply to us too? God help us all, sheep and shepherds alike.

A Note of Thanks

Ann Spangler of Servant Publications had been graciously taking the responsibility of putting together the Newsletter. I sent her the material and she brought it into order, deciding on sequence of articles, etc. She now has new responsibilities which require her to turn over the job to Mary Case. Thank you ever so much, Ann, for your help in the past, and Mary for yours in the future.

Drastic Obedience

"One reads tomes on the work of the Holy Spirit when one five-minutes of drastic obedience would make things as clear as a sunbeam." Oswald Chambers: *My Utmost for His Highest*

There Is No Other Way

In order to get to a place called Laity Lodge in Texas you have to drive into a riverbed. The road takes you down a steep, rocky hill into a canyon and straight into the water. There is a sign at the water's edge which says, "Yes. You drive in the river."

One who has made up his mind to go to the uttermost with God will come to a place as unexpected and perhaps looking as impossible to travel as that riverbed looks. He may glance around for an alternative route, but if he wants what God promises His faithful ones, he must go straight into the danger. There is no other way.

The written word is our direction. Trust it. Obey it. Drive in the river and get to Laity Lodge. Moses said to Israel, "I offer you the choice of life or death, blessing or curse. Choose life and then you and your descendants will live; love the Lord your God, obey him, and hold fast to him: that is life for you."

When you take the risk of obedience, you find solid rock beneath you—and markers, evidence that someone has traveled this route before. "The Lord your God will cross over at your head. . . he will be with you; he will not fail you or forsake you. Do not be discouraged or afraid" (Dt 30:19, 20; 31:3, 8 NEB). It's what the old gospel song puts so simply:

"Trust and obey, for there's no other way
To be happy in Jesus but to trust and obey."

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The Spirit of Renunciation

Francois Coillard, missionary of the Zambesi, wrote, "When we see missionary festivals so run after—when we hear these stirring hymns, these sublime and moving protestations of our compassion for the perishing Heathen, and of our entire devotion to Him whom we acknowledge as *King*, should we not expect to see a whole crusade on the march for the conquest of the world, singing 'Onward, Christian Soldiers'? One might suppose that all we have and all we hope for had been laid on the altar, waiting for nothing but the fire from heaven. And in reality, what have we done? What have we given? What have we sacrificed? Where does this spirit of renunciation show itself in the details of daily life? What discipline are we willing to submit to? What ease, what luxuries have we denied ourselves?

"Have we not indeed often grudged to God's service what we could spare? And alas even this half-hearted zeal soon evaporates. The fit of spasmodic devotion once over, we take back from God what we had professed to give Him; we return to the idols of our hearts, refuse His claims, and leave the Heathen to perish without compunction." (Quoted by Amy Carmichael in a private letter, May 2, 1899)

What Do You Want Your Biographer to Say about You?

My brother Tom gave me a collection of essays on the writing of biography, to help in the work I am at present engaged in. There's a lesson for all of us, I think, in this paragraph from an essay written in 1932 by Claude M. Fuess, headmaster of Phillips Academy:

"If [Gamaliel] Bradford [a famous biographer] were, in some whimsical mood, to turn his analytic gaze in my direction, what should I like him to notice: that golden Phi Beta Kappa key or that unpaid laundry bill; that ten-dollar check sent to an indigent cousin or that towel pilfered from the Pullman Company; that unprinted ode to spring or that kick furtively bestowed upon a stray cat?"

The Golden Rule for Roommates

- If you open it, close it.
 - If you turn it on, turn it off.
 - If you unlock it, lock it up.
 - If you break it, admit it.
 - If you can't fix it, call in someone who can.
 - If you borrow it, return it.
 - If you value it, take care of it.
 - If you make a mess, clean it up.
 - If you move it, put it back.
 - If it belongs to someone else and you want to use it, get permission.
 - If you don't know how to operate it, leave it alone.
 - If it's none of your business, don't ask questions.
 - If it ain't broke, don't fix it.
 - If it will brighten someone's day, say it.
- (From a letter to Ann Landers, reprinted in the Singles paper, Calvary Church, Placentia, California. Thanks, Second-Milers.)

Prayer

- Please pray for me the prayer Paul prayed for the Colossian Christians: "that your outward lives, which men see, may bring credit to your master's name, and that you may bring joy to his heart by bearing genuine Christian fruit in all that you do, and that your knowledge of God may grow yet deeper" (Col 1:10 JBP).
- I need all the prayer I can get for the speaking engagements listed in the itinerary. Are there some of you who will pray specifically on the dates given? Ask that my words may carry God's message, that there will be ears to hear and hearts ready to obey, and that the Holy Spirit will grant power.
- Please thank God with me for the reception my book *Passion and Purity* has had. Never have I received so much mail so soon. It is greatly cheering to know there are still young people who search for the beacon of purity. Pray that the book will be put into the hands of many more who need its message on virginity.

Letter from a Reader

"Several years ago you sent me the prayer of Betty Scott Stam on a small piece of parchment. It is a prayer of dedication and commitment and has turned my life around. I still carry it in my wallet and read it from time to time. I also share it with others whenever I feel it is appropriate.

"I prayed that prayer nearly every day: 'Lord, I give up all my own plans and purposes . . . ' until I could say it all and truly agree in my heart. The last part, 'at any cost,' took six months to achieve. Once I did, things moved quickly. My husband of twenty-three years divorced me to marry a younger woman. But God was gracious . . . [The writer tells the story of how He has led and provided.] Today, four years later, I am praying that prayer again, and I'm feeling a call I've felt since I was twelve—to the foreign mission field."

Often, as Jesus told us (Lk 9:24), finding life (in heavenly terms) entails losing life (in earthly terms). What we had depended on gives way. "Thy will be done" means mine be undone. Betty Scott Stam could not have known that in a few years she would be beheaded by Chinese Communists when she prayed,

Lord, I give up all my own plans and purposes, all my own desires and hopes, and accept Thy will for my life. I give myself, my life, my all, utterly to Thee to be Thine forever. Fill me and seal me with Thy Holy Spirit. Use me as Thou wilt. Send me where Thou wilt. Work out Thy whole will in my life at any cost, now and forever. Amen.

The Elisabeth Elliot Newsletter

Servant Ministries, Inc.
Post Office Box 7711
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48107

Travel Schedule Feb./March 1986

February 7-9 Tennessee Valley Women's Retreat, Mrs. Niedermeyer 205-881-3440.

February 9 Huntsville, Alabama, Faith Chapel 205-852-1606.

February 11 Topsfield, Massachusetts, Congregational Church Women.

February 12 Wenham, Massachusetts, Gordon College chapel 617-927-2300.

February 13 La Mirada, California, Biola University chapel 213-994-0351.

February 13 Anaheim, California, Youth for Christ staff and board conference 312-668-6600.

February 17 Wellesley, Massachusetts, Campus Crusade for Christ, Ginger Paluba, RFD #2, Winsted, Connecticut 06098.

February 21 Prattville, Alabama, First Presbyterian Church 205-365-6387.

February 28 Toronto, Ontario, Canada Christian College, 416-923-8833.

March 1 London, Ontario, Women Alive, 705-726-3803.

March 15 Natick, Massachusetts, Daybreak Crisis Pregnancy Center, Carol Rosa, 617-489-4276.

March 21, 22 Calgary, Alberta, Women Alive, 705-726-3803.

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The Elisabeth Elliot Newsletter

March/April 1986

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Struggling with Self-Esteem

Who has been telling people that they should always be "struggling" with things? Who came up with this self-esteem notion? Another letter (I'm amazed at how many I get about this business) says, "I'm so tired of not accepting myself. I can't seem to let go of my standards of what a woman should be." It looks to me as though we've gone entirely too far. Isn't it time to quit prying into our own psyches and take a long, careful look at the Cross of Jesus? Think of what He intended for us there: "His purpose in dying for all was that men, while still in life, should *cease to live for themselves*" (2 Cor 5:15); of why He did it: "He loved me and gave himself for me" (Gal 2:20); of what His death accomplishes: "When anyone is united to Christ, there is a *new act of creation*" (2 Cor 5:17; NEB footnote). Balance the word of Romans 12:3 ("Do not be conceited or think too highly of yourself") with that of Colossians 1:21, 22 ("You yourselves, who were strangers to God. . . his spiritual enemies, he has now reconciled through the death of his body on the cross, so that he might welcome you into his presence clean and pure, without blame or reproach" J.B. Phillips' translation). Identify yourself with the company God has chosen: "what the world calls foolish, to shame the wise; he has chosen what the world calls weak, to shame the strong. He has chosen things of little strength and small repute . . . to explode the pretensions of the things that are—that no man may boast in the presence of God" (1 Cor 1:27, 28; JBP).

The poor girl was tired of not accepting herself (which self?) and trying to let go her standards. If there's one thing that's mighty scarce these days it's standards! Of course, if she

garnered them from "Dynasty" or from *People* magazine, the quicker she lets those go the better. But if she's taking her standards from Scripture, she needs to hang onto them with all her might. "Be perfect" is the biblical standard. In view of *that* can we "accept ourselves"? Nobody comes close to that, nobody ever has except Jesus Himself. But that's what He intends to make of us some day, and He poured out His life's blood to do it. Would He do that if He didn't love us? Would He do that and then leave us without the help we need every day? If He has done that, can't we trust Him? Isn't He worth obeying? What is the "new act of creation" if not the very life of Christ lived in us, one day at a time? Concentrate on Him. Forget self-esteem. It's an awful waste of time.

Backfire

The National Organization for Women's "Silent No More" campaign to encourage women who have had abortions to speak out, may be backfiring as women who feel they were exploited and traumatized by abortion tell their stories. The goal of the campaign is to counter the effects of Dr. Bernard Nathanson's dramatic film *The Silent Scream* which shows the real-time ultrasound image of an unborn baby recoiling and struggling as it is being aborted. Larijo Nerad, president of Women Exploited by Abortion, a group of women who have had abortions and are now fighting to stop legal abortion, says that her group "has not needed to launch a nationwide campaign to solicit letters from women. Our files are crammed with testimonies from women both physically and psychologically injured by abortion." (Dale O'Leary, *The Pilot*)

Mary Pride's Book

In the July/August and September/October Newsletters of 1985 I mentioned Mary Pride's book, *The Way Home*. I have received several inquiries as to my views on some of the things Mrs. Pride says. Other NL readers may have wondered about the same things, and lest my mentioning the book be taken as an unconditional endorsement let me say that I did not intend it to be quite unconditional. While I say *Brava!* to her disavowal of feminism, and applaud the strong encouragement to understanding motherhood as a high form of service to the Lord and her urging women to stay home, I recognize that she is both a young woman and a fairly new Christian. More years and more experience may modify some of her assertions. I would take issue with her on the following subjects:

1. The purpose of marriage. Yes, without question God's original intention was progeny. But the New Testament also reveals a tremendous mystery, signalled in the union of husband and wife: the relationship between Christ and the Church. I see this as a drama or mystery-play in which men and women, by obedience, enact headship and submission as they are enacted both in the Trinity and in the order of the Church. The Christian home, in other words, is a sort of theater where this great truth is represented daily. (See my book, *The Mark of a Man*.)

2. Contraception. It seems to me that the issue is, *May a Christian couple exercise any choice at all?* I believe with Mrs. Pride that a Christian couple may not choose to opt out altogether of the responsibility of having a family. It was what God meant when He ordained marriage. The spacing and number of pregnancies, however, may be a matter for choice. As soon as I say that I must add that what is right for some is not necessarily right for all. Love for God is self-giving, as is His love for us, and we exercise choices as responsible adult Christians in a spirit of total willingness to be and have what in His heart we are meant to be and have. Some believe that the so-called "natural" methods of contraception are acceptable while mechanical or surgical methods are

not. This has been the official Roman Catholic position. (For an explanation, see for example the Encyclical Letter of His Holiness Pope Paul VI, *Of Human Life*, July 1968.) The encyclical presents a strong and reasonable case for using the natural method.

3. On wives earning money at home. Mrs. Pride's belief that women *ought* to earn money at home, whether it is an economic necessity or not, finds scant support in Scripture. I look on it as a "burden too heavy to be borne" by many young wives and mothers. I do not find it in the New Testament list of women's responsibilities (see Newsletter, May/June 1985).

4. On a man's self-employment. Is it God's ideal? It would appear so when God put Adam in charge of a garden and of all the creatures of the earth. But man demolished God's ideal. In a fallen and broken world we must learn to live a godly, righteous, and sober life in conditions God never intended at the beginning. Employment is perhaps one of those, but was accepted in New Testament times as one area in which Christians may glorify God—by faithful performance of work, by respectful obedience to those put over him.

Letters To Readers

More than one letter has come from a reader of *Passion and Purity* telling me how much he or she "loved" the book, "really got a lot out of it," etc., and then proceeding to tell a long tale about how the old lifestyle still goes on, sleeping around, "but she's a really neat girl," or "he's a good Christian guy," and "I don't think God wants me to lose him/her," or "we were sleeping together before we read your book and now we don't know what to do," etc. One of those came in yesterday's mail from a twenty-one-year-old who had given away her virginity at seventeen. Both of them students in a *Christian* college,

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she and her current boyfriend go to bed often. But this was her prayer: "Lord, I am about as far from 'pure' as they come. Please forgive my constant attempts to justify compromises." Then she tells me she cannot even *conceive* of a relationship without sex. What to do?

My reply: "Thank you for your long letter. What more can I say than what I've tried to say in the book? You say you read it carefully and it made sense to you. So now you know what you have to do. The choice, of course, is yours. Will you choose to trust God to handle your future, or will you continue to attempt to run it yourself? Will you choose to obey Him, *starting today*, or will you have it your way? Nobody can make those choices for you, Marcia (not her real name). What you sow you will surely reap. My advice is SOW FOR ETERNITY. 'Happy are those who are strong in the Lord, who want above everything else to follow your steps' (Psalm 84:5; Living Bible). The first thing you must decide is what you want *above everything else*. Once you make that decision for life, many other things become very simple, and God will most certainly help you."

Valerie

Readers ask for news of my daughter Valerie Shepard. She lives in Laurel, Mississippi, where her husband Walt is pastor of Covenant Presbyterian Church. She is home-schooling her two older children, Walter (third grade) and Elisabeth (first). She teaches a women's Bible class on Fridays, and on Saturdays the men of their church come to the house for a prayer breakfast. The greater part of her "ministry" is the ordinary work of any housewife—"I assure you that whatever you did for the humblest of my brothers, you did for me," Jesus said. Please pray for her and all other young mothers who need to be reminded that "divine service is conducted daily" in their kitchens and laundry rooms. There are many voices that would tell them something quite different.

Books by Elisabeth Elliot

Through Gates of Splendor—the story of five missionaries killed in Ecuador by Auca Indians in 1956. A251 \$5.95

Shadow of the Almighty—the life of Jim Elliot, including his personal journals and letters, his love story, his missionary experience. A228 \$6.95

The Savage My Kinsman—photographs and text describing a year with the Auca Indians of Ecuador. 0999 \$5.95

No Graven Image—a novel probing the question of God's sovereignty. A279 \$5.95

The Liberty of Obedience—on Christian maturity and service; on what a Christian is "allowed" to do. A278 \$1.95

A Slow and Certain Light—on the guidance of God and how a Christian may understand His will. A280 \$2.75

These Strange Ashes—the story of a missionary's first year, touching on the questions of apparent failure and loss. A281 \$6.95

The Journals of Jim Elliot. A276 \$6.95

Love Has a Price Tag—a collection of essays on varied topics. 1537 \$5.95

Let Me Be a Woman—Notes for Valerie on what it means to be a woman, single, married, or widowed. A277 \$5.95

The Mark of a Man—notes for Pete on the responsibilities assigned to men by God; the meaning of masculinity. A351 \$5.95

Discipline: The Glad Surrender—what it means to accept the lordship of Christ in one's body, mind, emotions, time, work, etc. A004 \$9.95

Passion and Purity—a true love story, illustrating the principles by which to preserve "the gift you give only once," virginity. A302 \$5.95

A Lamp for My Feet—brief meditations which apply the Bible to the common experience of twentieth century living. 2347 \$9.95

Readers may order through: Servant Book Express, P.O. Box 7455, Ann Arbor, Michigan 48107-9977. Payment must accompany order. Please pay in U.S. currency or equivalent. Add postage, handling, and guaranteed delivery charges:

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\$30.01 to \$40.00, add \$3.00
\$40.01 to \$50.00, add \$4.00
\$50.01 to \$100.00, add \$5.00
over \$100.00, add 5%
Michigan residents add 4% tax.

Travel Schedule

March/April/May 1986

March 1

London, Ontario; Women Alive, 705-726-3803.

March 15

Natick, MA; Daybreak Crisis Pregnancy Center, Carol Rosa, 617-489-4276.

March 21, 22

Calgary, Alberta; Women Alive, 705-726-3803.

April 4-6

Rio Rico, AZ; women's retreat, Barbara Tompkins, 602-299-9000.

April 6

Tucson, AZ; First Evangelical Free Church, 602-299-1660.

April 10

Seaside Heights, NJ; Open Door Pregnancy Center; Rev. James McColl, 201-793-0247.

April 11-13

Ocean City, NJ; Creative Living Women's Conference; Mrs. Carole Williamson, 215-459-4232.

April 16, 17

Akron, OH; The Chapel in University Park; Mrs. Lou-Ann Redmon, 216-688-1342.

April 18, 19

Winnipeg, Manitoba; Portage Ave. Mennonite Brethren Church, 774-4414.

April 19

Winnipeg; women's conference; Mrs. Toni Dueck, 295 Wallace Ave., Winnipeg R2E 0B1.

May 2-4

Mt. Hermon, CA; women's conference, Jayne Price, 408-335-4580.

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The Heavenliness of a Little Child

(The following is from an article by Walter D. Shepard Jr. in *The Covenanter*, monthly bulletin of Covenant Presbyterian Church in Laurel, Mississippi.)

Andrew Murray's book *How to Raise Your Children for Christ* comments on Matthew 18:4-5. The disciples had come to Jesus with a question: Who is greatest in the kingdom of heaven? In answer, Jesus called a little child and set him in the midst of them. In the kingdom, the humblest and most childlike would be the highest.

In creating a family, God sets a little child in the midst of husband and wife and in that little child opens to them the mystery of the kingdom of heaven and the spiritual world. If that couple wants to know about heaven and what will prove their fitness for its highest place, they must study the child nature. On earth we'll find nothing so heavenlike as a little child, and no surer way to the highest enjoyments of heavenly dignity than in receiving little children in His name.

Let's look at what Andrew Murray calls "the heavenliness of the little child." Our Lord Jesus uses one word: "Whoever then *humbles* himself as this child. . . ." The greatest will be those who think least of being greatest because they lose sight of themselves while seeking God and His kingdom. Have you noticed the great charm of childlikeness? It's the absence of self-consciousness. The true child knows how to lose himself in that which is around him. On the other hand,

the older the child grows the more we see the curse of sin: it makes a person (every one of us) his own center.

Parents have the means at their disposal of gratifying the tastes and pleasures of their children. Thus they are in danger of destroying the simplicity and tenderness of the child by stimulating the desires which belong merely to this world. "In the midst of a great deal of Bible teaching and hymn singing, the very heart of true religion may be eaten out by the artificial and unchildlike spirit of the homes in which the children are reared."

Will we have the courage to shut down some of the pointless activities as we realize our children's tender susceptibility to impressions? Will a haggard dad and a breathless mom be alert to the fact that the child is alive and alert to what surrounds him—to the influence of the heavenly life or the withering effect of a worldly life?

"If we are to watch over the heavenliness of our children, then we must ourselves be childlike and heavenly-minded." As our Lord put a little child as a visual aid in the midst of strong men, we ought to remind ourselves of how often our children teach us more than we see ourselves teaching them. The key is our commitment to making the atmosphere of our homes different from the world's homes. We should evidence simple, happy, and trustful living in the Father's presence.

Lord, give us this grace to make our homes the havens they can be, not only for the children's sake but for the sake of Christ.

Let's spend less time exclusively with grown-ups and learn to set a child, lots of children, in our midst and enjoy them. Yes, it's o.k. to take notes!

A Few Swipes at the Glory of Homemaking

Even the gift catalogues are peddling some not-so-subtle anti-housework propaganda:

- a doormat that says DULL WOMEN HAVE IMMACULATE HOMES!
- a cross-stitch motto, A CLEAN HOUSE IS A SIGN OF A WASTED LIFE.

Put those maxims against 1 Peter 4:7, "The end of all things is upon us, so you must lead an ordered life."

Prayer

"Order your private devotions so that they become not arguments and causes of tediousness by their indiscreet length, but reduce your words into a narrow compass, still keeping all the matter; and what is cut off in the length of your prayers, supply in the earnestness of your spirit; for nothing is lost while the words are changed into matter, and length of time into fervency of devotion. Break your office and devotion into fragments and make frequent returnings." Jeremy Taylor (seventeenth century).

Please pray for me as I write a small booklet (perhaps eight to ten pages) for children, ages ten to seventeen, about prizing "the gift you give only once," virginity. This is one thing I must do to try to reduce the appalling statistics of teenage pregnancy and promiscuity. Ask God to help me to make it readable, simple, truthful, and helpful, for His name's sake. Pray about an illustrator and publisher for the booklet. (No, I haven't finished Amy Carmichael's biography. I need prayer for that, too.)

Pray for those who suffer because of the sins of people they love. Ask the Lord to teach them in this experience that He suffers with them (compassion means "to suffer with"); that they are thus given a chance to share *His* suffering (1 Pt 4:13; Col 1:24; Phil 1:29), to bear His yoke (Matt 11:29), and to know Him in a way not otherwise possible (Phil 3:10). (All of these describe the opportunities offered to us in any kind of suffering, but perhaps it is more difficult to be willing to learn when suffering comes through those we love.)

Teaching Children

How many times between the ages of three and ten do children have to answer the only two questions adults can think of to ask them: How old are you? and What are you going to be when you grow up?

The second question may seem innocuous, but is it? In the first place, many children may be distressed at being required to make a choice which is far beyond them. In the second place, it implies that the choice is theirs. This can lead to great confusion later on. The child will grow up physically, but spiritually he will not have begun until he learns that Jesus died not only to save him from sin but in order that he should live not for himself but for Him who died (see 2 Corinthians 5:15 and 1 John 3:16). If a young person has been taught from childhood that he ought to "be something" without at the same time being shown that nothing is better than being God's servant, he may be preoccupied with ambitions and ideals he has gotten solely from the world. If his conception of "where it's at" has nothing to do with the Kingdom of God, he is in for trouble when it comes time to discern the Will of God. He will be setting limits to his obedience, defining the terms of his service. "For My sake" is a concept children can grasp much earlier than we generally suppose. A little boy wrote to me that he was learning to lay down his life for others. To him this meant that sometimes when he would rather play he lay down beside his little sister to help her go to sleep.

Pray that God will show you how to teach your children that life is meant to be lived for God. "You are not the owner of your own body. You have been bought, and at a price! Therefore bring glory to God in your body" (1 Cor 6:20; JBP). Help your child to understand that the Lord is his Shepherd, and he is a little lamb. The Shepherd will gladly show him the right path-way if he is willing to follow.

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Question and Answer

Q. Is it a sin to ask God why?

A. It is always best to go first for our answers to Jesus Himself. He cried out on the cross, "My God, my God, why have You forsaken me?" It was a human cry, a cry of desperation, springing from his heart's agony at the prospect of being put into the hands of wicked men and actually *becoming sin* for you and me. We can never suffer anything like that, yet we do at times feel forsaken and cry, WHY, LORD?

The psalmist asked why. Job, a blameless man, suffering horrible torments on an ash heap, asked why. It does not seem to me to be sinful to ask the question. What is sinful is resentment against God and His dealings with us. When we begin to doubt His love and imagine that He is cheating us of something we have a right to, we are guilty as Adam and Eve were guilty. They took the snake at his word rather than God. The same snake comes to us repeatedly with the same suggestions: Does God love you? Does He really want the best for you? Is His word trustworthy? Isn't He cheating you? Forget His promises. You'd be better off if you do it your way.

I have often asked why. Many things have happened which I didn't plan on and which human rationality could not explain. In the darkness of my perplexity and sorrow I have heard Him say quietly, TRUST ME. He knew that my question was not the challenge of unbelief or resentment. I have never doubted that He loves me, but I have sometimes felt like St. Teresa who said, "If this is the way You treat Your friends, no wonder You have so few!" Job was not, it seems to me, a very patient man. But he never gave up his conviction that he was in God's hands. God was big enough to take whatever Job dished out (see Job 16 for a sample). Do not be afraid to tell Him exactly how you feel (He's already read your thoughts anyway). Don't tell the whole world. God can take it—others can't. Then listen for His answer. In the Newsletters of 1984 there were six scriptural answers to the question WHY—from 1 Peter 4:12-13; Romans 5:3-4; 2 Corinthians 12:9; John 14:31; Romans 8:17; Colossians 1:24. There is mystery, but it is not all mystery. Here are clear reasons.

A Stone with a Broken Heart

"Do you know the lovely fact about the opal? That, in the first place, it is made only of desert dust, sand silica, and owes its beauty and preciousness to a defect. It is a stone with a broken heart. It is full of minute fissures which admit air, and the air refracts the light. Hence its lovely hues, and that sweet lamp of fire that ever burns at its heart, for the breath of the Lord God is in it.

"You are only conscious of the cracks and desert dust, but so He makes His precious opal. We must be broken in ourselves before we can give back the lovely hues of His light, and the lamp in the temple can burn in us and never go out." Ellice Hopkins.

He Is Able

For more than a century thousands of Christians have used a little book called *Daily Light*, a collection of scripture verses arranged for morning and evening reading, without commentary. The story of how it was put together perhaps gives us a clue as to why so many can testify to the amazing relevance of the selected passages to the needs of the very days for which they are given. The Bagster family of London collected the scripture passages and "prayed them into" the dates. Sometimes it did not seem clear which passages were to be used on a given date, so they proceeded to the next and later returned to fill in the page in question. The evening selection for March 8 is this:

I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able.

Able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think.

Able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work.

Able to succour them that are tempted.

Able . . . to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.

Able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy.

Able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.

Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.

"Believe ye that I am able to do this?" . . . Yea, Lord. "According to your faith be it unto you."

(2 Tm 1:12; Eph 3:20; 2 Cor 9:8; Heb 2:18; Heb 7:25; Jude 24; 2 Tim 1:12; Phil 3:21; Matt 9:28-29)

Passion and Purity

A twenty-six-year-old man preparing to be a missionary writes, "I wish someone had given me this book about six months ago because it would have saved me a lot of pain and anguish of heart. The principles you wrote about spoke to me about more than just boy-girl relationships. God used this book to turn me from a very dangerous and persistent habit I've gotten into." He goes on to say he'd been dating many different girls, but deep down he had a real aversion to the whole dating scene. "I didn't like the feeling of having many girlfriends but really having no one. My heart was aching and lonely. I could feel Jesus asking me if He could have some time with me, please, so that He could comfort me, but it was always easier to call a

friend (guy or girl) and spill out my problems to that person. . . . This last week I picked up your book and began to read it. God hit me so hard with the fact that I have been searching in the wrong place for my fulfillment. Jesus did not have first place, so how could I ever enjoy a marriage relationship?"

A Dieter's Prayer

A reader who was "stuck with nineteen pounds of fat" after the birth of her second baby writes, "The Lord showed me that I'd made Him Lord of all my life—every area except eating. Such a simple thing it may seem. Now when I sit down to a meal I say, 'Lord, how much of this? How much of that?' It works for me unless out of habit I sit down and forget my new commitment and just follow my fleshly desires."

Travel Schedule May/June 1986

May 2-4 Mt. Hermon, CA; women's conference, Jayne Price, 408-335-4580.

June 20-21 Philadelphia, PA: Presbyterian Church of America, 404-292-5715.

June 23-24 Colorado Springs, CO; Music Evangelism Foundation, 303-632-7337.

June 25-26 Philadelphia, PA; PCA women, Susan Hunt, 404-292-6102.

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July/August 1986

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Who Will Speak to My Husband?

(The following is an article by R.C. Sproul, first published in his magazine *Tabletalk* in February, 1986. Reprinted with permission.)

“Wives, submit yourselves to your husbands”—this Biblical admonition is one of the most abused exhortations of Scripture. It is abused on two sides, twisted and distorted beyond recognition by both parties in the dispute.

On the one hand, feminists frantically seek to escape the clear teaching of the Apostle on the matter of headship in the home. They enlist the aid of theologians and New Testament teachers who commit exegetical acts of despair to neutralize a Biblical mandate—all in a good cause. To stop the apparently incessant acts of domestic tyranny committed by arrogant husbands, these exegetes turn the Bible into a nose of wax to be shaped to conform to the latest wind of public opinion.

Wifely subordination to her husband is not a popular viewpoint to espouse these days. The fierce militantism of liberated women gives pause to the man who dares to interpret these injunctions in traditional fashion. What kind of ministry can one have if he alienates 50% of the population on an issue like this?

But enough of this feminist distortion. It will pass. It is the other side that frightens me. Those with a zeal for Biblical orthodoxy can also twist these admonitions to wives into destructive orders. Consider the popularity of the view that is epidemic in the evangelical world today that declares women should always

obey their husbands in everything. This simplistic application of the exhortation ignores other Biblical principles by which we are called to obey God rather than men.

When controversy rages over the issue of wives' submission, men who speak to the issue are a bit suspect. We have a vested interest in this debate. I'd rather hear what Elisabeth Elliot has to say about it.

Recently a woman said to me, "I know what the Bible says about wives being submissive. But who will talk to my husband about his responsibility?"

Hear this woman's plea. She speaks for thousands of Christian wives. It is almost impossible these days for a Christian wife to be unaware of what the Bible says about submission. The wives all know it and, to make matters worse, their husbands know it too. The problem is that men don't know and/or don't care to know what God commands of them.

Here is the bad news, men. "*Husbands, love your wives.*"

Why is this mandate not the center of controversy? Why don't we find endless articles about what loving our wives means? Why don't we see essays that speak of "mutual love"?

This mandate has not become a hotly contested issue because husbands systematically ignore it. Who will speak to the husbands?

God has spoken. God has laid down a law. That law is clear and inescapable. The law states: "*husbands, love your wives*" (Eph 5:25). How are we to love our wives? Let me count the ways, Elizabeth Barrett Browning to the contrary. Scripture lists basically *one* way we are to love our wives: AS CHRIST LOVED THE CHURCH AND GAVE HIMSELF UP FOR HER.

No wonder men want to focus on the wives'

responsibility in marriage. Our responsibility is to love our wives in a sacrificial way, in a way that demonstrates we are ready to lay down our lives for them.

Christ is the head of the church. The church is not the head of Christ. The church is to submit to Christ; Christ is not subordinate to His bride. Yet Jesus has never tyrannized the church. The bride of Christ has never received a black eye from the brutal fists of her husband.

If husbands loved their wives as Christ loves His church, the question of wifely submission would never be an issue. There would be no need for women's liberation. What Godly woman would ever feel demeaned if she were called to be submissive to Christ? If Christ were her husband, would she ever need to hoist a picket sign to denounce him?

If I am called to love my wife as Christ loves the church, that is my responsibility before God. It would be easier for me to concentrate on my wife's responsibility. Everybody else seems to be more interested in the woman's responsibility. Why can't I be also? But then, who would speak to the husbands? (R.C. Sproul)

"When we choose deliberately to obey God, then He will tax the remotest star and the last grain of sand to assist us with His almighty power." (Oswald Chambers, *My Utmost for His Highest*, December 1.)

Notice about Books in Print

The May/June 1986 Newsletter carried a list of most of my books which are in print. We have discovered that the booksellers' reference book, *Books in Print*, is not by any means complete, and that some of mine are listed under various Elliot spellings. No wonder booksellers are always telling my friends that my books are out of print. Alas!

From My Journal

February 21, 1986, Autaugaville, Alabama. Beautiful guest cottage on the vast farm (cotton, pecans, hogs, cattle, etc.) of Buzz and Diane Wendland. Walt and Val (my daughter) and the four children are given another guest house. Lovely arrangement—all of us together, since Walt, Val, and I are speakers in the same conference.

Walter (8) prayed last night as I was tucking him in, "Help Christiana (4) to have a sweet heart, and help Jim (22 months) to have an obedient heart, and thank you for Elisabeth (6)." (I'm quite sure I didn't think of my brothers as cause for thanksgiving when I was that age.) I asked Walter if he had read George MacDonald's *At the Back of the North Wind*. "Oh yes! It was so good—but I need to be more like Diamond. He was so kind."

Tour of the farm. In the farrowing shed little Jim watched the birth of a piglet. "It came out!" was the awed comment. As we drove through Prattville he said, "Mama—Pettibone crane?" "Yes, Jim, Pettibone crane." Like his brother at that age, he has a thing about heavy equipment and has learned the make of some of them.

Elisabeth picked out tunes on the grand piano in the Wendlands' living room. I asked if she could do "I Am So Glad That Our Father in Heaven." Never tried it before, but without hesitation she banged it out with verve and astonishing speed. Only four or five sour notes.

Christiana, directing an imaginary choir, unaware of an audience: "Well, if y'all don't want to sing, you can just go home." No use talking to her during one of her performances—she isn't available.

During one of the meetings Christiana and Jim went to the nursery. It was full that evening—twenty-four children, one adult and one teenager to "sit" them. The sitters were in the room with the infants while the toddlers played in the adjoining room. Christiana ap-

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pears in the doorway of the infants' room. "Y'all better get in there and watch those kids because I have to go to the bathroom." A take-charge person.

Lord, for each of these little children I pray: equip them thoroughly for the doing of Your will; effect in them everything that pleases You through Jesus Christ. (This is the prayer of the writer to the Hebrews, chapter 13:20, 21, J.B. Phillips' translation.)

The Master's Will

Years ago I spent a night with a Welsh shepherd and his wife in a place called Llany-mawddwy. In that short time I saw many spiritual lessons enacted in the relationship between the shepherd, his dog, and his sheep. Mari, the shepherd's wife, told me many others. The following is from her book, *In the Shelter of the Fold*.

"A farmer from Peebles, Scotland, had bought some sheep from another farm a good way off. All by herself, his faithful dog started out to drive the sheep to her home on the other side of the mountain. Her master was tempted to linger awhile, over his pint, perhaps, with the vendor. When he returned home later that night, he realized to his consternation that the sheep and the dog had not arrived. In real anxiety he and his son set out in different directions to look for them. But what did the farmer see almost immediately coming to meet him but the flock of sheep with the dog behind them, and in her mouth a new-born puppy, still wet from the womb.

"On her way home, the expectant mother had given birth to her pups. She had delivered herself of them while keeping the sheep together lest they mix with other sheep on the mountain. Then, when she was able to resume her duties and the responsibility of bringing the sheep home, she picked up one member of the little family in her mouth, to bring him with her to the shelter of the farm. When she had finished the work of getting the flock safely into the fold, she made a warm snug nest and laid the pup in it. Then she disappeared into the darkness and reappeared later with the second pup

in her mouth, and then a third. When she arrived back with the fourth, the poor little thing was dead.

"Her duty and faithfulness to her master and her work came first in her life. It was as though she were consecrated, as though she had dedicated her life to please her master and to do his will before considering her own instincts."

The sheep dog puts me to shame. I find it easy to "go with my feelings," but that is no way for a Christian to live. "Indeed," said St. Paul (Romans 8:12, 13, Phillips), "that way of living leads to certain spiritual death. But if on the other hand you cut the nerve of your instinctive actions by obeying the Spirit, you will live."

How to Read the Bible

"It shall greatly helpe thee to understande Scripture if thou mark not only what is spoken or wrytten, but
of whom
to whom
with what words
at what time
where
to what intent
with what circumstances
considering what goeth before
and followeth."

Letter from a Reader

"I hope you don't mind my writing to you. I just wanted to share that you are still being held up in thoughts and prayers after two years. Remember the van full of ladies from Springfield who trooped through your house? . . . Your words changed little facets of our lives (here she tells me some of them). I have written you at least ten letters (now don't look at your mailman that way!). I realized you weren't a 'Christian Ann Landers,' and so instead of getting out a stamp each time, I got on my knees." Thank you, Michelle.

How Things Go in the Carpentry Business

Jeff Becraft of the Fellowship of Christian Athletes writes, "In trying to recruit college athletes to serve as 'huddle leaders' at our summer camps I get a lot of responses such as, 'Well, I'd like to go, but it depends on my job, and I'd like to do some traveling this summer . . . etc.'"

"Jesus didn't say, 'Well, I'm going to see how things go in the carpentry business and if things don't work out . . . well, I might go save the world or something.' No. 'We are going to Jerusalem.' This is no seeking of adventure. This is no whim. This is the will of God. That's all that matters."

Jewels on the Sidewalk

My dear friend Katherine Morgan (the spiritual mother I wrote about in the May/June '85 issue) writes from Colombia:

"I have long felt that most of the family and social problems today can be traced directly to the fact of woman being out of her God-given place and consequently forcing man out of his. Most women cannot see the slightest thing wrong with it, and neither can their shortsighted husbands. Their argument here is that even with two salaries coming in, they can hardly scrape by. When one points out that half

of the things they have they don't need, and that what they call their 'needs' are not nearly so great as their children's need of them as parents, they just look at one and look blank. I often ask mothers if they ever leave their color television set or their jewel box with the jewels in it out on the sidewalk when they go to work. They look astonished at the silly question. Then comes the query, 'Do your children compare in value with those things? Yet you leave them out all day on the street to have their morals, their culture, and their souls stolen by thieves who play in the neighborhood.'"

Travel Schedule July/August 1986

July 21

Christian Booksellers Convention, Washington, D.C.

August 15, 16

Lake Wales, FL; SPRINT Re-Entry Conference; Howard Lisech, 305-293-7200

September 20

Lenox, MA; Stevens School of the Bible women's seminar; 413-637-2241

September 26, 27

St. Petersburg, FL; Moody Bible Institute women's seminar; Josephine McCarthy, 312-329-4000

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The Elisabeth Elliot Newsletter

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Family Prayers

When I was a child my father and mother gathered the six of us in the living room after breakfast every morning for family prayers. First we sang a hymn, omitting none of the stanzas, accompanied on the piano by one of our parents. It was in this way that we learned a good bit of solid theology without any conscious effort. I must emphasize that it was hymns and old gospel songs we sang, not choruses or gospel ditties.

There are some young families who still do this today. Judy Palpant of Spokane, who had heard me tell about our family prayers, writes, "Our children know that you were the inspiration for our three-year-old tradition of singing a hymn with our family devotions. We sing the same one each morning for a month. Tonight was the first time we tabulated the number of hymns we learned. The children were impressed! Let me assure you that many new words and truths have been impressed upon their hearts and minds as we have discussed the themes and words of our chosen hymn. Our many guests at breakfast (especially when we were in Africa) were often blessed by the singing of a hymn. My husband's parents were visiting us when we were singing 'Savior, Like a Shepherd Lead Us.' That hymn was sung at their wedding. During the Easter season one year we were learning 'When I Survey the Wondrous Cross on Which the Prince of Glory Died.' A missionary from Kenya underlined the words 'Prince of Glory' for us by sharing some insights with us. Thank you for this idea which has enriched our family as well as our guests."

A reader asks, "At what age were the children when your parents started family prayers? How long a passage was read?" I think they must have begun as soon as the first child was born. I am Number Two, and I can't remember a time when

we did not have family prayer. All of us were included, the smaller ones sitting on laps. My father read from Hurlbut's *Story of the Bible* (wearing out three hardback copies!), just a page or so each morning. In the evening after dinner he read the evening portion of *Daily Light*, which is pure Scripture (King James Version). The hymn came first, then reading, then (in the mornings, because we were not around the table then) we knelt to pray, my father leading, all joining in the Lord's Prayer to close.

This question from another reader: "How can I encourage my husband as the spiritual leader of the family to have regular family devotions?" This is one I am often asked. If he is a Christian I would hope that he is willing at least to listen to his wife's suggestion. Many men believe their wives are "more spiritual" than they, and feel justified in leaving spiritual training of the children up to them. This is a mistake. The father is the priest in the home. He is the head of his wife. It is his God-given assignment to take spiritual leadership. No matter how brief and simple the devotional time may be, there is no calculating the power of its long-term effect on the children. They learn very early the place God has in their parents' lives. My father was a very simple man—humble, honest about his faith, but reticent in the extreme about speaking of it. We had no such thing as "sharing times" in our family. It was rare for us to converse about spiritual things, especially personal experience. But we knew our parents prayed in private, read their Bibles, and prayed and read aloud with us. It was routine. But it mattered. It matters to me now. I hope perhaps these words of testimony may nudge some of those reticent Christian fathers to take courage, take the bull by the horns, and say, "I've learned something. It's important. More important, maybe, than anything else we do in this house. We're going to start today."

What's Out There?

Last May *Time* magazine reported the discovery of the most massive object ever detected in the universe. The odd thing is nobody knows what it is. The Kitt Peak telescope picked up two quasars ("intensely bright bodies so far away that the light they emit travels for billions of years before reaching the earth") which seemed to be identical, an occurrence astronomers consider about as likely as finding two people with identical fingerprints. Something called a "gravitational lens" seemed to be bending the light (get that!) from a single quasar in such a way as to produce two identical images. Nothing astonishing about that—Einstein predicted it more than seventy years ago, and Arthur Eddington confirmed it a few years later.

The great question is just exactly *what* is acting as a gravitational lens. Whatever it is, it has to have the mass of a thousand (1,000) galaxies. If it's a black hole, it is "at least a thousand times as large as the Milky Way (which consists of hundreds of billions of stars, including the sun)." Got that? I was bemused by the statement, "Astrophysicists find it difficult to explain how so tremendous a black hole could have formed." I guess they do. They're turning over a third possibility, much too arcane for me to peer into at all, but it has to do with the Big Bang theory of the origin of the universe.

The most numbing of the facts of this story for me is that people go to such elaborate lengths to avoid mentioning one vastly prior fundamental possibility that (surely?) stares them in the face: creation.

How much faith does it take to believe in God? Less, I venture to say—a great deal less—than to believe in the Unconscious generating the Conscious, Mindlessness creating Mind, Nothing giving birth to Something.

What we know of God we have seen in His Son. He in whom we are asked to trust is Love, creative Love, thinking of us, I suppose, before He thought of gravitational lenses, giving Himself in sacrificial love long before He gave us His own breath of life—for the Lamb was slain *before the foundation of the world*.

My Lord and my God. Forgive my faithlessness.

Grandchild Number Five

Colleen Amy was born in Laurel, Mississippi, June 7. She has two brothers and two sisters. Their parents are Walt and Valerie Shepard. "Whose work is this, I ask, who has brought it to pass? Who has summoned the generations from the beginning? It is I, the Lord, I am the first, and to the last of them I am He" (Isaiah 41:4; NEB). "Grandchildren are the crown of old age" (Proverbs 17:6). Thank You, Lord.

Help Needed

Is there someone who would be willing to live in and help Valerie care for her house and five children for the coming school year? Please write directly to her, and send a photo: Mrs. W.D. Shepard Jr., 3234 University Ave., Laurel MS 39440, or call (601)425-4115.

Booklet on Virginity

In the May/June 1986 Newsletter I asked you to pray about the publication of a little booklet for people aged about eleven to sixteen. When *Time* magazine ran a cover story on the prevalence of teen-age pregnancy they managed to come up with two "remedies" for this "flaw in the social fabric": more sex education in the schools, more availability of contraceptives.

I was upset. What can I do? I wondered. This twelve-page booklet is meant to help these children see that there is another way.

It's called *Sex Is a Lot More Than Fun*. You can order it directly from us:

Lars Gren
10 Strawberry Cove
Magnolia, MA 01930

Please don't order it from the Newsletter address.

Prices: Single copies, \$1.50 each, postpaid.
Lots of ten, \$12.50, postpaid.

Make checks payable to Booklets Ltd.

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Regrets

When my father was twelve years old he lost his left eye through disobedience. He had been forbidden to have firecrackers, so he sneaked out early in the morning of July 4, 1910, and, with the help of a neighboring farmer, set off some dynamite caps. A piece of copper penetrated his eye.

Four years later my grandfather wrote this letter to my grandmother:

Dearest:

I am not one bit surprised that after all our experiences of the past four years you should suffer from sad memories, but I really do not believe for a moment that you should feel you have any occasion to let remorse bite into your life on account of Philip's accident. Surely we *cannot* guard against all the contingencies of this complex life, and no one who has poured out life as you have for each one of your children should let such regrets take hold.

None of us could be alive to the pressing needs of today if we should carry along with us the dark heaviness of *any* past, whether real or imagined. I know, dearest, that your Lord cannot wish anything of that sort for you, and I believe your steady, shining, and triumphant faith will lead you out through Him, into the richest experiences you have ever had. I *believe* that firmly.

I have had to turn to Him in helplessness today to overcome depression because of my failures. My Sunday School fiasco at Swarthmore bears down pretty hard. But that is *not right*. I must look ahead, and up, as you often tell me, and *I will*. I know how sickening remorse is, if anyone knows; yet I also know, as you do, the lift and relief of turning the whole matter over to Him. We must have more prayers and more study together, dearest. I haven't followed the impulses I have so often had in this.

Lovingly, your own Phil.

My grandfather was the most cheerful and serene man I knew in my childhood. It is hard for me to imagine his having had any cause for remorse or temptation to depression. This letter, which bears a two-cent stamp and a

Philadelphia postmark, was sent to Grandma in Franconia, New Hampshire, where they had a lovely vacation house. I spent my childhood summers in that house and can picture her sitting on the porch, perhaps on the anniversary of her son's accident, looking out toward Mts. Lafayette, Bald, and Cannon, wrestling with the terrible thoughts of her own carelessness and failure. I thank God for my heritage. I thank Him for the word of His faithful servant Paul, "I concentrate on this: I leave the past behind and with hands outstretched to whatever lies ahead, I go straight for the goal—my reward the honor of being called by God in Christ" (Phil 3:13, 14 JBP).

Readers Write:

Home Schooling

"We began home schooling this year and we love it," writes the mother of seven, ages three to fifteen. "It is helping us become a strong family as we work and learn together. My children are working harder, learning more, and developing good study habits. I need a lot of self-discipline in order to keep up with housework and do justice to the schooling, but it's an area I'm weak in and I appreciate the challenge." I have a hunch the lady is like the rest of us—not "born disciplined," just willing to ask for and receive the Lord's help.

Committed to Staying Home

"I am a seminary faculty wife and we live on almost poverty-level income, but no matter how great the sacrifice, I am committed 100% to being in the home. I can affirm that God honors this. We have few material possessions and have moved every year of our oldest child's life (seven). I've seen that we Christians can do many strange and unusual things (that the world and many Christians say cannot be done without the children's suffering—e.g. lack of possessions, permanent home), but with the family as #1 priority, a mother and father devoted to teaching the children sensitivity to life with God as center, God will bless and honor."

Help Needed

Help needed in Palm Beach, FL. Care for 93-year-old (ambulatory) man. \$1,100 per month plus room and board. Call Lars (617) 525-3653.

Wedding Rings

An elderly jeweler who had spent his life selling wedding rings in New York City to people in all walks of life was asked by a radio interviewer, "Do you see any difference between those who are buying rings now, and in the past?"

"Yes," was his prompt answer. "They are not so happy now. They live together first, and you do not see the happiness couples used to have when they came looking for a ring." He also noted that a large number of homosexuals are buying wedding rings.

As Aristotle noted millenia ago, all men seek happiness. There are no exceptions. The difference between people is their definition. What's yours? How do you get there? John 13:17 (J.B. Phillips) has a good starter: "Once you have realised these things [the things the Master does], you will find your happiness in doing them." It seems that not many folks swallow that nowadays.

Travel Schedule September/ October/November 1986

September 20 Lenox, MA; Stevens School of the Bible women's seminar; 413-637-2241.

September 25 Sarasota, FL; Covenant Life Church.

September 26, 27 St. Petersburg, FL; Moody Bible Institute women's seminar; Josephine McCarthy, 312-329-4000.

October 4 Alexandria, LA; Baptist Student Convention; 318-448-3402.

October 17, 18 St. John, NB; Atlantic District Women's Convention; Mrs. Flora Nye, 506-273-3051.

October 31-November 2 Asheville, NC; The Cove women's conference; Mrs. Eley, 1-800-THE-COVE.

November 7, 8 Boyne Mountain, MI; Winsome Women's Retreat; Meg Brown, 616-347-4945 (office 0020).

November 22 Bangor, MA; Don Gill, 617-425-4115

November 25-30 Colorado; Campus Crusade for Christ (details uncertain).

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The Mother of the Lord

We see her first, that little Mary (may I say little? I think she was a teenager), as a simple village girl in a poor home in an out-of-the-way place. She is bending over her work when suddenly the light changes. She raises her eyes. A dazzling stranger stands before her with a puzzling greeting. He calls her "most favored one" and tells her the Lord is with her. She is stunned. I don't believe her thought is of herself (Who am I? or Am I ever lucky!) Mary is troubled. She discerns at once that this has to do with things infinitely larger than herself, far beyond her understanding. What can it mean?

The angel does not weigh in immediately with the stupendous message he has been sent to deliver. He first comforts her. "Don't be afraid, Mary." *Mary*. She is not a stranger to him. He is assuring her that he has the right person. He explains what she has been chosen for—to be the mother of the Son of the Most High, a king whose reign will be forever. She has one question now—not about the Most High, not about an eternal king—those are things too high for her—but motherhood is another matter. She understands motherhood, has been looking forward to it with great happiness. Her question is about that: "How can this be? I am still a virgin." He does not really explain. He simply states a mystery: "The power of the Most High will overshadow you." He goes on to tell her of another miraculous pregnancy, that of her old cousin Elisabeth, well past child-bearing age. "God's promises can never fail," he says. They won't fail for you, Mary. Rest assured.

How will the girl respond? She is at once totally at the disposal of her Lord (she sees that the visitor is from Him). Whatever the mystery, whatever the divine reasons for choosing her, whatever the inconveniences, even disasters (broken engagement? stoning to death—the punishment of a fornicator?) which she may be required to face, her answer is unequivocal and instant: "Here I am. I am the Lord's servant; let it be as you have told me." *Anything, Lord*.

We see her next with Elisabeth, who, by the manner of Mary's greeting and by her own baby's sudden movement in her womb, knows immediately that God has chosen Mary to be the mother of the Lord. They don't sit down over coffee and natter about the gynecology or the practical logistics or what people are going to say. Mary sings her song of gladness, of thorough-going acceptance of the gift, of trust in the Mighty One.

We see her sweating in the cold of the stable, putting her own life on the line, as every mother must do, in order to give life to somebody else. We see her with the tough shepherds, breathlessly telling their story of the glory of the Lord and the singing of the angel choir. Everyone else is astonished (a word which comes from thunder-struck), but Mary does not join the excited babble. She is quiet, *treasuring* all these things, pondering them deep in her heart. We see her with the mysterious travelers from the East bringing their lavish gifts. She says nothing as they kneel before the baby she holds in her arms. We see her on the donkey again, on the

round-about journey to Egypt because her husband has been given a secret message in a dream. She does not balk, she does not argue.

We see her in the temple handing over her baby to old Simeon, to whom the Holy Spirit has revealed the child's amazing destiny: a revelation to the heathen, glory to Israel. But to Mary he gives the far deeper message of suffering, for there is no glory that is not bought by suffering: her son will suffer—he will be a sign which men reject; she, his mother, will suffer, will be pierced to the heart. No question or answer from her is recorded. Again we know only her silence.

We see nothing of her for twelve years—days and nights, weeks and months, years and years of caring for the infant, the toddler, the little boy, the adolescent. There is no mention of any of that. Mary has no witness, no limelight, no special recognition of any kind. She is not Mother of the Year. Hers is a life lived in the ordinary necessity of their poverty and their humanity, no one paying attention to her attention to him. Whatever the level of her comprehension as to the nature of this boy, she knows he was given to her. She remembers how. She treasures all this. She ponders things in the silence of her heart. Did she share any of them with Joseph? Could she? Could he receive them? We know next to nothing of the dynamics between them. She was content to be silent before God.

The apostle Paul tells us we are "hidden with Christ in God." There is mystery there, but when I think of the life of Mary, I see some facets of that mystery that I missed when I read the apostle. Hers was a hidden life, a faithful one, a holy one—holy in the context of a humble home in a small village where there was not very much diversion. She knew that the ordinary duties were ordained for her as much as the extraordinary way in which they became her assignment. She struck no poses. She was the mother of a baby, willing to be known simply as his mother for the rest of her life. He was an extraordinary baby, the Eternal Word, but his needs were very ordinary, very daily, to his mother. Did she imagine that she deserved to be the chosen mother? Did she see herself as

fully qualified? Surely not. Surely not more than any other woman who finds herself endowed with the awesome gift of a child. It is the most humbling experience of a woman's life, the most revealing of her own helplessness. Yet we know this mother, Mary, the humble virgin from Nazareth, as "Most Highly Exalted."

This Christmas I am thanking God that unto us a Child was born. I am thanking Him also that there was a pure-hearted woman prepared to receive that Child with all that motherhood would mean of daily trust, daily dependence, daily obedience. I thank Him for her silence. That spirit is not in me at all, not naturally. I want to learn what she had learned so early: the deep guarding in her heart of each event, mulling over its meaning from God, waiting in silence for His word to her.

I want to learn, too, that it is not an extraordinary spirituality that makes one refuse to do ordinary work, but a wish to prove that one is not ordinary—which is a dead giveaway of spiritual conceit. I want to respond in unhesitating obedience as she did: Anything You say, Lord.

Blessed Are the Pure in Heart,
for They Shall See God.

A Few Words from the Man behind the Scenes

Who wanted a few words from him? No one in particular. It's a bit like when I was in sales with McKesson Company in Atlanta. The home office folks popped in every now and then. We knew there was a reason for their coming and it meant something for some of us to do.

The Newsletter has been going since November, 1982 and is being mailed to 36 countries, United States, and Canada. Those of you who have been with us since the beginning may

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remember that I said a few words at the end of the first year.

Servant Publications is continuing to give their help. We are still committed to mailing the Newsletter (without cost to those who can't afford to pay). We don't send any underlined, red-lettered, starred appeals. We sure appreciate you who have been very generous in your support, helping others receive it, especially aiding overseas and Canadian friends who have a terrible exchange rate.

The "Home Office" will say that should anyone find himself wanting to place a year-end gift (for some strange reason this seems to help at tax-time), or even a mid-year gift for that matter, the office will respond with a very loud thank you.

Please, please return the card when it comes, to let us know if you want to continue on the mailing list. As some of you know, it's an automatic off-the-list if we get no response. You don't need to send money, but you do need to return the card.

You can help greatly if you think the Newsletter is worth keeping in business. Pass your copies on to friends, or ask them if they'd like to sign up. The strange fact is that as our numbers grow the unit cost decreases. Must be a tie-in somewhere there with that cookbook, *Eat More for Less*, or something.

Thanks from Lars Gren, the Man Behind the Scenes (referred to at times as the Third Mr. Elliot).

Those Christmas Cards

I learned this one from old friends of my parents, the Walter Buckinghams of Vero Beach, Florida. Save the cards (they string them up all over the house, which I prefer not to do), take one card each day and pray together for those people. You could send a regular government fourteen-cent post card each day, telling people they've been prayed for. You've no idea how this might cheer some of them, and it'll cheer you even more to do it (remember?—"more blessed to give...").

A Children's Christmas Pageant

My friend Virginia Larsen of Austin, Minnesota, described what happened at the last one in her Sunday School. Two little chubby angels fought over who got to hold Baby Jesus, so Mary grabbed him and passed him like a football (overhead toss) to Joseph, whereupon one angel grabbed a fistful of straw and threw it at her rival—and pandemonium ensued, for the shepherds and two more angels and one Sunday School teacher all got involved. They heard "Knock it off!", "Hey, he pinched me!", "Gimme that!", and a three-year-old shepherd got one of his colleagues by the leg with his crook and sent him flying. It would be hard to stage a pageant where everything goes wrong, but in this one everything did. I imagined the heavenly host rolling in the aisles of Paradise, holding their sides together.

The Incarnation

That the Great Angel-blinding light should
shrink
His blaze to shine in a poor Shepherd's eye;
That the unmeasur'd God so lowe should
sinke,
As Pris'ner in a few poor rags to lye,
That from his Mother's Breast he milke
should drinke,
Who feeds with Nectar Heaven's faire family,
That a vile Manger his low Bed should prove,
Who in a Throne of stars Thunders above;
That he whom the Sun serves, should faintly
peepe
Through clouds of Infant Flesh! That He, the
old
Eternall Word should be a Childe, and weep;
that He who made the fire, should fear the cold,
That heaven's high Majesty His Court should
Keepe
In a clay cottage, by each blast control'd;
That Glories self should serve our Griefs and
feares,
And free Eternity submit to years,
Let our overwhelming wonder be.

(Richard Crashaw, 1613?-1649)

Sex Is a Lot More Than Fun

A twelve-page booklet for children of about eleven to sixteen (depending on the child) about the true meaning and use of sex. I've tried to help them to see there are good reasons for waiting, and they CAN say NO.

Please order directly from us, *not from the Newsletter:*

Lars Gren

10 Strawberry Cove

Magnolia, MA 01930

Single copies: \$1.50 postpaid. Lots of ten: \$12 postpaid.

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Endorsement?

Occasionally readers have questioned whether my speaking for certain groups is tantamount to an endorsement. Most emphatically not. I will speak for anyone who will listen. Very few groups I cannot endorse would dream of asking me to speak, but some do. If such groups intend to capitalize on my presence as though it were a seal of approval, I am content to leave that with God.

The Elisabeth Elliot Newsletter

Servant Ministries, Inc.

Post Office Box 7711

Ann Arbor, Michigan 48107

Travel Schedule November/ December 1986; January 1987

November 4 Liverpool, NY; Sheraton Inn Syracuse; Natalie Ambrose, 315-685-8260 or Caryl Bangs, 637-3727.

November 7, 8 Boyne Mountain, MI; Winsome Women's Retreat; Meg Brown, 616-347-4945 (office 347-0020).

November 14 Trumbull, CT; Mrs. Kenyon, 617-927-2300 (ask for Planned Giving Dept.).

November 16 Easton, MA; Foursquare Church, 617-238-1280.

November 22 Bangor, ME; Evangelistic Assoc. of New England; Donald Gill, 617-523-3579.

November 25-30 Keystone, CO; Campus Crusade for Christ singles conference; Donna Guirard, 501-661-0366.

December 28 St. Louis, MO; Assemblies of God SALT conference; Dennis Gaylor, 417-862-2781.

December 29 Philadelphia, PA; Campus Crusade for Christ; Joan Gilliam, 617-648-0900.

January 28 McPherson KA; First Baptist Church, 316-241-6400.

January 29 Steubenville, OH; Ohio Valley Christian Assoc.; PO Box 972, Steubenville.

January 31 Edina, MN; Colonial Church, 612-925-2711.

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The Elisabeth Elliot Newsletter

January/February 1987

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Prayer Is Conflict

Prayer is no easy pastime. As I grow old I find that I am more conscious than ever of my need to pray, but it seems at the same time to become more of a struggle. It is harder to concentrate, for one thing. I was greatly helped by some private notes Amy Carmichel wrote to her "Family" (hundreds of children and their helpers, both Indian and European) in Dohnavur, South India, to help them prepare for a special day of prayer. She quoted Paul's letter to the Colossians (2:1): "I would that ye knew what great conflict I have for you." He is referring at least in part to the conflict of prayer. The same verse is translated "how greatly I strive" in the Revised Version; "how deep is my anxiety" in J.B. Phillips; and, in the Jerusalem Bible, "Yes, I want you to know that I do have to struggle hard for you . . . to bind you together in love and to stir your minds, so that your understanding may come to full development, until you really know God's secret in which all the jewels of wisdom and knowledge are hidden."

Here are Amy's notes:

With what do I struggle?

1. With all that says to me, what is the use of your praying? So many others, who know more of prayer than you do, are praying. What difference does it make whether you pray or not? Are you sure that your Lord is listening? Of course He is listening to the other prayers but yours are of such small account, are you really sure He is "bending His ear" to you?

2. With all that suggests that we are asked to give too much time to prayer. There is so much

to do. Why set aside so much time just to pray?

3. With all that discourages me personally—perhaps the remembrance of past sin, perhaps spiritual or physical tiredness; with anything and everything that keeps me back from what occupied St. Paul so often—vital prayer.

What will help me most in this wrestle?

1. The certain knowledge that our insignificance does not matter at all, for we do not come to the Father in our own name but in the Name of His beloved Son. His ear is always open to that Name. Of this we can be certain.

2. The certain knowledge that this is Satan's lie; he is much more afraid of our prayer than our work. (This is proved by the immense difficulties we always find when we set ourselves to pray. They are much greater than those we meet when we set ourselves to work.)

3. Isaiah 44:22 and kindred words, with 1 John 1:9, meets all distress about sin. Isaiah 40:29-31 with 2 Corinthians 12:9,10 meets everything that spiritual or physical weariness can do to hinder. Psalm 27:8 with Isaiah 45:19 meets all other difficulties. And the moment we say to our God, "Thy face, Lord, will I seek," His mighty energies come to the rescue. (See Colossians 1:2, 9) *Greater, far greater, is He that is in us than he that is against us. Count on the greatness of God. But are we to go on wrestling to the end!*

No, there is a point to which we come, when, utterly trusting the promise of our Father, we rest our hearts upon Him. It is then we are given what St. Paul calls access with confidence (Eph 3:12). But don't forget that this access is by faith,

not by feeling, faith in Him our living Lord; He who says "Come unto Me" does not push us away when we come. As we go on, led by the Holy Spirit who so kindly helps our infirmities, we find ourselves in 1 John 5:14, 15 and lastly in Philippians 4:6, 7. It is good to remember that immediate answer to prayer is not always something seen, but it is always inward peace.

And if the day ends otherwise and we are discouraged? Then tell Him so, "nothing ashamed of tears upon His feet" [here she is quoting from F.W.H. Meyers's poem "St. Paul"]. Lord, Thou knowest all things. Thou knowest that I love Thee. "Yes, my child, I know." But don't settle down into an "it will never be different" attitude. It *will* be different if only in earnest we follow on to know the Lord.

The Gift of Work

The principal cause of boredom is the hatred of work. People are trained from childhood to hate it. Parents often feel guilty about making children do anything but the merest gestures toward work. Perhaps the children are required to make their beds and, in a feeble and half-hearted fashion, tidy up their rooms once a month or so. But take full responsibility to clear the table, load the dishwasher, scrub the pots, wipe the counters? How many have the courage to ask this of a ten-year-old? It would be too much to ask of most ten-year-olds because parents have seriously asked nothing of them when they were two or three. Children quickly pick up the parents' negative attitudes toward work and think of it as something most sedulously to be avoided.

Our Lord and Savior worked. There is little doubt that He served in the carpenter shop under the instruction of His earthly father Joseph, putting in long hours, learning skill, care, responsibility, and above all, the glory of work as a gift to glorify His heavenly Father. He did always those things that pleased the Father. Later He chose almost all His disciples from

those who labored with their hands. The apostle Paul, a man of brilliant mind, made tents.

Booker T. Washington, a black who grew up in the South when blacks were expected to do the hardest and dirtiest jobs, learned his greatest lesson from the example of a Christian woman. A New Englander, the founder of the Hampton Institute, she washed the windows the day before school started, so it would be nice for those children who had been born slaves.

Is work a necessary evil, even a curse? A Christian who spent many years in Soviet work camps, learning to know work at its most brutal, its most degrading and dehumanizing, testified that he took pride in it, did the best he could, worked to the limit of his strength each day. Why? Because he saw it as a gift from God, coming to him from the hand of God, the very will of God for him. He remembered that Jesus did not make benches and roofbeams and plow handles by means of miracles, but by means of saw, axe, and adze.

Wouldn't it make an astounding difference, not only in the quality of the work we do (in office, schoolroom, factory, kitchen, or back yard), but also in our satisfaction, even our joy, if we recognized God's gracious gift in every single task, from making a bed or bathing a baby to drawing a blueprint or selling a computer? If our children saw us doing "heartily as unto the Lord" all the work we do, they would learn true happiness. Instead of feeling that they must be allowed to do what they like, they would learn to like what they do.

St. Ignatius Loyola prayed, "Teach us, Good Lord, to labor and to ask for no reward save that of knowing that we do Thy will." As I learn to pray that prayer, I find that there are many more rewards that come along as fringe benefits. As we make an offering of our work, we find the truth of a principle Jesus taught: fulfillment is not a goal to achieve, but always the by-product of sacrifice.

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Passion and Purity—a true love story, illustrating the principles by which to preserve "the gift you give only once," virginity. A302 \$6.95

A Lamp for My Feet—brief meditations which apply the Bible to the common experience of twentieth century living. 2347 \$9.95

Readers may order through: Servant Book Express, P.O. Box 7455, Ann Arbor, Michigan 48107-9977. Payment must accompany order. Please pay in U.S. currency or equivalent. Add postage, handling, and guaranteed delivery charges:

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Readers Write

"Your book *A Lamp for My Feet* was a big instrument in encouraging my husband this past three weeks or so. Our one and only daughter was married on Saturday, and he was very concerned over walking her down the long aisle (thirty-five seconds, actually, from start to finish), and then of greeting guests of whom he was sure he would forget the names. It was becoming a high anxiety day instead of a joy. He has been reading your book in the mornings, but stopped about two weeks ago on page 67, "God's Help for God's Assignment," and there he stayed. He reread it every day, to remind himself of the truth in it. And not only was he not confounded or ashamed, but he had one of the happiest days of his life! Lives were touched through the ceremony and all the prayer that surrounded it. It was a 'Victory Day' in every way for us and our God."

The following is the excerpt referred to above from my book *A Lamp for My Feet*:

God's Help for God's Assignment

Sometimes a task we have begun takes on seemingly crushing size, and we wonder what ever gave us the notion that we could accomplish it. There is no way out, no way around it, and yet we cannot contemplate actually carrying it through. The rearing of children or the

writing of a book are illustrations that come to mind. Let us recall that the task is a divinely appointed one, and divine aid is therefore to be expected. Expect it! Ask for it, wait for it, believe that God gives it. Offer to Him the job itself, along with your fears and misgivings about it. He will not fail or be discouraged. Let his courage encourage you. The day will come when the task will be finished. Trust Him for it.

"For the Lord God will help me; therefore shall I not be confounded, therefore have I set my face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed" (Is 50:7 AV).

January/February/March 1987

January 9, 10 Sharon, MA; Nazarene Women's Retreat; 617-662-9628.

January 16 Gordon-Conwell Seminary; Dr. Wilson, 617-468-7111.

January 28 McPherson, KA; First Baptist Church; 316-241-6400.

January 29 Steubenville, OH; Ohio Valley Christian Association; Mary Kay Locke, P.O. Box 972, Steubenville, OH.

January 30 St. Paul, MN; Mrs. McDonald, 612-633-5914.

January 31 Edina, MN; Colonial Church; 612-925-2711.

February 1 Edina, MN (see above).

February 6-8 Jacksonville, FL; All Souls Episcopal Church, 904-268-4600.

February 9, 10 Nashville, TN; Christ Presbyterian Church, 615-373-2311.

February 26 Atlanta, GA; Junior League; Mrs. Linda Simpson, 404-261-7799.

February 27, 28 Augusta, GA; First Presbyterian Church, 404-823-2450.

March 6 Burlington, MA; Fellowship Bible Church, 617-272-2278.

March 13, 14 Poulsbo, WA; Crista Camps and Conferences, 206-697-1212.

March 27, 28 Columbus, OH; Ohio District Council, 614-890-2290.

THANKS—to those who offered help for the man in Palm Beach. We found it.

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My Life for Yours

Ten years ago a young Canadian woman sat in the assembly hall at the University of Illinois in Urbana, along with 17,000 other students attending Inter-Varsity's missionary convention. She thrilled to the singing of the great hymns, led by Bernie Smith. She heard the speakers, "and I remember the incredible excitement and desire to know and serve God that I experienced at that time. Now I have walked through some deep waters, and I feel compelled to write to you," her letter to me said. She had read two of my books just before the convention, and I happened to be among the speakers. Another was Helen Roseveare, author of *Give Me This Mountain* and other books. Barbara was especially moved by the thought of the cost of declaring God's glory. Her letter told me this story:

Three years after Urbana she married Gerry Fuller, "a wonderful man who demonstrated zeal for Christ, a passion for souls, a beautiful compassion for hurting, broken people who needed to know the healing love of Jesus Christ." Following seminary and student pastorates, he became a prison chaplain and an inner-city missionary. Then he married Barbara and together they worked in Saint John, New Brunswick, with street kids, ex-convicts, and glue-sniffers.

The time came when Barbara saw Gerry seeking the Lord with such great intensity it made her question her own commitment to Christ. Was she prepared to die to self as he was? What was it that drove him to pray as he did—at least once until four in the morning? Was her own love for the Lord as deep as his, or was it perhaps shadowed by her love for her husband?

Gerry had a nephew named Gary, "a quiet guy with an artistic nature and talents that had been

snuffed as a child, leaving him very insecure, undisciplined." He couldn't hold down a job, got in trouble with the law. When relatives consented to his using their vacation cottage, a neighboring cottage was broken into. The owner called Gerry to say that his gun had been taken; Gary was the prime suspect, but they didn't want to call the police until they'd called Gerry.

Gerry was "scared stiff," but knew what he had to do: put his whole trust in God, go to the cottage, try to persuade his nephew to turn himself in. He and Barbara went to bed.

Next morning when they prayed together he asked the Holy Spirit especially to strengthen Barbara in raising little Josh and Ben. Should she go with him to see Gary? She was relieved that his answer was no—"If anything happens to him, the children will need me," was the thought that flashed into her mind.

Gerry said goodbye. Barbara fasted, prayed, cared for the little boys, worked in the garden, waited. All day she waited. He did not come. Oh well, Gerry was always late for everything. No doubt they were deep in conversation. He had tried so often to help Gary. Lord, may he help him now.

At last the sound of a car. Eagerly Barbara looked up from her weeding. It was the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. She froze, then fell to the ground sobbing. Gerry was dead. But looking up at the bewildered faces of her sons, four and two years old, she pulled herself together, took their little hands, and told them Daddy was with Jesus and they wouldn't see him again for a long time. "From that point on there was the sense of being carried through the whole dream-like event. God surrounded me with His presence and an overwhelming sense that 'It's all right.' I knew He was in charge."

The murder was a deliberate act. Gary is serving a life sentence in a penitentiary with some who were led to Christ through Gerry's

witness. They loved Gerry, but for love of his Lord they have forgiven his killer. A number of lives have been changed as a result of his testimony, but "in spite of the good things that came of his death there is always the WHY," Barbara writes. "As you say, we must let God be God. It's hard to explain, though, to a tired three-year-old when he wails, 'I miss Daddy!'"

"One of my greatest blessings and comforts came as a surprise about six weeks after my husband's death when I discovered that I was pregnant with a baby conceived the eve of his homegoing. And how like the Lord and His perfect timing to present me with a beautiful child on Easter Sunday—the girl I had prayed for. Her name is Marah Grace and it is by God's grace that she has made my bitter waters sweet.

"People say I am brave but I don't see any great bravery in walking through one of the difficult experiences of life. God is the One who strengthens us *at the time* for the things we must face. My greatest fear was the fear of losing Gerry, but when the time came God swooped under me as a great bird and carried me on eagle's wings above the storm.

"So that is my story. I wanted to share it with you—I feel somewhat akin to you. My husband went in obedience to God, well aware of the danger, and laid down his life for Christ's sake. My task is to follow that example and to instill in my children the values Gerry and I shared: the supreme value of knowing Jesus Christ and serving Him with our whole selves."

Thank you, dear Barbara, for being one more faithful witness to a wholly faithful and sovereign Lord. Like Jim Elliot, Gerry knew that "he is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain what he cannot lose." Like the coastguardsmen, he knew "You have to go out, you don't have to come back."

The Government Is on His Shoulders

The Orthodox Morning Prayer includes this petition: Teach me to treat all that comes to me throughout the day with peace of soul and with firm conviction that Your will governs all.

I had thought of "all that comes to me" as coming from outside, that is, from the action of others. Today what came to me was the sudden sickening realization that I had forgotten a speaking engagement last night. It was on my calendar but not in my engagement book. I had looked only at the latter.

I did not treat this with peace of soul. The pastor was very gracious when I called.

"God is in control," was his word of comfort.

Yes. He is still there in spite of my inexcusable failures. What destroyed my peace was not only the thought of those I had sinned against—their inconvenience, disappointment, offense—but the thought of *my reputation* for faithfulness. I had to confess that subtle form of pride.

Nothing that comes to me is devoid of divine purpose. In seeking to see the whole with God's eyes, we can find the peace which human events so often destroy. He is the God who is able even to "restore . . . the years which the swarming locust has eaten," (Joel 2:25, RSV) and to turn "the Vale of Trouble into the Gate of Hope" (Hosea 2:15, NEB).

Matthew Henry on Child Training

When I was the newly widowed mother of a fourteen-month-old daughter, my mother sent me this quotation from Matthew Henry, an eighteenth century commentator whom my father had been reading aloud to her that morning in April, 1956:

"Proverbs 19:18, 'Chasten thy son while there is hope, and let not thy soul spare for his crying.' Parents are here cautioned against a foolish indulgence of their children, that are untoward and viciously inclined, and that discover such an ill temper of mind as is not likely to be cured but by severity.

"1. Do not say that it is all in good time to

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correct them, no, as soon as ever there appears a corrupt disposition in them, check it immediately, before it takes root and is hardened into a habit. *Chasten thy son while there is hope*, for perhaps if he be let alone awhile, he will be past hope, and a much greater chastening will not do that which now a less would effect. It is easier plucking up weeds as soon as they spring up, and the bullock that is designed for the yoke should be betimes [before it is too late] accustomed to it. . . .

"2. Do not say that it is a pity to correct them, and, because they cry and beg to be forgiven, you cannot find it in your heart to do it. If the point will be gained without correction, well and good; but it often proves that your forgiving them once, upon a dissembled [pretended] repentance and promise of amendment, does but embolden them to offend again, especially if it be a thing in itself sinful, as lying, swearing, ribaldry, stealing or the like. In such a case put on resolution, *and let not thy soul spare for his crying*. It is better that he should cry under thy rod than under the sword of the magistrate or, which is more fearful, than under divine vengeance."

The language of the eighteenth century sounds a bit stern. We rarely call our children "untoward and viciously inclined," but we see other people's children—in the supermarket, in church, in our own newly decorated living room—who fit that description exactly. Children need a rod, and they need it early. Not a big stick. My parents found that a thin eighteen-inch switch did the trick so long as it was applied at an early age, and immediately following the offense. It is important to note Henry's specifying "a thing sinful in itself." Punishment for such things should be different from correction for childish mistakes—spilled milk (have him clean it up if he's old enough), a forgotten chore (have him do that one plus another he doesn't usually have to do). One grandmother recently told my daughter a method of persuading children to eat what was put before them. When others had finished and a child was dawdling over his plate, she set a timer for five minutes. If the plate was not cleaned it went into the refrigerator to be presented at the beginning of the next meal. "Worked like a charm," she said.

Soup

I'm married to a soup man. Lars would eat soup and/or fish three times a day if I'd feed it to him. The day you read this will likely be an idyllic and balmy day in spring when soup would be the last thing you'd think of serving. Never mind. The day I'm writing this is bleak. Snow has turned to freezing rain, crackling and sending slivers of ice sliding down the windowpane. The sea is battleship gray. The wind shakes the two ragged skeletons of pine which stand between my study window and the breakers. It's a soup day. This one is really a vegetable stew, but we eat it in soup plates with a spoon.

- 1 medium eggplant, cubed
- 2 medium zucchini, cubed
- 5 carrots, thick diagonal chunks
- 3 celery stalks, thickly sliced
- 2 onions, same
- 5 medium potatoes, cubed
- ½ c. vegetable oil, preferably part olive
- 1 tbsp. each of dried basil and parsley, or 3

tbsp. fresh

½ tsp. salt

Throw everything into a large heavy pot. Add ½ c. water. Cover and simmer, stirring occasionally till carrots are tender-crisp. If you want it soupier, add water (or a can of beef broth or some tomato juice). Serve with lots of Parmesan cheese on top. Serves 4 quite hungry people. Easiest, most delicious lunch or supper.

A Working Mother

"A few years ago," writes a friend, "when faced with some rather large debts, Elaine wanted to earn a little money to help get the family out of the hole. She didn't want to leave the children, so even though her past work experience had been as a high school math teacher and computer programmer for IBM and Sylvania, she opted instead for a paper route! That meant that she had to leave at 3:30 each morning, seven days a week, for a couple of years, to deliver her papers. She was home again before breakfast and before Ed had to leave for work." Bravissima, Elaine!

Small Seminars

We plan to do a one-day writing seminar in Boston on Saturday, October 3. Also on November 18-22 there will be a gathering at Pine Mountain Club Chalets near Atlanta, exclusively for women who in some way are spiritually responsible for helping/teaching others. Enrollment for either of these events will be strictly limited. If interested, please write directly to me, *not to the Newsletter*, at 10 Strawberry Cove, Magnolia MA 01930. Please give me some idea of why you are interested and should be included.

Prayer Requests

1. In January I began writing a new book. Will you pray that the Lord will help me with it even if I won't tell you what it is?

2. Please use the itinerary to pray along with us as we travel. The Spring Harvest in England brings together many thousands, in tents, "caravans" (trailers), etc.

3. That God will "equip us thoroughly for the doing of His will, and effect in us everything that pleases Him" (Heb 13:21).

Video Cassettes—For those of you who are beyond twelve-inch black and white TV and "into" huge entertainment centers with VCR's, stereophonic sound, and perhaps AromaVision, we have my wife (she's Elisabeth Elliot) on ½ inch VHS, "My Life: An Offering," (3 talks) \$55 for purchase, \$12 for rental, postage included. Order from me: Lars Gren, 10 Strawberry Cove, Magnolia MA 01930.

March/April/May 1987

March 6 Burlington, MA; Fellowship Bible Church, 617-272-2278.

March 13, 14 Poulsbo, WA; Crista Camps and Conferences, 206-697-1212.

March 27, 28 Columbus, OH; Ohio District Council, 614-890-2290.

April 4-17 England; Spring Harvest, Graeme Bunn, 4352-6055

April 24 Birmingham, AL; Mayors' Prayer Breakfast, Jesse E. Miller, 320-6000.

May 1 Berrien Springs, MI; Andrews University, 616-471-7771.

May 2 Flint, MI; Calvary United Methodist Church, 313-238-7685.

May 8 Staten Island, NY; Gateway Cathedral, 718-351-2400.

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Serious Play, Careless Work

When I was a kid we rushed home every afternoon from school, burst into the house to make sure Mother was there where we wanted her to be (she was), and then collected the kids on the block to play Kick the Can or to build playhouses out of wooden greenhouse boxes. Equipment didn't cost us a cent. Adults didn't have to supervise us or drive us anywhere or coach us. We just played. We were kids, and we knew that after-school time was playtime—until it was time to work (practice the piano, set the table, clear the table, do homework).

Something has gone badly awry. Educators have gotten terribly serious about play and terribly casual about real physical work. Billions of dollars are lavished on developing crafts which nobody really needs and forms of recreation which people have to be taught to like. We've got "toys to grow on," computer games, play groups, playgrounds. Tiny tots who would have been happy with a few Tupperware containers and some spoons are given fancy mechanical toys that *do* things, and taught that if they make huge messes with finger paints they're being creative, which they didn't know they wanted to be.

There's something wrong with our sense of balance and of the fitness of things. I've seen Indian children playing in the river, climbing trees, sliding down mudbanks. But at the same time they were often catching fish or finding wild honey, fruit, or edible snails. They had no toys to play with but they had a marvelous time (at the age of three or four, mind you) building fires, sharpening knives, whacking away at the ever-encroaching weeds. Nobody told them what to do. Child's play naturally turned into useful work. My little three-year-old Valerie was

as adept at these activities as the Indians—learned just as they had, by daily observation of adult men and women at work, then by imitation. A girl of ten could weave a perfect hammock; a boy of ten could handle a blowgun and bring home the "bacon," *i.e.* a bird or monkey for supper. A lot of what they did mattered, and they had much more fun than children who spend a good part of their childhood doing things that don't matter very much to them or anybody else.

Aren't children nowadays getting far too much of the wrong kind of attention and not nearly enough of the right kind? Does it really make sense for kids of six and seven to be so frantically serious about organized sports and geniuses at computer games, but to have no idea how to amuse themselves without a coach, a team, a uniform, an arsenal of weapons, or an expensive and complicated piece of electronic equipment—not to mention daily transportation to and from the athletic field, park, ice rink, anywhere but the back yard? Must they be rounded up, herded, instructed, shouted at, praised, coaxed, and hovered over by adults who are paid money to pay attention to the poor little hooligans in order to keep them out of the adults' hair during "working hours"?

Is anybody paying attention to how a *child* works? Is it assumed that if asked to rake a lawn he'll do it halfheartedly? Will he sweep the garage in silent fury or will he rejoice in doing a thorough job of it? Will she scrub a sink till it shines and know herself to be a useful member of a household? School teachers desperately try to teach children who have never really labored with their hands to do schoolwork—not a very good place to start, it seems to me. If a child is not given to understand that he has a responsibility to help make the wheels of home run smoothly—if he is not given work which matters, in other words—why should he imagine

that it matters very much whether he cooperates with teachers and fellow students? His parents have failed to give attention to a vital matter. Their attention has been elsewhere—on their own interests, jobs, amusements, physical fitness, or only on the child's health and a misguided notion of happiness which leaves out work altogether. If the "quality time" his father spends with him is limited to amusements rather than work, small wonder the child assumes nobody really likes work. His choices in how to spend his time, like his preferences in food, are *taught* at home—by observation of parental attitudes.

The jungle Indian children I knew learned without formal lessons of any kind. They were with their parents more or less all the time—everybody sleeping around a single fire at night, boys hunting or fishing with their fathers by day, girls planting and gathering food with their mothers. It was hard work to survive. They took that for granted and pitched in. Everybody was responsible to collect firewood and keep the fire burning. Very rarely did a parent even have to tell a child, let alone nag him, to do his job. It was expected and the kids met the expectations. Nobody over two had much leisure, but they had a lot of fun. I've never seen people laugh so much. It was a peaceful life, a life without anything like the severe stresses and conflicts we have created for ourselves. Wouldn't it be lovely to go back to all that?

But how are we supposed to do it? We don't live in the jungle. Children have jungle gyms instead of real trees to climb; plastic swimming pools instead of a clear flowing river; sliding boards instead of mudbanks. The work necessary to keep everybody alive and fed and clothed is done where they can't see it. So far as children can see, it usually has nothing to do with being fed and clothed but only with money. Their parents (often, alas, both of them) tear off somewhere in the morning and come home at night exhausted, having spent their day at who knows what. The newspaper, dinner, and TV take up a chunk of what's left of the day. Football, the child learns by observation, is vastly more important than anything else in the father's life. It takes precedence over everything, rivets his father's attention, something he himself has never managed to do. So he, like his father, seeks

escape from home and the responsibilities of home.

Is the situation irremediable? I don't think so. Surely we could eliminate some of the frustration and discontent of "civilized" family life if we took our cues from the "uncivilized" people who work almost all the time (and *enjoy* it) and play very little of the time (without making a complicated chore out of it). Happiness, after all, is a choice. Let your child see that you put heart and soul into the work God has given you to do. Do it for Him—that changes the whole climate of the home. Draw the child into acceptance of responsibility by starting very early. Expect the best. If you expect them to oppose you, to "goof off," to be terrible at two, rude at ten, intractable as teenagers, they won't disappoint you.

It takes longer, of course, to teach a child to do a job than it takes to do it yourself—especially if you have not given him the chance to watch you do it fifty times. It takes sustained attention—the sort of attention a child desperately needs. He can't get too much of that. He needs to be convinced that he is a necessary and very much appreciated member of the family.

What about the sacrifices? We're going to have to make some if we mean to correct our mistakes. Instead of sacrificing everything for money and sports, which most people seem ready to do without a qualm, we may have to sacrifice money and sports for our children. We will certainly have to sacrifice *ourselves*. But, of course, that is what being a father or a mother means. Selah.

My Mother

She was Kath to her close friends, Dearie to my father, and always Mother (never Mom) to her six children. She held us on her lap when we were small and rocked us, sang to us, and told us stories. We begged for the ones about "when you were a little girl." Katharine Gillingham was born June 21, 1899 in Philadelphia. We loved hearing about the butler who did tricks for her behind her parents' backs and about the alarmed

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postman who rushed to rescue the screaming child with her arm down a dog's throat until he heard what she was saying: "He's got my peanut!" In 1922 she married Philip E. Howard Jr., a man who, because he had lost an eye in an accident, felt sure no woman would have him. They worked for five years with the Belgian Gospel Mission, then returned to the States when he became associate editor (later editor) of *The Sunday School Times*.

Mother's course was finished on February 7. She was up and dressed as usual in the morning at the Quarryville Presbyterian Home in Pennsylvania, made it to lunch with the help of her walker, lay down afterwards, having remarked rather matter-of-factly to someone that she knew she was dying, and wondered where her husband was. Later in the afternoon cardiac arrest took her, very quietly.

Each of us (in chronological order) took a few minutes at the funeral to speak of some aspect of Mother's character. Phil spoke of her consistency and unfailing availability as a mother; of her love for Dad, ("He was always my lover," she said). I recalled how she used to mop her eyes at the table, laughing till she cried at some of my father's bizarre descriptions, or even at his oft-told jokes; how she was obedient to the New Testament pattern of godly womanhood, including hospitality. Dave talked about her unreserved surrender to the Lord, first of herself (at Stony Brook conference in New York), and then (painfully, years later at Prairie Bible Institute in Canada) of her children; of how, when we left home, she followed us not only with prayer but, for forty years with hardly a break, with a weekly letter. Ginny told how Mother's example taught her what it means to be a lady; how to discipline herself, her children, her home. Tom remembered the books she read to us (A.A. Milne, Beatrix Potter, *Sir Knight of the Splendid Way*, for example), and the songs she sang as she rocked each of us little children ("Safe in the Arms of Jesus," "Go Tell Aunt Nancy") shaping our vision of life. Jim pictured her sitting in her small cane rocker in the bay window of her bedroom after the breakfast dishes were done, sitting quietly before the Lord with the Bible, *Daily Light*, and notebook.

The last three years were sorrowful ones for all of us. Arteriosclerosis had done its work in

her mind and she was confused and lonely ("Why hasn't Dad been to see me?" "He's been with the Lord for 23 years, Mother." "Nobody told me!"). Still a lady, she tried to be neatly groomed, always offered a chair to those who came. She had not lost her humor, her almost unbeatable skill at Scrabble, her ability to play the piano, sing hymns, and remember her children. But she wanted us to pray that the Lord would let her go Home, so we did.

The funeral ended with the six of us singing "The Strife is O'er," then all family members, including our beloved aunts Alice and Anne Howard, sang "To God be the Glory." The graveside service closed with the doxology (the one with Alleluias). We think of her now, loving us with an even greater love, her poor frail mortality left behind, her eyes beholding the King in His beauty. "If you knew what God knows about death," wrote George MacDonald, "you would clap your listless hands."



A New Book

In May, my new book, *A Chance to Die: The Life and Legacy of Amy Carmichael*, will be available. Amy Carmichael became for me what some now call a role model. She was far more than that. She was my first spiritual mother; she showed me the shape of godliness.

If you would like to support the Newsletter with a donation at this time, we will send you this hardcover book *and* an additional year of the Newsletter. To make this donation, send:

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Prayers

The following suggestions for intercession are abridged from Lancelot Andrewes' *Private Devotions*:

for those who have a claim on me
from kinship,—
for brothers and sisters, that God's blessing
may be on them and on their children;
or from benefits conferred,—that Thy recompence
may be on all who have benefitted me, who have ministered
to me in spiritual, material, or physical things;
or from trust placed in me,—
those whom I have educated, employed, served,
influenced;
or from natural kindness,—for all who love me,
though I know them not;
or from Christian love,—for those who hate me
without cause, or even on account of truth and
righteousness;
or from neighborhood,—those who dwell near me;
or from promise,—for all whom I have promised
to remember in prayers;
or from mutual office,—for all who remember me
in their prayers and ask of me the same;
or from stress of engagements,—for all who for
any sufficient cause fail to call upon Thee.

RECOMMENDED READING: Mike Mason, *The Mystery of Marriage* (Multnomah Press). A Drop-Everything book. A book on marriage to end all books on marriage. "This one is a crackerjack!" says J.I. Packer. Mason deals with the stunning paradoxes of the mystery, the problems (all of them) and the glories (more than I'd ever thought of). I don't need to read any other books on the subject.

Travel Schedule, May/June 1987

May 1 Berrien Springs, MI; Andrews University, 616-471-7771.

May 2 Flint, MI; Calvary United Methodist Church, 313-238-7685.

May 8 Staten Island, NY; Gateway Cathedral, 718-351-2400.

May 15, 16 Winnipeg, MAN; Winnipeg Bible College, 204-284-2923.

May 22 London, ONT; Compassion of Canada, 519-473-9220.

May 23 Petrolia, ONT; New Life Assembly, 519-882-1600.

May 30 Falls Church, VA; The Falls Church women, 703-532-7600.

June 8-12 Charlottesville, VA; Center for Christian Study, 804-295-2471.

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Nothing Is Lost

A pastor's wife asked, "When one witnesses a work he has poured his life into 'go up in flames' (especially if he is not culpable), is it the work of Satan or the hand of God?"

Often it is the former, always it is under the control of the latter. In the biographies of the Bible we find men whose work for God seemed to be a flop at the time—Moses' repeated efforts to persuade Pharaoh, Jeremiah's pleas for repentance, the good king Josiah's reforms, rewarded in the end by his being slain by a pagan king. Sin had plenty to do with the seeming failures, but God was then, as He is now, the "Blessed Controller of All Things" (1 Tm 6:15, J.B. Phillips). He has granted to us human beings responsibility to make choices and to live with the consequences. This means that everybody suffers—sometimes for his own sins, sometimes for those of others.

There are paradoxes here which we cannot plumb. But we can always look at the experiences of our own lives in the light of the life of our Lord Jesus. How shall we learn to "abide" (live our lives) in Christ, enter into the fellowship of His sufferings, let Him transform our own? There is only one way. It is by living each event, including having things "go up in flames," as Christ lived: in the peace of the Father's will. Did His earthly work appear to be a thundering success? He met with argument, unbelief, scorn in Pharisees and others. Crowds followed Him—not because they wanted His Truth, but because they liked handouts such as bread and fish and

physical healing. His own disciples were "fools and slow of heart to believe." (Why didn't Jesus *make* them believe? For the reason given above.) These men who had lived intimately with Him, heard His teaching for three years, watched His life and miracles, still had little idea what He was talking about on the evening before His death. Judas betrayed Him. The rest of them went to sleep when He asked them to stay awake. In the end they all forsook Him and fled. Peter repented with tears, and later saw clearly what had taken place. In his sermon to the Jews of Jerusalem (Acts 2:23, JBP) he said, "This man, who was put into your power by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God, you nailed up and murdered. . . . But God would not allow the bitter pains of death to touch him. He raised him to life again—and there was nothing by which death could hold such a man."

There is nothing by which death can hold any of His faithful servants, either. Settle it, once for all—YOU CAN NEVER LOSE WHAT YOU HAVE OFFERED TO CHRIST. It's the man who tries to save himself (or his reputation or his work or his dreams of success or fulfillment) who loses. Jesus gave us His word that if we'd lose our lives for His sake, we'd find them.

Prayer

O Direct my life towards Thy commandments, hallow my soul, purify my body, correct my thoughts, cleanse my desires, soul and body, mind and spirit, heart and reins. Renew me thoroughly, O Lord, for if Thou wilt, Thou canst.
(Lancelot Andrewes, 1555-1626)

Homeschooling

My daughter Valerie Shepard homeschools three of her five children (the other two are pre-school age). Her son Walter, the oldest, attended kindergarten and first grade before the decision was made to homeschool. Some of you have asked what advantages homeschooling offers, so I asked Val what she has discovered. Here is her answer:

1. The children have *more time*: to read (aloud and silently); to learn responsibility by doing chores at home; to play (without adult direction) and use the imagination; to listen to and enjoy each other; to learn obedience.

2. Parents need not de-program or reteach values the child hears for seven hours a day. They have the child's full attention at any time of the day and can give him full attention; he is not watching two different value systems daily.

3. Children learn to love each other more. They do not look down on one another in favor of their peers, or in wrong adulation of older children. This society teaches that among children "older is better." That's not right. Having them at home all day allows them to be children without having to "grow up" in the wrong ways.

4. They learn to be servants of one another. The family is a microcosm of the Body of Christ.

P.S. Since I asked Val to write this I have had the fun of trying it out myself. Val and Walt went to South Carolina (taking their nursing baby Colleen) and I had the other four for five (very busy!) days. There is a schedule of chores posted in the kitchen. Daily I reminded them (seldom more than once). The nine-, seven-, and five-year-olds took turns setting and clearing the table, emptying the dishwasher, folding laundry, sweeping the kitchen. Walter and Jim (not quite three) take out trash, the girls clean the bathroom. All but Jim make their beds.

School began at nine with Bible reading, singing, prayer, all four joining in. Jim sat on the floor and played while the others studied. Christiana finished her kindergarten work by ten or so, Walter and Elisabeth worked till nearly lunchtime.

Every afternoon there was Quiet Hour. This was a lifesaver for Granny. The three older children must be in their rooms for an hour.

They need not sleep, but they must read or find something quiet to do *alone*. (Not once did we have any altercation about Quiet Hour. It's always been a part of their lives, and they *like* it.) Jim and I lay down together, I read him a Beatrix Potter story, and he fell asleep. Since we had no car, four of us walked to the grocery store every day, while Walter rode his bike. It was an interesting string of people, Elisabeth hugging (for example) five pounds of flour, Christiana batting things with a box of Saran Wrap, Jim lugging a bag of apples, Granny with a loaded brown bag.

We had poetry readings (Jim memorized with no effort at all) and singing. Everybody learned "Chattanooga Choo-Choo," by mistake, as it were—I meant for them to learn "Praise the Savior" but somehow that one didn't stick so easily, alas! Walter and Elisabeth practiced the piano and played vigorous duets for the rest of us. We made bread and organized drawers and closets and sorted clothes and toys for give-away and picked violets and had a marvelous time.

I should confess this—on the evening of the first day I wasn't sure I'd survive the week. When Val phoned I asked, "How do you do it?" "Mama, I just do what you taught me: don't think about all you have to do, just DO THE NEXT THING!" I needed to be told what I have often told others, and it worked.

Homeschooling is demanding to say the least—but worthwhile. If you are considering trying it, you might want to get Mary Pride's *The Big Book of Home Learning: The Complete Guide to Everything Educational for You and Your Child*, (Crossways, \$17.50).

Those Mighty Feathers

My friend and spiritual mother Katherine Morgan, who, though pushing eighty, is still a missionary in Colombia, writes: "Many of you are concerned with our safety here in Bogota where people are shot every day in the streets. A

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magistrate of the Supreme Court was assassinated about five blocks from us the other morning. . . . But I can say I have never felt safer anywhere than each day as I go about my duties. Mr. George Schultz came down from Washington to the inauguration of our new president and had about twenty bodyguards with him. But according to Psalm 91 we have a greater bodyguard which is the shadow of the Almighty and His 'feathers.' *Shadow* and *feathers* are mightier than human arms. Some time ago a missionary friend of mine was coming home from the store carrying one baby and leading the other by the hand when a man approached her with a long knife pointed right at her. He demanded her purse. She shouted at him, 'Leave me alone. I am covered with feathers!' Giving her one terrified look, he fled."

Draw Near That Fire

(The following was written by my mother, Katherine Gillingham Howard, found in her little prayer notebook after her death.)

How cold the heart and stony—like one dead—
On which the beams of God's own Word,
In daily meditation, fail to shed their warmth.
If through neglect, we draw not near that fire,
At first, unnoticed, creeps a shivering chill.
But when, neglected, lies the Book for days,
That chill takes hold, till the whole soul is ill.
And yet when once again we seek God's Word,
With empty heart and soul and deep despair,
In faithfulness He meets us. Praise the Lord!
And pours in oil and wine on all our care.

Another Way

Following a women's meeting in Florida I was sitting at a table out under the trees autographing books. A young woman waited politely until I was free, then, with a shining face, told me this story. She had been working, but came to the conviction that she ought to be at home with her children. This, it seemed, was quite impossible. Her husband insisted she work because they needed the money. "Last week," she said, "he was away for three days. I set aside

those days to fast and pray, asking God to change my husband's mind and to show us another way." A day or two later, without preliminary, her husband said, "Honey, we must find a way to enable you to quit working." Within one week they had sold their house and found another with equal floor space at a much lower price.

May her testimony spur others to ask God if He might show them another way. "Your Heavenly Father knows that you need these things."

A Dozen Ways to Make Yourself (and Quite a Few Others) Miserable

1. Count your troubles, name them one by one—at the breakfast table, if anybody will listen, or as soon as possible thereafter.

2. Worry every day about something. Don't let yourself get out of practice. It won't add a cubit to your stature but it might burn a few calories.

3. Pity yourself. If you do enough of this, nobody else will have to do it for you.

4. Devise clever but decent ways to serve God and mammon. After all, a man's gotta live.

5. Make it your business to find out what the Joneses are buying this year and where they're going. Try to do them at least one better even if you have to take out another loan to do it.

6. Stay away from absolutes. It's what's right for you that matters. Be your own person and don't allow yourself to get hung up on what others expect of you.

7. Make sure you get your rights. Never mind other people's. You have your life to live, they have theirs.

8. Don't fall into any compassion traps—the sort of situation where people can walk all over you. If you get too involved in other people's troubles, you may neglect your own.

9. Don't let Bible reading and prayer get in the way of what's really relevant—things like TV and newspapers. Invisible things are eternal. You want to stick with the visible ones—they're where it's at now.

10. Be right, and be sure to let folks know it. If you catch yourself in the wrong, don't breathe it to a soul.

11. Review daily the names of people who have hurt, wronged, or insulted you. Keep those lists up to date, and think of ways to get even without being thought of as unreasonable, uncivilized, or unchristian.

12. Never forgive a wrong. Clutch it forever, and you'll never be unemployed. Resentment is a full-time job.

RECOMMENDED READING: Peter Kreeft, *Making Sense Out of Suffering* (Servant Publications, Ann Arbor MI). Kreeft takes up the unanswerable and carries us inexorably to the stunning answer. He tells us in lucid and vigorous prose the old, old story. I already knew how it would end, but I was swept from one clue to the next as willingly and thrillingly as if I had been reading through a mystery novel. Rabbi Kushner (author of *When Bad Things Happen to Good People*)—can you refute Kreeft's case?

July/August/September 1987

July 9 Phoenix, AZ; Conservative Baptist Women's Luncheon, Mrs. Myra Falconer, (602) 834-9120.

July 10, 12 Arkadelphia, AR; Singles Conference, Carol Roper, (501) 376-0900.

July 12-18 Huntsville, ONT; Richard Holliday, (705) 789-4031.

August 8 Oklahoma City, OK; Luncheon, Sandra Clopine, (417) 862-2781.

August 28, 29 Holland; Operation Mobilization.

September 25-27 Los Gatos, CA; Los Gatos Christian Church.

September 29 Merrillville, IN; World Home Bible League women's retreat, Mrs. Leona Botting, (616) 669-5977.

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The Gospel According to Sloat

Psychologist Donald Sloat, author of *The Dangers of Growing Up in a Christian Home*, made some breathtaking assertions in an interview for *InterVarsity* magazine last spring. I scurried to my typewriter to protest to the powers that be, but I can't leave it at that. I met a couple who were badly confused by Sloat's statements, which they had studied earnestly, hoping to find some light for a dark time they are having with a defiant fifteen-year-old.

God has promised that for the upright (those whose lives are characterized by obedience) light will arise out of darkness. The world, however, is continually coming at us with notions utterly at variance with God's light. We must test every notion by the straightedge of Scripture.

I think I know what Dr. Sloat meant, and I am terribly aware of the great gulfs fixed between what one believes, what one actually says, and what an interviewer may record (not to mention what the reader or hearer may *think* was said). I can only take the words of the interview as it appeared.

Sloat's remarks confuse the nature of the *true* Christian home with its sad imitations, *true* Christian faith with a vague and often Pharisaical travesty. He has discarded the baby with the bathwater. This is a serious mistake for one who is taken for a godly counselor. False premises lead to false conclusions in diagnosis and false prescriptions. Note the following:

Christian faith, he says, can be dangerous to family stability. By Christian faith does he really mean the genuine article or a man-made farrago? Faith, according to Scripture, means obedience, and that, Jesus says, is the secret of stability.

The man who hears His words and acts upon them builds his house on a rock. Rain, floods, and wind will not destroy it (Mt 7:25).

Christian parents "push ideas onto their kids," says Sloat. God says, "These commandments which I give you this day are to be kept in your heart; you shall repeat them to your sons, and speak of them indoors and out of doors, when you lie down and when you rise" (Dt 6:6, 7; NEB). I'm deeply thankful to God that my parents did just this. They "pushed" a lot of things on us—spinach and courtesy and bedtime and the Bible.

Self-denial, Sloat tells us, represented by such slogans as "Jesus first, others second, yourself last," hinders the development of self-esteem. I wonder what revision of that order he might suggest? Jesus plainly said, "If anyone wishes to be a follower of mine, he must leave self behind; he must take up his cross and come with me. . . . if a man will let himself be lost for my sake, he will find his true self" (Mt 16:24, 25; NEB). There are appropriate ways (first by the example of self-giving love in the parents) to begin to teach this crucial truth even to a little child—pass the butter to Daddy before you help yourself; let your brother have a turn on your new bike; don't grab the last cookie.

"Parents sometimes use another person, or even God, to shame their youngsters," Sloat warns, "making it sound as though the child is displeasing someone else." Throughout Scripture we find godly people (the psalmist, for example, and the apostle Paul) stating that their supreme desire is to please the Lord. Jesus Himself had no aim other than to please His Father. A child *wants* to please his parents, and knows very well that deliberate wrongdoing displeases them. If he is encouraged to obey what they say he will be ready for the next lesson—if you love God, you do what *He* says, too. The lesson that love means obedience

begins here—"Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right" (Eph 6:1; RSV). My own parents' faithfulness in this helped immeasurably in my learning to obey God.

The next question is a real zinger. The interviewer asks if it's better to be raised in an open, non-Christian home than in a strict Christian one.

"From primarily a psychological point of view, the house that is more open and understanding probably has the environment a child needs," is Sloat's stunning reply. He goes on to say that since a child is going to sin no matter what the parents do, it is artificial to make a list of rules. One wonders why God bothered with the Ten Commandments, long after man had proved that he was going to do what he wanted to do anyway. Would Sloat feel that Ten Suggestions would have been psychologically healthier?

"Parents can help their children by not setting up conditions where the kids think they are being perfect or self-righteous"—a very confused line of thought. If there are no limits imposed, kids (or any of the rest of us) will have no trouble being "perfect." You can't break laws if there aren't any. Theologically speaking, the law reveals sin. Practically speaking, carefully thought-out household rules (and who would defend any other kind?) are guidelines for living thoughtfully and unselfishly. All of us, precisely because we are human and imperfect, need to know where the lines are drawn.

Sloat believes that one must get rid of hurt before he can truly forgive. If we follow that advice, most of us will never get around to obeying what Jesus said: "... if you do not forgive others, then the wrongs you have done will not be forgiven by your Father." (Mt 6:15; NEB). I have learned (through having tried it backwards) that forgiveness is the prerequisite for getting rid of the hurt.

Other highly dubious tenets of Sloat's Gospel: the wildly rebellious child may be better off than the sensitive one. Therefore, parents ought to encourage "some forms of" rebellion, even though my Bible tells me it is like witchcraft (1 Sm 15:23). His suggestion in this context reveals his confusion: let them choose their own socks. If what parents are to encourage is freedom in mere matters of taste, such as the color of a pair

of socks, rebellion doesn't enter the picture. Disobedience to house rules is a matter of principle—something else altogether.

"Don't make a rule you can't enforce." We need not bother, then, to teach our children the meaning of honor and trust? Are they to obey only when under surveillance?

Sloat believes that "legal and moral issues," which he does not define, are enforceable. Some rules, in his view, are not: a child's choice of friends, rules about smoking and church attendance. Confusion again. What he meant to say, surely, is that some rules are *worth* enforcing, others aren't. Parents differ on which is which. The principle remains: if it's one of those carefully thought-out rules, the parents must require obedience, no matter how stubbornly the child opposes them. They're in trouble if they start taking opinion polls.

Referring to the possibility of his teenage daughter's sleeping with her boyfriend, this father says, "As much as I would *maybe* want to try and stop her, I don't know if I could. . . . The best thing to do with teenagers is to not *try* to control behavior" (*italics mine*). This one took my breath away. The *best* thing to do? Not *try* to control them? Alas. And then Sloat cites the prodigal son as his proof-text—the father financed his son's rebellion. He forgets that the son was of age and could therefore legally claim his inheritance. Parents are responsible for their children's behavior—as long as they are children. There comes a time, however, when they must turn the adult son or daughter over to God.

Sloat's "best piece of advice": become a whole person. What, exactly, does *that* mean? It's a catch phrase which few bother to define. I wonder if his definition of a whole person would be in line with 1 John 2:17 (J.B. Phillips), "... the man who is following God's will is part of the permanent and cannot die," or with Matthew 16:25, "... if a man will let himself be lost for my sake, he will find his true self."

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I'm afraid the doctor has dug up a good many more snakes than he can kill. He's going to have to spend a long time answering people's questions. I daresay he'll be saying he "didn't mean it that way." If people can't say what they mean, then they either don't understand it or they don't believe it. Too many psychologists today take refuge in psychobabble, calculated to snow us ordinary folks. From a Christian we hope for conviction and clarity, a vision of life which takes its shape from the Word who was made flesh and dwelt among us, and a fearless willingness to swim against the strong tides of secularism.

Gratitude—Even in Death

Eileen Longo, of Warren, New Jersey, writes of her marriage to a man with leukemia who was given two years to live. For ten healthy years after that prognosis "he lived for God radically—there couldn't be a shadow of grasping this life, since it was all so obviously a daily gift from the Lord." When their daughters were five, three, and nine months, the leukemia returned. On the evening of the fourth day Eileen left the hospital, "full of joy and excitement, caught up in a work of God. I knew either he would be healed or taken to Glory, either one a tremendous miracle. So I wasn't shocked when I got the call at 1 A.M. Bill was gone. I simply threw myself into the arms of my Father in Heaven, in gratitude for all the years and the rich life He had given us, so undeserved. God's mercy and love have filled me from that moment. It is nearly one and a half years, and there still is no room for anything but gratitude because of how good God is. To Him be the glory!"

Sometimes we puzzle over how on earth we are supposed to obey the command, "In everything give thanks." Eileen's testimony may show the answer. She wasn't thankful for leukemia—that's the work of the enemy—but she found far greater things to thank God for.

What to Do When Your Children Grow Up

Thoughts from my mother's little red Quiet Time notebook: "Job 1:5—'When a round of feasts was finished, Job sent for his children and sanctified them, rising early in the morning and sacrificing a whole-offering for each of them; for he thought that they might . . . have . . . committed blasphemy in their hearts. This he always did.'

"When one's children are adults, what is the role of the parent?

"They seldom come to us for help or advice. It is wonderful if they do. Then, out of our experience and perhaps the spiritual wisdom God may give us, we may be able to give wise counsel. Seldom, if ever, do they ask advice concerning the training of children. It is a blessing when they ask for prayer for themselves or their children, and this is usually the sole recourse of the grandparent, except for one *tremendous* duty: we can do as Job did. We have the One great Sacrifice to plead—the blood of Jesus Christ! May we be faithful in this duty and privilege for those we love!"

Prayer

Loving Lord and Heavenly Father, I offer up today all that I am, all that I have, all that I do, to be Yours today and Yours forever. Give me grace, Lord, to do all that I know of Your holy will. Purify my heart, sanctify my thinking, correct my desires. Teach me, in all of today's work and trouble and joy, to respond with honest praise, simple trust, and instant obedience, that my life may be in truth a living sacrifice, by the power of Your Holy Spirit and in the name of Your Son Jesus Christ, my Master and my all. Amen.

What Money Can't Buy

Dale Wayne Slusser is an architectural draftsman who, when he told his boss he was giving up his job to work for a mission, was offered more than double his salary if he'd stay. He wrote, "All he can offer me is money, prestige, and comfort—but he can't offer me joy! How can he?" Dale is no fool. He gives up what he can't keep to gain what he can't lose.

Please Write

I'd love to know what you want less of or more of in the Newsletter. Just send a postcard (and please don't expect a personal reply) to my home address: 10 Strawberry Cove, Magnolia, MA 01930. Thank you.

September/October/ November/December 1987

September 25-27 Los Gatos, CA; Los Gatos Christian Church.

September 29 Merrillville, IN; World Home Bible League women's retreat, Mrs. Leona Botting, (616) 669-5977.

October 2 Providence, RI; Brown University IVCF, Kevin Offner, (401) 521-4258.

October 3 Wenham, MA; Gordon College, Writer's Seminar, Lars Gren, (617) 525-3653.

October 15 Lancaster, PA; Calvary Independent Church women's conference.

October 16-18 Livonia, MI; Winning Women Inc., (313) 474-7271.

October 19 Pittsburgh, PA; Faith Christian Community School and Beverly Heights U.P. Church, (412) 561-5100.

October 23 Elgin, IL; Judson College Founders Day, (312) 695-2500.

October 29 Nyack, NY; Women's seminar, Dan Rinker, (914) 358-1710.

October 30, 31 Indianapolis, IN; Brown County Women's Retreat, (317) 849-5049.

November 1 Indianapolis, IN; (see October 30, 31).

November 6 Lynchburg, VA; Liberty University, Mrs. Sue Forbus, (804) 237-5961.

November 7 Illinois (town indefinite); Winning Women, Mrs. Peg Emmons, R.R. 2, Box 18, Saybrook, IL, 61770.

November 16, 17 Toccoa Falls, GA; Toccoa Falls College, (404) 886-6831.

November 22 Auburn, Alabama; Lakeview Baptist Church.

December 4 and 6 Long Beach, CA; Parkcrest Christian Church, (213) 421-9374.

December 5 Palm Desert, CA; Evangelical Free Church.

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The Elisabeth Elliot Newsletter

November/December 1987

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A New Thanksgiving

Those who call Thanksgiving "Turkey Day," I suppose, take some such view as this: Unless we have Someone to thank and something to thank Him for, what's the point of using a name that calls up pictures of religious people in funny hats and Indians bringing corn and squash? Christians, I hope, focus on something other than a roasted bird. We do have Someone to thank and a long list of things to thank Him for, but sometimes we limit our thanksgiving merely to things that look good to us. As our faith in the character of God grows deeper we see that heavenly light is shed on everything—even on suffering—so that we are enabled to thank Him for things we would never have thought of before. The apostle Paul, for example, saw even suffering itself as a happiness (Col 1:24, NEB).

I have been thinking of something that stifles thanksgiving. It is the spirit of greed—the greed of doing, being, and having.

When Satan came to tempt Jesus in the wilderness, his bait was intended to inspire the lust to do more than the Father meant for Him to do—to go farther, demonstrate more power, act more dramatically. So the enemy comes to us in these days of frantic *doing*. We are ceaselessly summoned to activities: social, political, educational, athletic, and—yes—spiritual. Our "self-image" (deplorable word!) is dependent not on the quiet and hidden "Do this for My sake," but on the list the world hands us of what is "important." It is a long list, and it is both foolish and impossible. If we fall for it, we neglect the short list. Only a few things are really important, and for those we have the promise of divine help: sitting in silence with the Master in order to hear His word and obey it in the ordinary line of *duty*—for example, in being a good husband,

wife, father, mother, son, daughter, or *spiritual* father or mother to those nearby who need protection and care—humble work which is never on the world's list because it leads to nothing impressive on one's resume. As Washington Gladden wrote in 1879, "O Master, let me walk with Thee/ In lowly paths of service free. . . ."

Temptation comes also in the form of *being*. The snake in the garden struck at Eve with the promise of being something which had not been given. If she would eat the fruit forbidden to her, she could "upgrade her lifestyle" and become like God. She inferred that this was her right, and that God meant to cheat her of this. The way to get her rights was to disobey Him.

No new temptation ever comes to any of us. Satan needs no new tricks. The old ones have worked well ever since the Garden of Eden, although sometimes under different guises. When there is a deep restlessness for which we find no explanation, it may be due to the greed of *being*—what our loving Father never meant us to be. Peace lies in the trusting acceptance of His design, His gifts, His appointment of place, position, capacity. It was thus that the Son of Man came to earth—embracing all that the Father willed Him to be, usurping nothing—no work, not even a *word*—that the Father had not given Him.

Then there is the greed of *having*. When "a mixed company of strangers" joined the Israelites, the people began to be greedy for better things (Num 11:4, NEB). God had given them exactly what they needed in the wilderness: manna. It was always enough, always fresh, always good (sounds good to me, anyway, "like butter-cakes"). But the people lusted for variety. These strangers put ideas into their heads. "There's more to life than this stuff. Is *this* all you've got? You can have more. You gotta live a little!"

So the insistence to have it all took hold on God's people and they began to wail, "all of them in their families at the opening of their tents." There is no end to the spending, getting, having. We are insatiable consumers, dead set on competing, upgrading, showing off ("If you've got it, flaunt it"). We simply cannot bear to miss something others deem necessary. So the world ruins the peace and simplicity God would give us. Contentment with what He has chosen for us dissolves, along with godliness, while, instead of giving thanks, we lust and wail, teaching our children to lust and wail too. (Children of the jungle tribes I knew years ago did not complain *because they had not been taught to.*)

Lord, we give You thanks for all that You in Your mercy have given us to be and to do and to have. Deliver us, Lord, from all greed to be and to do and to have anything not in accord with Your holy purposes. Teach us to rest quietly in Your promise to supply, recognizing that if we don't have it we don't need it. Teach us to desire Your will—nothing more, nothing less, and nothing else. For Jesus' sake, Amen.

Splendor in the Ordinary

For the encouragement of those whose work seems humdrum, here is what St. Francis DeSales said: "The King of Glory rewards His servants not according to the dignity of their office, but according to the love and humility with which they carry it out."

In the same spirit are these paragraphs from the book *Splendor in the Ordinary* (out of print, alas), by Thomas Howard (who has taught me many things, even though he is my brother):

"[In households] the idea is that in our daily routines we are playing out the Drama of Charity, which eludes politics and its calculations. The commonplaces of household life are parts of the rite in which we celebrate the mystery of Charity—and it is indeed a mystery, full of outrageous absurdities like obedience being a form of liberty, and self-denial a form of self-discovery, and giving a form of receiving, and service a form of exaltation. Politics boggles at mysteries like this; but in Christian households the hunch is that they are all clues to what the Real Drama is about.

"For when the Drama of Charity was played out on the stage of our history, we saw these absurdities disclosed in their true colors. Here we saw Love incarnate in the form of a servant; here we heard the disquieting doctrine of exchanged life proclaimed all over the hills of Judaea; here we witnessed the humility of the virgin mother exalted high above the station of patriarchs and prophets, and the heroic silence of her spouse lauded for all time. Here we saw a gibbet transfigured into a throne, defeat into victory, death into life, and submission into sovereignty. And here we learned of the Holy Ghost himself whose service is to glorify, not himself, dread and mighty as he is, but this incarnate Love humbled below the meanest of men. A riot of self-giving and glory, humiliation and exaltation, service and majesty. Nonsense by any political calculating; but the mystery of Charity before our eyes.

"It is this nonsense that we come upon in our kitchens. For the service in this room is either pointless thralldom, or it is as close to the center of the Real Drama as any rite in the whole household. For it is, precisely, service; and service, occurring as it does always for the sake of something else, is a form of humility and self-giving; and humility and self-giving have been disclosed in the Christian Drama as being at the heart of the matter."

Those Christmas Letters

Somebody wrote to Ann Landers, begging her to print his complaints about those "unbearable Christmas letters" which he found "boring as hell." Many of you probably feel the same, even though you might use different terms to describe it.

It is a bit much to be regaled at Christmastime with the details of Uncle Herman's hemorrhoid operation and the family white-water vacation which turned into a non-event. I lose track of who's getting what degree where, or whether it

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was Don, Dan, or Dean who made Little League last year. If you tell me the year has been a "stretching" experience, I suspect you're suppressing a lot of data which would have been much more interesting than what you told me.

I'll read your Family Times if you'll solemnly promise NOT to:

1. Omit your surname. I get four letters signed "Gary, Linda, and the kids."

2. Omit your address. *Please* put it on the *letterhead*. Envelopes get thrown away.

3. Write in the third person. "Gary got sacked last February." Fine. I know now that it's Linda who's writing. Uh-oh. In the next paragraph I read, "Linda's mid-life crisis hasn't been as bad as we expected." So did you hire somebody to write this personal letter? If it's the family dog who takes pen in paw, say so, as J.I. Packer does.

4. Send a picture of the children which doesn't include the parents. The children are adorable in their matching red pajamas, but it's the parents I know. I'd like to see everybody, preferably in daytime clothes—please?

A Spiritual Spanking

A woman from Bremerton, Washington, writes: "Thank you for the fine spanking you delivered to my spiritual behind. Some of my friends think your standards are too high, you are too demanding of us *as women*, you were raised knowing what self-discipline is all about, and therefore you don't struggle as we do, etc. Whether this is true or not, I only know that God speaks to me . . . cuts through the garbage and sentiment. Please don't ever soften the message, no matter how great the temptation. There are more than enough people who deliver the bad news wrapped in cotton wool. We need to know there are awful consequences to disobedience. Like the prophets of old, choose the hard road; tell us what we need to hear. And keep telling us over and over until we heed."

That letter gave me a great lift, Holly. Pray that I may always speak the truth, but speak it in love, with grace, and seasoned with salt. Pray above all that I may *act* what I talk and write.

When Does a Calf Start Being a Calf?

There is a lot of woolly thinking about the question of when life begins. Calves, it seems, start being live creatures a lot sooner than babies do. A new tax law requires cattle breeders to record all costs associated with raising a cow—beginning with *conception*. As Kimberly Sheets of Iowa writes in *Focus on the Family*, "Do you realize that the same government that tells us a calf is a calf at conception also makes abortion legal?! What does this say about the value of human life?" (Reprinted with permission from *Focus on the Family*, copyright © July 1987.)

Prayer Requests

The volume of mail I receive on the following subjects leads me to ask that you:

- Pray for young men in their late twenties and thirties who seem unable to come to a decision to accept masculine responsibility as husbands and fathers. I meet them everywhere I go—of marriageable age, most of them have had a succession of "relationships," and have broken more than one woman's heart. Pray that God will show them their responsibility to get down to business with *Him* as to whether marriage is a part of His plan.
- Pray for young women who are hoping for marriage, many of whom have been brought to the brink and then abandoned. Ask God to help them to trust His love to give them what is best, and to wait quietly while faithfully carrying out each day's duty.
- Pray for those who preach and teach the Word of God, that they may have courage and forthrightness in presenting the crystal-clear truth about sexual purity, beginning with the significance even of "small" liberties which nowadays are so casually indulged in. I Corinthians 6 and I Thessalonians 4:2-8 are crucial passages, not heard often enough.

A Book on Tape

A two-tape album of my reading of *These Strange Ashes*, the story of my first year as a missionary. Make check for \$9 (includes postage) payable to Lars Gren, 10 Strawberry Cove, Magnolia, MA 01930.

A Note from Lars

"Oh no. Not the annual note from the Man at headquarters? Harry—here comes the pitch. We're about to get pinched. Watch this. Capital letters. Double exclamations. Underlined in red, white, and blue. Harry, this'll make you weep at the end. Oh no, Harry. It's not that at all. What? He's just thanking us for the past year's contributions and for helping to make this an easy year for him? Well, Harry, that's nice. Maybe we'll do something for him next year, too." Sure do appreciate you subscribers and contributors, and so do a whole lot of folks who get the Newsletter *gratis*, especially those overseas and in Canada where the exchange is still poor. The Lord's best for you in the coming year. Lars Gren (Mr. Elliot III)

November/December 1987/ January 1988

November 6 Lynchburg, VA; Liberty University, Mrs. Sue Forbus, (804) 237-5961.

November 7 Illinois (town indefinite); Winning Women, Mrs. Peg Emmons, R.R. 2, Box 18, Saybrook, IL, 61770.

November 16, 17 Toccoa Falls, GA; Toccoa Falls College, (404) 886-6831.

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December 5 Palm Desert, CA; Evangelical Free Church.

January 22-26 Auburn, AL; Covenant Presbyterian Church, (205) 821-7062.

January 28 Grantham, PA; Messiah College, (717) 766-2511.

January 29 Gettysburg, PA; Mid-eastern Leadership Conference, Mrs. John Metcalf, (301) 262-0884.

January 30 Boston, MA; Evangelistic Association of New England, Miss Laurel Breton, (617) 523-3579.

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Why Is God Doing This to Me?

An article appeared in the *National Geographic* fourteen years ago which has affected my thinking ever since. "The Incredible Universe," by Kenneth F. Weaver and James P. Blair, included this paragraph:

"How can the human mind deal with the knowledge that the farthest object we can see in the universe is perhaps ten billion light years away? Imagine that the thickness of this page represents the distance from the earth to the sun (93,000,000 miles, or about eight light minutes). Then the distance to the nearest star (4-1/3 light years) is a 71-foot-high stack of paper. And the diameter of our own galaxy (100,000 light years) is a 310-mile stack, while the edge of the known universe is not reached until the pile of paper is 31,000,000 miles high, a third of the way to the sun."

Thirty-one million miles. That's a very big stack of paper. By the time I get to thirty-one-and-a-half million I'm lost—aren't you? I read somewhere else that our galaxy is one (only one) of perhaps ten billion.

I know the One who made all that. He is my Shepherd. This is what He says: "With my own hands I founded the earth, with my right hand I formed the expanse of sky; when I summoned them, they sprang at once into being. . . . I teach you for your own advantage and lead you in the way you must go. If only you had listened to my commands, your prosperity would have rolled on like a river in flood. . . . (Isaiah 48:13, 17, 18, NEB).

Hardly a day goes by without my receiving a letter, a phone call, or a visit from someone in

trouble. Almost always the question comes, in one form or another, *Why does God do this to me?*

When I am tempted to ask that same question, it loses its power when I remember that this Lord, into whose strong hands I long ago committed my life, is engineering a universe of unimaginable proportions and complexity. How could I possibly understand all that He must take into consideration as He deals with it and with me, a single individual? He has given us countless assurances that we cannot get lost in the shuffle. He choreographs the "molecular dance" which goes on every second of every minute of every day in every cell in the universe. For the record, *one* cell has about 200 trillion molecules. He makes note of the smallest seed and the tiniest sparrow. He is not too busy to keep records even of my falling hair.

Yet in our darkness we suppose He has overlooked us. He hasn't.

I have been compiling a list of the answers God Himself has given us to our persistent question about adversity. My early Newsletters dealt with eight of them. Here are two more:

1. We need to be pruned. In Jesus' last discourse with His disciples before He was crucified (a discourse meant for us as well as for them), He explained that God is the gardener, He Himself is the vine, and we are branches. If we are bearing fruit, then we must be pruned. This is a painful process. Jesus knew that His disciples would face much suffering. He showed them, in this beautiful metaphor, that it was not for nothing. Only the well-pruned vine bears the best fruit. They could take comfort in knowing that the pruning proved they were neither barren nor withered, for in that case they would simply be burned up in the brushpile.

Pruning requires the cutting away not only of what is superfluous but also of what appears to be good stock. Why should we be so baffled when the Lord cuts away good things from our lives? He has explained why. "This is my Father's glory, that you may bear fruit in plenty and so be my disciples" (John 15:8, NEB). We need not see *how* it works. He has told us it *does* work.

2. We need to be refined. Peter wrote to God's "scattered people," reminding them that even though they were "smarting for a little while under trials of many kinds" (they were in exile—the sort of trial most of us would think rather more than a "smart"), they were nevertheless *chosen* in the purpose of God, *hallowed* to His service, and *consecrated* with the blood of Jesus Christ. With all that, they still needed refining. Gold is gold, but it has to go through fire. Faith is even more precious, so faith will always have another test to stand. Remember God's loving promise of II Corinthians 12:9.

But Thou art making me, I thank Thee, sire.
What Thou hast done and doest Thou
knows't well,
And I will help Thee; gently in Thy fire
I will lie burning; on Thy potter's wheel
I will whirl patient, though my brain should
reel.
Thy grace shall be enough the grief to quell,
And growing strength perfect through
weakness dire.
(from George MacDonald, *Diary of an Old Soul*, October 2)

Prayer

O Lord my God, make me obedient without argument, poor without embarrassment, chaste without prudishness, patient without complaint, humble without hypocrisy, joyful without silliness, mature without grouchiness, eager without thoughtlessness, reverent without servility, truthful without guile, forceful without presumption, willing to correct my brother without superiority, and to help him by word and deed without pretence.

(St. Thomas Aquinas)

Readers Write

"'Those Christmas Letters' (November/December Newsletter) I find excessively filled with salt and no hint of love or grace. Ironic that it was followed by an article entitled, 'A Spiritual Spanking.' Who needs the spanking?"

My comments on the Christmas letters were tongue-in-cheek. I am so sorry they sounded unloving. Please don't take me off your Christmas list!

Another reader wonders why the subscription rate is so high. The actual cost to send the newsletter for one year is \$6.00. Some people pay and some cannot, but we continue to send the newsletter to anyone who asks for it. Currently for a donation of \$25.00 or more, you will receive an extra year on your subscription plus a copy of my new book, *A Chance to Die: The Life and Legacy of Amy Carmichael*. Donations should be made payable to The Elisabeth Elliot Newsletter, P.O. Box 7711, Ann Arbor, Michigan 48107.



A Small Section of the Visible Course

The house where I was born, at 52 Rue Ernest Laude in Brussels, looks exactly as it does in the picture in my mother's photo album. The old snapshot is a study in grays. The one Lars took last August is in color. The cobblestone street is the same in both. The bricks of which the house is built turn out to be rather pink; the white marble facade of the second and third stories has not changed. They have put new shades in the two first-floor windows, and the people in the pictures are different. In the first, on the second-floor wrought-iron balcony in sunshine, stands my mother, twenty-four years old, slim and straight, with a wonderful pile of dark satiny

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hair. She is wearing a dark ankle-length dress with a wide white cape-collar. In the colored picture there are two cars, and near the front door, very wind-blown, stand I. How I longed to ask the present tenants to allow me to go up to the balcony, even into the kitchen where I was born.

Sixty years and four months had passed since I was last there. My mother had locked the front door when she turned to the Dutch lady who was her helper.

"I feel as though I've forgotten something."

Adri knew very well what it was, and wondered how far my mother would get before realizing that the five-month-old baby was still upstairs, wrapped in her bunting, ready for the ocean voyage.

There was something wondrously comforting about knowing, as I stood before that unremembered house, that this is where my parents lived, where they loved, where they welcomed into their small cold-water flat the newborn sister of their son Philip. They were missionaries, working with what was then the Belgian Gospel Mission. Lars and I visited the old buildings; the little Flemish chapel where my father taught Sunday School and probably played the Steinway piano that stands there—bought by Mrs. Norton, wife of the founder of the mission (she sold her jewels to pay for it). We looked at an old photo album there with pictures of my grandparents, my great uncle, and my parents.

All of the past, I believe, is a part of God's story of each child of His—a mystery of love and sovereignty, written before the foundation of the world, never a hindrance to the task He has designed for us, but rather the very preparation suited to our particular personality's need.

"How can that be?" ask those whose heritage has not been a godly one as mine was, whose lives have not been peaceful. "It is the glory of God to conceal a thing" (Proverbs 25:2). God conceals much that we do not need to know, yet we do know that He calls His own sheep by name and leads them out. When does that begin? Does the Shepherd overlook anything that the sheep need?

William Kay's note on Psalm 73:22 is this: "Though I was supported by Thee and living 'with Thee' as thy guest, yet I was insensible to

Thy presence;—intent only on a small section of the visible course of things;—like the irrational animals that are ever looking down at the ground they are grazing."

"Yet I am perpetually with Thee, Thou hast laid hold on my right hand," wrote the psalmist. "Thou wilt guide me with Thy counsel and afterwards receive me in glory. . . . And as for me, nearness to God is my good; I have put my trust in the Lord God" (vss. 23, 24, 28).

A Word from the C.E.O. (Chief Executive Officer)

Is it permissible for a husband to brag a bit on his wife? No? Oh well, I'll let someone else do it. Vernon Grounds of Denver Seminary wrote to Revell Publishers, "That Elliot biography of Amy Carmichael is one of the finest published in recent years. I predict it will gain the stature of a Christian classic."

The Most Creative Job in the World

It involves:

taste	fashion
decorating	recreation
education	transportation
psychology	romance
cuisine	designing
literature	medicine
handicraft	art
horticulture	economics
government	community relations
pediatrics	geriatrics
entertainment	maintenance
purchasing	direct mail
law	accounting
religion	energy
	and management

Anyone who can handle all those has to be somebody special.

She is.

She's a homemaker.

(Message published in the Wall Street Journal by United Technologies Corp., Hartford CT 06101; reprinted by permission)

Recommended Reading

Amy Carmichael's *If* (a very thin book that packs a terrific wallop on the subject of love) and *Edges of His Ways*, selections from her writings arranged for each day of the year. Both available from Christian Literature Crusade, Fort Washington, PA19034.

For sheer delight, read Isak Dinesen: *Out of Africa*, perhaps the most beautiful prose written in this century. The movie was pitifully feeble by comparison with the book, which is one of the Greats. (Life is too short to read all the good books. Read great ones. That means you'll eliminate mine, alas.)

January/February/March/ April 1988

January 22-26 Auburn, AL; Covenant Presbyterian Church, (205) 821-7062.

January 28 Grantham, PA; Messiah College, (717) 766-2511.

January 29 Gettysburg, PA; Mid-eastern Leadership Conference, Mrs. John Metcalf, (301) 262-0884.

January 30 Boston, MA; Evangelistic Association of New England, Miss Laurel Breton, (617) 523-3579.

February 8, 9 Briarcliff Manor, NY; The King's College, (914) 941-7200.

February 14 Chicago, IL; Chicago Sunday Evening Club, (312) 427-4483.

February 15-17 Deerfield, IL; Trinity Evangelical Divinity School.

February 26, 27 Sand Springs, OK; Angus Acres Baptist Church, Mrs. Donna Moore, (918) 245-3198.

March 2 South Hamilton, MA; Fairhaven Christian School.

March 5 Trenton, MI; St. Paul Mini-Retreat, St. Paul Lutheran Church, (313) 676-1565.

March 11-13 Birmingham, AL; Briarwood Presbyterian Church single women, Marnie Birdsong, 967-1760.

March 14, 15 Columbus, GA; women's conference, Jeannie Illges, (404) 324-2647.

March 20 Portland, ME; Payson Park Evangelical Free Church.

April 8, 9 LaCrosse, WI; Whole Women Breakaway, Darlene Dixon, 416 McHugh Street, Holmen, WI.

April 16 Quincy, IL; Lighthouse Ministries, Debbie Niederhauser, (217) 228-1731.

April 27 Byfield, MA; Byfield Parish Church, (617) 352-2022.

April 30 Chicago, IL; Moody Bible Institute, Mrs. Jo McCarthy, (312) 329-4402.

The Elisabeth Elliot Newsletter

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The Elisabeth Elliot Newsletter

March/April 1988

ISSN 8756-1336

The Ultimate Contradiction

Two people were walking along a stony road long ago. They were deep in conversation about everything that had happened. Things could not have been worse, it seemed, and I suppose the road was longer and dustier and stonier than it had ever been to them, though they had traveled it many times. As they trudged along, trying to make sense out of the scuttling of their hopes, a stranger joined them and wanted to know what they were talking about.

"You must be the only stranger in Jerusalem who hasn't heard all the things that have happened there recently!" said one of the two, whose name was Cleopas.

It seemed that the stranger had no idea what things he referred to, so Cleopas explained that there was a man from the village of Nazareth, Jesus by name, who was clearly a prophet, but He had been executed by crucifixion a few days before.

"We were hoping He was the one who was to come and set Israel free."

Things had been bad for Israel for a long time, and those who understood the ancient writings looked for a liberator and a savior. Cleopas and his companion had pinned their hopes on this Nazarene—surely He was the one God had sent, a prophet "strong in what he did and what he said" (Luke 24:19 JBP). But those hopes had been completely crushed. He had been killed and even His body could not be found. Where were they to turn now?

The story goes on to tell how the stranger explained to them that they had not really understood what the prophets had written, and that this death which had so shattered their

faith was inevitable if the Messiah was to "find his glory."

But what a strange phrase—"find his glory." What could it mean? I can imagine the two looking at each other in bewilderment. This shameful death—in order to find his *glory*?

When they reached their destination the stranger was about to go further but they persuaded him to stay with them. As they sat down to eat he picked up the loaf of bread, gave thanks, broke it, and gave it to them. Suddenly they recognized him. *Jesus!* The two who sat with Him had not been pessimists. They had indeed had hopes. But what puny hopes theirs had been. In their wildest optimism they could not have dreamed of the glory they now saw. A resurrection, the ultimate contradiction to all of the world's woes, had taken place. They saw Jesus with their own eyes. What must their own words have seemed to them if they thought about what they had said: "We were hoping . . ."? They could not deny that those hopes had died, but what insane dreamer could have imagined the possibility that had become a reality here at their own supper table? Their savior had come back. He had walked with them. He was in their house. He was eating the very bread they had provided.

If resurrection is a fact—and there would be no Easter if it were not—then there is no situation so hopeless, no horizon so black, that God cannot there "find His glory." The truth is that without those ruined hopes, without that death, without the suffering that He called inevitable, the glory itself would be impossible. Why the universe is so arranged we must leave to the One who arranged it, but that it is so we are bound to believe.

And when we find ourselves most hopeless, the road most taxing, we may also find that it is then that the Risen Christ catches up to us on the way, better than our dreams, beyond all our

hopes. For it is He—not His gifts, not His power, not what He can do for us, but He Himself—who comes and makes Himself known to us. And this is the one pure joy for those who sorrow.

And yet . . . and yet we sorrow. The glorious fact of the resurrection is the very heart of our faith. We believe it. We bank all our hopes on it. And yet we sorrow. It is still appointed unto man once to die, and those who are left must grieve—not as those without hope, for the beloved will be resurrected. The “ultimate contradiction,” however, seems very far in the future. There is no incongruity in the human tears and the pure joy of the presence of Christ, for He wept human tears too.

When we learned recently from dear friends that they had lost their baby, this is what I wrote to them (I’ve been asked to print it here for others who are bereaved):

“Your little note was waiting for us when we returned yesterday from Canada. How our hearts went running to you, weeping with you, wishing we could see your faces and tell you our sympathies. Yet it is ‘no strange thing’ that has happened to you, as Peter said in his epistle (1 Peter 4:12)—it gives you a share in Christ’s suffering. To me this is one of the deepest but most comforting of all the mysteries of suffering. Not only does He enter into grief in the fullest understanding, suffer with us and for us, but in the very depths of sorrow He allows us, in His mercy, to enter into *His*, gives us a share, permits us the high privilege of ‘filling up’ that which is lacking (Colossians 1:24) in His own. He makes, in other words, something redemptive out of our broken hearts if those hearts are offered up to Him. We are told that He will never despise a broken heart. It is an acceptable sacrifice when offered wholly to Him for His transfiguration. Oh, there is so *much* for us to learn here, but it will not be learned in a day or a week. Level after level must be plumbed as we walk with the Shepherd, and He will do His purifying, purging, forging, shaping work in us, that we may be shaped to the image of Christ Himself. Such shaping takes a hammer, a chisel, and a file—painful tools, a painful process.

“Your dear tiny Laura is in the Shepherd’s arms. She will never have to suffer. She knew only the heaven of the womb (the safest place in

all the world—apart from the practice of abortion) and now she knows the perfect heaven of God’s presence. I’m sure that your prayer for both your children has been that God would fulfill His purpose in them. It is the highest and best we can ask for our beloved children. He has already answered that prayer for Laura.

“Do you know the Letters of Samuel Rutherford (1600-1661)? He wrote so beautifully to mothers who had lost children. Here is one: ‘Grace rooteth not out the affections of a mother, but putteth them on His wheel who maketh all things new, that they may be refined; therefore sorrow for a dead child is allowed to you, though by measure and ounceweights; the redeemed of the Lord have not a dominion or lordship over their sorrow and other affections, to lavish out Christ’s goods at their pleasure. . . . He commandeth you to weep; and that princely One took up to heaven with Him a man’s heart to be a compassionate High Priest. The cup ye drink was at the lip of sweet Jesus, and He drank of it. . . . Ye are not to think it a bad bargain for your beloved daughter that she died—she hath gold for copper and brass, eternity for time. All the knot must be that she died too soon, too young, in the morning of her life; but sovereignty must silence your thoughts. I was in your condition: I had but two children, and both are dead since I came hither. The supreme and absolute Former of all things giveth not an account of any of His matters. The good Husbandman may pluck His roses and gather His lilies at midsummer, and, for ought I dare say, in the beginning of the first summer month; and he may transplant young trees out of the lower ground to the higher, where they may have more of the sun and a more free air, at any season of the year. The goods are His own. The Creator of time and winds did a merciful injury (if I may borrow the word) to nature in landing the passenger so early.’

“Jesus learned obedience by the things which He *suffered*, not by the things which He enjoyed. In order to fit you both for His purposes

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both here and in eternity, He has lent you this sorrow. But He bears the heavier end of the Cross laid upon you! Be sure that Lars and I are praying for you, dear friends."

The Little Red Notebook

Several readers wanted more from the little red notebook I found among my mother's things when she died last year. Someone wanted prayers for grandchildren. Here is one from Mother's notebook:

Holy Father, in Thy mercy, hear our
anxious prayer;
Keep our loved ones, now far distant,
'neath Thy care.

Jesus, Savior, let Thy presence be their
light and guide;
Keep, O keep them, in their weakness,
at Thy side.

When in sorrow, when in danger, when
in loneliness,
In Thy love look down and comfort
their distress.

May the joy of Thy salvation be their
strength and stay;
May they love and may they praise Thee
day by day.

Holy Spirit, let Thy teaching sanctify
their life;
Send Thy grace that they may conquer
in the strife.

Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, God the One
in Three,
Bless them, guide them, save them,
keep them near to Thee.
(I.S. Stevenson, 1869)

If the heart wanders or is distracted, bring it back to the point quite gently and replace it tenderly in its Master's presence. And even if you did nothing during the whole of your hour but bring your heart back and place it again in our Lord's presence, though it went away every time you brought it back, your hour will be very well employed.

St. Francis de Sales

Killing in Zimbabwe

When sixteen white missionaries and children were hacked to death by Marxist-Leninist rebels in Zimbabwe last November, the world took little notice. The Evangelical Press Association called me, asking for my comments as to why this might be, in view of the worldwide, detailed coverage given thirty-two years ago to the death of my husband Jim and four other Americans speared by Auca Indians. I don't know, but my guess was that television (which had been in its infancy in 1956) has deprived us of our ability—even of our "right"—to be shocked. You can't be shocked ten times a day every day.

News from Jim's brother, a missionary in Peru, sounds ominously like what's happening in Zimbabwe. There is pillage and murder in remote jungle towns by Marxists who, like those in Zimbabwe, would be glad to "rid the country of Western, capitalist-oriented people." A letter from my brother-in-law and his wife cites 2 Chronicles 14:11, and asks us to pray, not for their personal safety, but "that we may be small enough, weak enough, and humble enough that the Lord may show Himself strong on our behalf."

Will you pray for them and for all who are in a similar position?

News of Valerie

In response to my question in the September/October Newsletter about what you'd like more of, a number asked for news of my daughter Valerie. Last July I went to Laurel, Mississippi, and helped them sort and pack and have a gigantic garage sale. Then they loaded their five children (now ages 10, 8, 6, 3, and 1) into the van and drove to El Toro, California. Walt is pastor of the Aliso Creek Presbyterian Church in Laguna Niguel. The two oldest children whom Val has been schooling at home now attend a Lutheran school. Both received Outstanding Student awards, which made Val and Walt happy and humbly grateful, especially since Val was not convinced she had done a thorough job of educating them. I applaud homeschoolers. Having seen the deleterious effects of early peer-group pressures on little children, and the salu-

tary effects of Indian children's never being separated from parents until they are at least ten or twelve (and Valerie's having been continuously with me until she was in fourth grade), I recommend it. It's hard work. It takes sacrifice. It's worth it.

March—September 1988

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South Hamilton, MA; Fairhaven Christian School.

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Chicago, IL; Moody Bible Institute, Mrs. Jo McCarthy, (312) 329-4402.

May 1-15

Speaking engagement in Australia.

June 4-5

Camden, ME; The Rev. David Edman, St. Thomas' Church.

July 15-17

Lebanon, OR; Camp Tadmor, Carla Stenberg, (503) 657-4105.

July 18, 19

Cody, WY; Missionary Alliance Church, The Rev. James N. Howard, (307) 587-3418.

September 2-3

Montreal, Quebec; Seminaire Baptiste Evangelique, (514) 337-2555.

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A Child's Obedience

Question from a young mother: How can I train my twenty-month-old to come to me? How many times do I say "Come here" before I go and grab him?

The very first time you tell the child to do or not to do something (come here, don't touch, sit still) (1) make sure you have the child's attention; (2) look him straight in the eye (let him know he has your attention); (3) speak in an even, normal tone, address him *by name*, give the command; (4) give him a few seconds to let the message sink in; (5) speak his name again, and ask, "What did I say?" Since training should begin long before he is talking, he will not be able to verbalize the answer, but he should obey. Children always are way ahead of their parents' idea of what they can understand. (6) Tell him once more: "Mama said *Come*, Andrew." If he does not obey, spank him. After the first time or two of practice, spank after you've spoken *once*.

To make a habit of repeating commands is to train the child to believe you never mean what you say the first time. If the first lesson in obedience is carried out as above, the child learns quickly that you mean exactly what you say. I know it works—my parents taught us this way, and I watched them train my younger sister and brothers. I found that it worked with Valerie.

If you run after the child and physically force him to do what you say (e.g. grab him when he doesn't come, take something away when he touches it), you are training him not to pay attention to your *words*. He knows he can get away with anything until forcibly restrained.

Now about spanking. The book of Proverbs speaks of the "rod of discipline," (22:15) and says, "The rod and reproof give wisdom, but a child left to himself brings shame to his mother"

(29:15). "He who spares the rod hates his son, but he who loves him is diligent to discipline him" (13:24). My mother used a very thin little switch from a bush in the backyard. We knew there was one in every room, readily available to administer a couple of stings to our legs if we disobeyed. Valerie keeps a thin wooden paint stirrer handy in the house, and also in her purse. One or two firm "paddles" on a small outstretched hand are language that an under-two child understands very clearly.

Don't imagine that following this advice will mean that your child will be punished twenty times a day. The wonderful thing about these simple rules is that punishment needs to be used very seldom, *if you start soon enough*. If you begin at the beginning to show the child you are serious about obedience, you will not need to undo the months or years of raising your voice, repeating commands again and again, rushing after him. You will have control. The child will be learning to trust the word of authority (which will make it much easier later for him to believe that God means what He says) and your life together will be much more peaceful and happy.

Suppose your child is already twenty months or three years old and you have not taught him to obey? Then you must both pay a price, but I believe it can be done. Set aside a whole morning to start over. Talk to him, tell him how much you love him, tell him, "This morning we are going to learn the most important lesson you will ever have to learn." Let him see that you are in earnest. Start practicing the beginner's rules.

A word of caution: spanking, in my opinion, should be for deliberate disobedience only. When a child spills his milk or stuffs peanuts up his nose or pours your talcum powder all over the carpet, he is not being disobedient. He is only acting his age. You have not forbidden him

to stuff peanuts up his nose. If you have, and he does it anyway, spank him. If, in defiance, he dumps his milk on the floor, spank him. But childish mistakes and messes must be pointed out, and by all means he should be made to rectify them or clean them up as best he can. Think of punishments that will fit the "crimes," but reserve the stick or the switch for deliberate disobedience. He will soon learn that when he defies you, a spanking follows as sure as the dawn follows the night—even if you are in church or the supermarket. Take him out to the car and spank him. Explain the whole system to him again (*after* the spanking), if necessary. Put your arms around him, assure him of your love, and change the subject.

Interruptions, Delays, Inconveniences

Emily, wife of America's first foreign missionary, Adoniram Judson, wrote home from Moulmein, Burma, in January 1847:

"This taking care of teething babies, and teaching natives to darn stockings and talking English back end foremost . . . in order to get an eatable dinner, is really a very odd sort of business for Fanny Forester [her penname—she was a well-known New England writer before marrying Judson]. . . . But I begin to get reconciled to my minute cares." She was ambitious for "higher and better things," but was enabled to learn that "the person who would do great things well must practice daily on little ones; and she who would have the assistance of the Almighty in important acts, must be daily and hourly accustomed to consult His will in the minor affairs of life."

About eighty years ago, when James O. Fraser was working as a solitary missionary in Tengyueh, southwest China, his situation was, "in every sense, 'against the grain.'" He did not enjoy housekeeping and looking after premises. He found the houseboy irritable and touchy, constantly quarreling with the cook. Endless small items of business cluttered up the time he wanted for language study, and he was having to learn to be "perpetually inconvenienced" for the

sake of the gospel. He wrote after some weeks alone:

"I am finding out that it is a mistake to plan to get through a certain amount of work in a certain time. It ends in disappointment, besides not being the right way to go about it, in my judgment. It makes one impatient of interruptions and delay. Just as you are nearly finishing—somebody comes along to sit with you and have a chat! You might hardly think it possible to be impatient and put out where there is such an opportunity for presenting the Gospel—but it is. It may be just on mealtime, or you are writing a letter to catch the mail, or you were just going out for needed exercise before tea. But the visitor has to be welcomed, and I think it is well to cultivate an attitude of mind which will enable one to welcome him from the heart and at any time. 'No admittance except on business' scarcely shows a true missionary spirit."

There is nothing like the biographies of great Christians to give us perspective and help us to keep spiritual balance. Here are two well worth reading. It was J.O. Fraser who so inspired Jim Elliot with missionary vision that Jim decided he would name his first son after him. The above quotations are from Courtney Anderson: *To the Golden Shore*, Zondervan, p. 473; and Eileen Crossman: *Mountain Rain*, Overseas Missionary Fellowship, pp. 32, 33.

One more quotation—this from an out-of-print book, *The Life and Letters of Janet Erskine Stuart*: Says one who was her assistant for some years, "She delighted in seeing her plans upset by unexpected events, saying that it gave her great comfort, and that she looked on such things as an assurance that God was watching over her stewardship, was securing the accomplishment of His will, and working out His own designs. Whether she traced the secondary causes to the prayer of a child, to the imperfection of an individual, to obstacles arising from misunderstandings, or to interference of outside agencies,

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she was joyfully and graciously ready to recognize the indication of God's ruling hand, and to allow herself to be guided by it."

Rent-a-Mom

Kathy Lewis sent me this advertisement that appeared in her local paper in California. She writes:

"The most distressing part of this 'service' is the implication that Mom can so easily be replaced, particularly when she 'just doesn't want to do it.' What a shame that so many are missing the true joy of mothering which is daily, unconditional, and self-giving.

"I am so thankful that during the years when my three girls were small I could not afford frequent childcare. There were no day care centers. I was home every day and in our daily routine there was such security and comfort. Of course there were days when I was exhausted, bored, sick, irritated, or discouraged. But there was no alternative; I did whatever was next on the list out of sheer survival instinct. Most days were a happy blur of story books, peanut butter sandwiches cut in triangles and soup (with jelly spread on crackers if they had been extra good), tricycles, and long peaceful naps. [No matter how hectic *your* days may seem now, the time will come—we promise!—when they'll appear "a happy blur." EE]

"The long days of mothering small children now seem to me to have been short and fleeting. As God has promised, faithfulness to this calling has brought rewards beyond my deepest longings. The future is bright for my dear ones as they near the time of becoming mothers too, but there are days when I would give a lot to see those precious little faces and bury my face deep in the neck of a sleepy little girl again."

One of the slick catalogues which pour into my mailbox contained recently a "survival manual" entitled *Where's Mom Now That I*

"GOOD OLD MOM" A Rent-A-Mom Service



- Shopping
- Cooking
- Kids
- Cleaning
- Plants
- Pets

If you don't have time
or just don't want to
do it call

"GOOD OLD MOM"
Impeccable References
Bonded-Insured
388-7620

Need Her! I lament the need of such a book for the hundreds of thousands of children who must come home from school to an empty house and need help in surviving on their own—with recipes, remedies, first aid, laundry, bike care, and "helpful hints."

For you mothers who are there for your children, stick with it, for *God's* sake, no matter what pressures are brought to bear on you. And for you who want to be there and so far have not found a way to do it, ask God to show you if He has one. Trust Him and do whatever He says.

The Escalation of Evil

We sometimes smile at those who sentimentally imagine that the past was not nearly so bad as the present. Were they really "the good old days"? A study conducted by the Fullerton, California, police department and the California department of education cannot be dismissed as sentimentality. Compare the leading school discipline problems (*Time*, February 1, 1988):

1940's	1980's
Talking	Drug abuse
Chewing gum	Alcohol abuse
Making noise	Pregnancy
Running in hallways	Suicide
Getting out of place in line	Rape
Wearing improper clothing	Robbery
Not putting paper in wastebasket	Assault
	Burglary
	Arson
	Bombings

Prayer

May He support us all the day long until
the shadows lengthen,
evening comes,
the busy world is hushed,
the fever of life is over,
and our work is done.

Then, in his mercy, may He give us
A safe lodging,
A holy rest,
And peace at last.

(Cardinal Newman)

The Dangers of Sharing

There is a notion abroad today that we must all be "open" and "transparent," put all our cards on the table, hold nothing back. This, it is claimed, is real fellowship, what John meant by "walking in the light." Is it? Only God can search out the secret places of the heart. Therefore it is only as we draw near to Him that we can draw near to each other without harm. I think we've got it backwards when we suppose that by barging into one another's souls we somehow get closer to God. If we are given the opportunity to know another's heart, we must be very careful not to "foster the self that in a brother's bosom gnaws," as George MacDonald puts it (*Diary of an Old Soul*, November 9), but always to hold that one to the very highest. This is love. This is the kind of sharing which will strengthen and cheer.

A Little Boy Learns the Bible

When Valerie told the story of Peter's denial of Christ to her three-year-old son Jim he looked up in wide-eyed wonder and asked, "Mama, will we deny him too?"

"We must pray that we won't, Jim."

"Let's pray *right now*," he said, and they did.

On a recent mountain climb they came to a stream which a sign told them was pure for drinking. Stooping down, Jim scooped water into his hand, "like Gideon's soldiers, Mama," he said. When his sister Christiana lay down to drink, he said, "Christiana can't be Gideon's soldier, can she?"

His thoughts are not always exalted. He was sitting so quietly and apparently attentively in church one Sunday morning that Val asked him later what he had been thinking about. "About cutting up pumpkins," was his answer.

Travel Schedule May/June/ July 1988

May 1-15 Speaking engagements in Australia.

June 4, 5 Camden, ME: Rev. David Edman, St. Thomas' Church.

June 16-19 Howard Family Reunion at Gordon College, Wenham, MA.

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A Man Moves toward Marriage

Letters keep coming from both men and women who are in a quandary about how one ought to move toward marriage. While I was sitting here, rereading some of them, a man phoned with a question about the same subject. I wonder what is happening. Why so much confusion? Here's one of the letters:

"I'm a male Christian who needs help. I just ended a long-term 'relationship' with a non-Christian girl. I made plenty of compromises during those years, and by God's grace I hope next time will be better. I read your book *The Mark of a Man* and was shown things I never knew before which blew my mind. I'm excited about the idea of sharing life with a girl in a way which would honor Jesus. At the same time I get scared about making bad moves, when to initiate, and financial fears about supporting a family if I'm a missionary, which at the moment I'm being directed to. These things may seem silly but they're real to me. I only ask that in future Newsletters you could address some issues which could benefit us guys who see marriage as a blessing and not as years of imprisonment."

No, the questions do not seem silly to me—far from it. They are vital questions, and I'm glad there are men to whom they matter enough to pray about and ask counsel for.

I think one reason for confusion is the notion which arose, before the men who are now in their twenties and thirties were born, about the "equality" of the sexes. It is a word that belongs to politics but certainly not to courtship, a realm which concerns human beings in their entirety.

Another reason for confusion is misunder-

standing the order which God established in the beginning. I've tried to explain that divine arrangement in two books: *Let Me Be a Woman* and *The Mark of a Man*. If men would be men, women could do a better job of being women (and *vice versa*, of course, but the buck really stops with the men). What does it mean to be a man?

Christ is the supreme example. He was strong and He was pure, because His sole aim in life was to be obedient to the Father. His very obedience made Him most manly—responsible, committed, courageous, courteous, and full of love. A Christian man's obedience to God will make him more of a man than anything else in the world. Consider these qualities:

Responsibility. He must work out the salvation that God has given him "with a proper sense of awe and responsibility, for it is God who is at work" in him, giving him the will and the power to achieve His purpose (Phil 2:12, 13; J.B. Phillips). Man was made to be initiator, provider, protector for woman.

Commitment. He must be a man of his word, no matter what it costs. My father's strong counsel to my four brothers: Never tell a woman you love her until you are ready to follow that immediately with, "Will you marry me?" In other words, a man's love for a woman, if deep and abiding, leads to a lifetime commitment to her. Many heartaches would be avoided if he held back any expressions of love until he is ready to make that commitment. Once promised, he never goes back on that word.

Courage. A man must be willing to take the risks of rejection (she might say No), blame, and all that commitment costs.

Courtesy. A Christian's rule of life should be, *My life for yours*. He is concerned about the comfort and happiness of others, not of himself. He does not seek to have his own needs met, his own image enhanced, but to love God, to make

Him loved, and to lay down his life to that end. In small ways as well as great, he shows the courteous love of the Lord.

Purity. He must be master of himself if he is to be the servant of others. This means "buffeting" his body, bringing it into subjection, as Paul did. It means restraint, discipline, the strength to wait. It means an utter yielding to the will of God as revealed in 1 Cor 6:12-20 and 1 Thes 4:2-8.

As I have heard the sad stories and studied what I call "The Dating Mess" of today, it appears to me that men have generally overlooked another vital matter which ought to precede all overtures in the direction of a prospective wife. If we assume that a man is an adult when he is eighteen (or twenty-one at the latest), he should by that time be giving marriage some serious thought. He should get down to brass tacks with God to find out if this may be a part of His agenda for him. This will take time, and it might help if during this period he simply quits dating and starts praying. As long as the answer is uncertain, don't date. Does this sound extreme? It wasn't my idea. I learned it from a group of young men who have chosen this way. It is a guaranteed way of avoiding sexual activity (always illicit outside of marriage), of preserving one's wholeness and holiness, and of preventing the heartbreaks we see on every hand.

I urge you to trust God. He wants to give you the best. He will help you. He has promised to guide. He knows what you need. Ask Him to show you *whether, when, and whom* you should marry.

And don't be alone in this. Ask counsel of your spiritual superiors who are wise, who know how to pray and how to keep silence. Take their counsel seriously. If they have suggestions as to a possible mate, take those very seriously. My own parents prayed for godly spouses for all six of us, and actually named before God the very people that four of us married.

Read Genesis 24, study the principles Abraham's servant followed. Pray silently. Watch quietly.

Before you start dating, draw clear guidelines for yourself as to "how far to go." The only truly safe line is a radical one, but it works: hands off

and clothes on. If you think you can put the line somewhere else, remember that a little thing leads on to a bigger thing. A touch leads to a hug which leads to a kiss which leads to play which leads to consummation. That was how God intended the whole thing to work, but the idea of the whole thing was marriage and babies.

Can you trust yourself to quit once you start? The Bible says, "Flee youthful lusts." Don't toy with them. There is a very dangerous book and study guide, popular at least in California, called *Too Close, Too Soon*. It outlines a hazardous program of toying.

When God has guided you* as to the whether, the when, and the whom, then you must choose to love and not to fear. The Will of God always involves risk and cost, but He is there with grace to help and with all the wisdom you need. Every deliberate choice to obey Him will—depend upon it—be attacked by the enemy. Never mind. Nothing new about that. Be a man and stick with it.

*(My little book *A Slow and Certain Light* deals with the question of how to discern the Lord's will.)

The Thick Darkness

(Ex 20:21, Moses approached the dark cloud where God was. 1 Kgs 8:12, "O Lord, who hast set the sun in the heaven, but hast chosen to dwell in thick darkness. . . .")

I thought I was walking all alone
Into darkness immense and drear.
But where it was densest a Hand touched
my own,
And a Voice spoke, gentle and clear:
"Do you not think you might have known
That I should be here?
Your need is met, your way will be shown.
Be of good cheer."
(Bishop F. Houghton, China Inland Mission)

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This was sent to me recently by Ann Draisey, an old friend whose husband was killed by a drunken driver in 1952. At his funeral my father handed her the above poem. "I was helped many times in reading this and thinking of the one who gave it to me," she writes. "When Ed died, my whole world turned upside down. He was a stronger Christian and I leaned much on him." Ann has been widowed a second time, but says, "I marvel now at the goodness of the Lord and His care over me since that day. He is so faithful."

Grandchildren

Thanks to one of those wonderful frequent flyer bonuses, I went to visit my grandchildren last March. A few "clips": Three little children in the bathtub, splashing, laughing. When Granny appeared, Colleen (whose vocabulary, at not quite two, is limited to single words, pronounced very firmly and clearly) said: "Out." I got her out, stood her on the toilet seat, dried and dressed her. Jim, not quite four, was next. Christiana manages alone. . . . A breakfast of fresh pineapple, apple, and orange, scrambled eggs, homemade bread. Dishwasher broken, so Walt (the father) washed the dishes, bless 'im. . . . Table for eight in Claim Jumpers (a restaurant) after church. You could see people counting the parade of children, looking with awe, sympathy, or horror at the parents. The grandmother wanted to say, "It isn't going to be nearly as bad as you think." The children behaved. Colleen spent a good bit of the long waiting time eating crackers, dipping them and a small fist into a glass of water, and licking the fist. . . . A relay race at school. Elisabeth rushing over to exclaim with ecstasy, "I got second place *twice!*" . . . A walk with Val in the cool of the early morning while the rest of the family slept. Sprinklers on. Scent of jasmine and fresh green things. Snails drawing their shining pathways across the pavement. Val spoke of some lessons in the willingness to be nobody if only she may serve faithfully in her place. . . . The whole family in the living room, singing as I played the piano, "Great Is Thy Faithfulness, O God My Father."

The Saving Power of Housework

"Manual employments, especially if varied [and household occupations afford a great variety], give to children a sense of power in knowing what to do in a number of circumstances; they take pleasure in this, for it is a thing which they admire in others. Domestic occupations also form in them a habit of decision, from the necessity of getting through things which will not wait. For domestic duties do not allow of waiting for a moment of inspiration or delaying until a mood of depression or indifference has passed. They have a quiet, imperious way of commanding, and an automatic system of punishing when they are neglected, which are more convincing than exhortations. Perhaps in this particular point lies their saving influence against nerves and moodiness and the demoralization of 'giving way.' Those who have no obligations, whose work will wait for their convenience, and who can if they please let everything go for a time, are more easily broken down by trouble than those whose household duties have still to be done, in the midst of sorrow and trial. There is something in homely material duties which heals and calms the mind and gives it power to come back to itself. And in sudden calamities those who know how to make use of their hands do not helplessly wring them, or make trouble worse by clinging to others for support." (Janet Erskine Stuart: *The Education of Catholic Girls*, p. 85—now out of print.)

Prayer Request

A daily fifteen-minute radio program has been asked for, and a new series of videos. I wonder if this may possibly be one of the ways in which I am to obey Hebrews 10:24 (NIV): "Let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds." Pray that I may not mistake the "how."

Recommended Reading

Elizabeth Prentiss: *Stepping Heavenward*. The diary of a woman from 1831, when she was sixteen, to 1858, full of wisdom about life and death and love and motherhood, full of intimate glimpses of her daily work and walk with God. May be ordered from Reiner Publications, P.O. Box 25, Sterling, VA 22170 for \$8.61 postpaid.

Travel Schedule

July-September 1988

July 15-17 Lebanon, OR; Camp Tadmor, Carla Stenberg, 503-657-4105.

July 18, 19 Cody, WY; Missionary Alliance Church, Rev. James N. Howard, 307-587-3418.

September 2, 3 Montreal, Quebec; Seminaire Baptiste Evangelique, 514-337-2555.

September 8 Langhorne, PA; Philadelphia College of Bible, 215-752-5800.

September 26 Dallas, TX; Dallas Prayer Ministry, Mrs. Meletio, 214-956-8915.

September 27 Dallas, TX; Green Acres Baptist Church.

September 28 Dallas, TX; Dallas Christian Leadership, Marlee Hinckley, 214-363-9352.

September 29 Dallas, TX; Youth Specialities, Tic Long, 619-440-2333.

A Wife's Prayer for Her Husband

Lord, grant me the vision of a true lover as I look at _____. Help me to see him through Your eyes, to read the thoughts he does not put into words, to bear with his human imperfections, remembering that he bears with mine and that You are at work in both of us. Thank You, Lord, for this man, Your carefully chosen gift to me, and for the high privilege of being heirs together of the grace of life. Help me to make it as easy and pleasant as I possibly can for him to do Your will.

Keep in Touch

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September/October 1988

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Nevertheless We Must Run Aground

Have you ever put heart and soul into something, prayed over it, worked at it with a good heart because you believed it to be what God wanted, and finally seen it "run aground"?

The story of Paul's voyage as a prisoner across the Adriatic Sea tells how an angel stood beside him and told him not to be afraid (in spite of winds of hurricane force), for God would spare his life and the lives of all with him on board ship. Paul cheered his guards and fellow-passengers with that word, but added, "Nevertheless, we must run aground on some island" (Acts 27:26; NIV).

It would seem that the God who promises to spare all hands might have "done the job right," saved the ship as well, and spared them the ignominy of having to make it to land on the flotsam and jetsam that was left. The fact is He did not, nor does He always spare us.

Heaven is not *here*, it's *There*. If we were given all we wanted here, our hearts would settle for this world rather than the next. God is forever luring us up and away from this one, wooing us to Himself and His still invisible Kingdom where we will certainly find what we so keenly long for.

"Running aground," then, is not "the end of the world." But it helps to make the world a bit less appealing. It may even be God's answer to "Lead us not into temptation"—the temptation complacently to settle for visible things.

The Great Barrier Reef (Diary Excerpts)

May 3, 1988. We lost May 2 on the International Dateline. Incredible to think of this gigantic vessel (a 747) beating its smooth and steady pathway through a moonlit sky, so many thousands of miles across the Pacific for fifteen hours, unerringly aiming for the pinpoint of Sydney's airport, while inside we sleep and read and pray and eat and watch a movie.

3:45 P.M., Australia time. Cairns, Queensland. Scenery as we flew north from Sydney reminiscent of Ecuador—jungle, deep ravines, mountains, tea and cane plantations, houses on stilts.

Sitting at an outdoor table near an ice cream stand, overlooking beach and sea. Depressing parade of mostly-undressed vacationers of many nationalities. Americans—mostly loud, corny, hilarious—all over the place. What a price we pay for doing as Satan does—going to and fro in the earth! We came to see a little of the Great Barrier Reef, but this means a day of joining the bored.

May 4, 10:00 A.M., aboard the "Quicksilver" motor launch at Port Douglas. "Morning tea" has been served. Now, as we set out toward the reef, a marine biologist tells us that it covers 20,000 square kilometers. Millions of tons of calcium carbonate are laid down each year by the animals which form the reef. The water, she says, is nearly sterile, hence its crystal clarity. To the west of the reef it is six thousand feet deep. Cays are by-products of the reef, which is limestone secreted by polyps. Birds seed the cays, making them stable. Many reef fish establish "harems," but if the male leaves the group one of the females will change sex and take over his job.

The "Quicksilver" ties up to a steel pontoon. Lars and I go out in a boat with a glass-walled

underbelly through which we gaze incredulous at the teeming life of the coral. Oh, the shapes—antlers, flowers, tables, platforms, leaves, fingers, plates, wires, brains. And oh, the colors—of a brilliance and luminosity unimagined before. Parrot fish, so-named because of a strong beak, run at the coral and take a bite out of it. Schools of tiny cleaner fish do their work of removing dead scales, parasites, etc. from the larger ones, which wait quietly in line for their turn, as if at a car-wash.

Huge buffet lunch served—salads, fried chicken, great mountains of fresh prawns and gorgeous tropical fruit.

2:00 P.M. I go snorkeling. Awesome event. The moment I put my face into the water I am in a totally different world (vastly different from the one in which I usually live and breathe, very different, too, from the world of snorkeling off the coast of Massachusetts), a world of utter silence, filled with limpid light and color and swarming movement, fantastic faces, weird designs. A great bouquet of electric-blue flowers meets my eye at once—yes, it is a *coral*. Nearby is a giant clam, its scalloped edges ajar, showing the velvety purple mantle, strange tubes, orifices, a pulsating siphon.

I am surprised to see how casually the fish accept the presence of human beings. They pay almost no attention to us, moving with deliberate speed, majestic instancy, sometimes darting, sometimes confronting you straight in the face with unflinching gaze. Their colors are simply unbelievable—purple and yellow stripes, red spots, zebra stripes, rainbows, fluorescent greens, “random” mixtures. Now and then a glittering “curtain” is drawn across in front of you—a school of small fish that seems to come from nowhere. Suddenly a huge shape moves into my line of vision. A whale, perhaps? No, it is wearing striped shorts. No denizen of this water-world at all, but a portly, white-limbed gentleman, with great pendulous belly hanging like a blimp. I make an abrupt left turn. Far below me, in slow motion, the beginners’ class of scuba divers from the “Quicksilver” appears, a surrealist study in black and white, “moon-walking” on the floor of the sea.

“Have you journeyed all the way to the sources of the sea, / or walked where the Abyss

is deepest?” the Lord asked Job (Job 38:16; JB). No, Lord, I answer. But You have given me a glimpse of that marvelous kingdom, and I echo the psalmist’s praise: “Yahweh, what variety you have created, / arranging everything so wisely! / . . . vast expanse of ocean, / teeming with countless creatures, / creatures large and small, / with the ships going to and fro / and Leviathan whom you made to amuse you” (Ps 104:24-26; JB).

So much for the diary. We went to Australia for speaking engagements in and around Sydney, and from there to Singapore where my brother Dave Howard directs the World Evangelical Fellowship. Audiences in both places were eager and responsive, but I must not fill up the Newsletter with too many reports.

Lord of Her Lovelife

“I have been married for six weeks,” writes a reader, “and I look back to about a year and a half ago when I read *Passion and Purity* for the fourth time. This time was different—I kept from resisting your words in this book. I thought, ‘Yes, I will bring my lovelife into submission under God’s authority!’ I began to pray to God for His will. I was not dating anyone, but I was praying fervently for one man I knew—not with my usual attitude of lust, but with an attitude of wanting God’s will in *his* life, whether it be me or not. I made no advances or hints but left the relationship totally in God’s hand if He desired it. What a joy it is to say, ‘God have Your way and Your complete timing in my life.’

“*Passion and Purity* changed my whole idea that ‘I deserved someone’ into ‘God’s grace is all I need.’ I married the man I had been praying for. And I see the great value in starting out our relationship under God’s authority. We have both grown to know Him so much this year. I shared *Passion and Purity* with a good friend.

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She began to pray and leave her lovelife up to God. This resulted in a break-up, but soon after God brought a very godly man into her life. They will soon be married.

"I am not saying, 'Just follow the *Passion and Purity* formula and you will find yourself married.' I am saying being in submission to God far outdoes any joy given by chasing our own whims."

A young man who had read the same book writes, "God taught me that preparing for marriage is not so much a matter of finding the right person as it is becoming the right person. I began concentrating on my relationship with Christ and waiting on the Lord for His woman for me and His timing. It was quite a relief to me to realize that I didn't have to date my entire Christian campus and use the process of elimination to find the right one! Not long after I had laid my desires on the altar, God brought into my life a wonderful young lady and we'll be married soon."

Recycling Discarded Babies

The abortion business thrives on what is called "freedom of choice." The tiny baby-shaped thing in a woman's womb is a mere bit of tissue, not human but disposable, like a Kleenex. If, however, it turns out that that same collection of cells is usable, commercially or medically, it becomes highly human. Now that medical procedures have been developed for the implantation of bone marrow, brains, and other organs from aborted babies for the treatment of disease, we are asked to ignore the glaring contradiction. Will Christians too ignore it? "The people who know their God shall stand firm and take action" (Dn 11:32; RSV).

Prayer

This simple formula for prayer was sent by my nephew Gene Howard, just returning from mission work in Nepal.

Present my requests.

Relinquish my desires.

Accept His answers.

Yield my life.

When Do I Tell Him?

A young woman who gave her virginity away to the wrong person asks when she should reveal this to a man she is dating. This is what I told her:

It seems to me that this need not be a subject of conversation on the first or even on the tenth date. A great deal depends on the man, and what you think his expectations of you are. The most important thing for you now, with every man, is to behave like a responsible Christian woman. This will be a lonely road in today's society (as it was in yesterday's), and I should think especially in a place like your Ivy League college.

Being a responsible Christian woman means not fooling around *at all*. No kisses, no situations where you might be persuaded to indulge in any sort of steamy contact, and certainly no going into anybody's bedroom for any reason. These refusals will raise questions in his mind. Here is your opportunity to say, "I'm not that kind of girl. I wish I could say I've never been that kind, but I'm a Christian now, Jesus Christ is Lord of my life and of my love, and this is how it's going to be from here on in." He will then know that you have a "past," but he need not know the details. If he's shocked, he may back off. On the other hand, he may find you are just the woman he's been hoping still exists.

"Gateway to Joy"

That's what I've entitled the new radio program for which Back to the Bible has invited me to speak. This fifteen minute daily program will begin airing on October 3, 1988. If you wish to hear Gateway to Joy in your area, simply contact your local radio station manager and encourage him to get in touch with Back to the Bible's in-house radio agency: Good Life Associates, P.O. Box 81803, Lincoln, Nebraska 68501 or call (402)474-6440.

Prayer Requests

1. For God's help with a new video series to be recorded in September;
2. For His guidance about the daily radio program which has been asked for;
3. For part-time secretarial help of "executive" quality. A typist is available to me, but it would be a great boon to have someone who sees what needs to be done and does it. Sometimes, like Peter, I feel as though I'm drowning. Perhaps the Lord's outstretched hand would come in the form of a human helper;
4. For those who face hard decisions about the care of aging parents and other relatives.

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September 8 Langhorne, PA; Philadelphia College of Bible, (215) 752-5800.

September 26 Dallas, TX; Dallas Prayer Ministry, Mrs. Meletio, (214) 956-8915.

September 27 Dallas, TX; Green Acres Baptist Church.

September 28 Dallas, TX; Dallas Christian Leadership, Marlee Hinckley, (214) 363-9352.

September 29 Dallas, TX; Youth Specialities, Tic Long, (619) 440-2333.

September 30 Bismarck, ND; Steer Inc., (701) 258-4911.

October 10, 11 Greenville, SC; Second Presbyterian Church, (803) 271-8340.

October 11, 12 Roswell, GA; Fellowship Bible Church, (404) 992-4952.

October 14, 15 Loudonville, NY; Rev. Curt Morgan, (518) 436-9601.

November 3 Edina, MN; Grace Church, (612) 926-1884.

November 5 Philadelphia, PA; singles conference, Mike Cavanaugh, (716) 582-2790.

November 11, 12 Willowdale, Ontario; Ontario Bible College, (416) 226-6380.

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Christmas Is a Thing Too Wonderful

Some things are simply too wonderful for explanation—the navigational system of the Arctic tern, for example. How does it find its way over 12,000 miles of ocean from its nesting grounds in the Arctic to its wintering grounds in the Antarctic? Ornithologists have conducted all sorts of tests without finding the answer. *Instinct* is the best they can offer—no explanation at all, merely a way of saying that they really have no idea. A Laysan albatross was once released 3,200 miles from its nest in the Midway Islands. It was back home in ten days.

The migration of birds is a thing too wonderful.

When the angel Gabriel told Mary, "You will be with child and give birth to a son," she had a simple question about the natural: How can this be, since I am a virgin?

The answer had to do not with the natural but with something far more mysterious than the tern's navigation—something, in fact, entirely supernatural: "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the Most High will overshadow you" (Lk 1:35; NIV). That was too wonderful, and Mary was silent. She had no question about the supernatural. She was satisfied with God's answer.

The truth about Christmas is a thing too wonderful for us. Who can fathom what really took place first in a virgin's womb in Nazareth and then in a stable in Bethlehem?

At the end of the book of Job, instead of answering his questions, God revealed to Job the mystery of Who He was. Then Job despised himself. "I have uttered what I did not understand, / things *too wonderful* for me, which I did not know" (Jb 42:3; RSV).

In one of David's "songs of ascents" he wrote, "My heart is not proud, O Lord; / my eyes are not haughty; / I do not concern myself with great matters / or things *too wonderful* for me. / But I have stilled and quieted my soul; / like a weaned child with its mother, / like a weaned child is my soul within me" (Ps 131:1,2; NIV).

A close and fretful inquiry into how spiritual things "work" is an exercise in futility. Even wondering how "natural" things are going to work if you bring God into them—how God will answer a prayer for money, for example, or how your son-in-law is going to find a house for eight in southern California (on a pastor's salary)—is sometimes an awful waste of energy. God *knows how*. Why should I bother my head about it if I've turned it over to Him? If the Word of the Lord to us is that we are "predestined according to the plan of him who works out everything in conformity with his purpose" (Eph 1:11; NIV), we may apprehend this fact by faith alone. By believing that God means just what he says, and by acting upon the word (faith always requires action), we apprehend it—we take hold of it, we make it our own. We cannot make it our own by mere reason—"I don't see how such-and-such an incident can possibly have anything to do with any divine 'plan.'"

Why should we *see* how? Is it not sufficient that we are told that it is so? We need not see. We need only believe and proceed on the basis of that assured fact.

Mary's acceptance of the angel's answer to her innocent question was immediate, though she could not imagine the intricacies and mysteries of its working in her young virgin body. She surrendered herself utterly to God in trust and obedience.

Do you *understand* what is going on in the invisible realm of your life with God? Do you *see* how the visible things relate to the hidden Plan and Purpose? Probably not. As my husband

Addison Leitch used to say, "You can't unscrew the Inscrutable." But you do see at least one thing, maybe a very little thing, that He wants you to do. "Now what I am commanding you today is not too difficult [other translations say too hard, too wonderful] for you or beyond your reach. It is not up in heaven. . . . nor is it beyond the sea. . . . no, the word is very near you; it is in your mouth and in your heart so you may obey it" (Dt 30:11-14; NIV).

Let it suffice you, as it sufficed Mary, to know that God knows. If it's time to work, get on with your job. If it's time to go to bed, go to sleep in peace. Let the Lord of the Universe do the worrying.

A Christmas Tradition

In our home on Christmas morning we were allowed to go into our parents' bedroom very early with the filled stockings we had found hanging on the footboard of our beds (we had no fireplace in those days). We all (three of us in the early days before three more—known as "the babies"—came along) sat on the bed and pulled out the tiny gifts. These were things like toothpaste, pencils, April Showers talcum powder, nail brushes—for we had a practical mother—and always little gold mesh bags with gold-wrapped chocolate coins.

Next we dressed, made our beds, and ate breakfast. Things were always done decently and in order, even on Christmas. After breakfast we washed the dishes and had family prayers. Our thoughts were not focused, I'm sure, on the Bible reading or the prayers, but we learned something very important about delayed gratification: waiting enhances the joy.

Then—the presents which were piled under the tree. My father gave them out one at a time and everyone watched as the wrappings were torn off and the present displayed. In this procedure we learned not only to share in another's joy, but our own joy in the giving of gifts was greatly enhanced because everybody was watching. We found, too, that the longer it took the longer the pleasure lasted.

We all helped pick up the rubbish. Then each chose a "public" place to display the gifts received.

A Thanksgiving Tradition

During the Pilgrims' first harrowing winter in Massachusetts food dwindled one day to a single pint of corn—enough to provide each man, woman, and child with five grains. From that time on, it is said that they placed five grains of corn on each plate at Thanksgiving to remind them of God's faithfulness even in times of extreme want.

In William Bradford's history *Of Plimoth Plantation* he wrote of how, though the people had worked hard to produce crops, "the Lord seemed to blast, & take the same, and to threaten further & more sore famine unto them, by a great drought which continued from ye 3 weeke in May, till about ye middle of July, without raine, and with great heat (for ye most parte), insomuch as ye corne begane to wither away, though it was set with fishe, the moysture whereof helped it much. Yet at length it began to lanquish sore, and some of ye drier grounds were partched like withered hay, part whereof was never recovered."

They then designated "a solemne day of humiliation, to seek ye Lord by humble & fervent prayer, in this great distresse."

The Lord answered with "such sweete and gentle showers as gave them cause of rejoicing & blessing God . . . For which mercie (in time conveniente) they also sett aparte a day of thanksgiving." (From *Pentecostal Evangel*, Springfield MO, Nov. 23, 1975, used by permission.)

It might be a nice idea to put five kernels of corn at each place on your Thanksgiving table.

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A Prayer for the Middle-Aged

Lord, Thou knowest better than I know myself that I am growing old. . . . Keep me from the fatal habit of thinking I must say something on every subject and on every occasion. Release me from craving to straighten out everybody's affairs. Make me thoughtful but not moody; helpful but not bossy. With my vast store of wisdom (?) it seems a pity not to use it all, but Thou knowest, Lord, that I want a few friends at the end.

Keep my mind free from the recital of endless details; give me wings to get to the point. Seal my lips on my aches and pains. They are increasing and love of rehearsing them is becoming sweeter as the years go by. I dare not ask for grace enough to enjoy the tales of others' pains but help me to endure them with patience.

I dare not ask for improved memory, but for a growing humility and a lessening cocksureness when my memory seems to clash with the memories of others. Teach me the glorious lesson that occasionally I may be mistaken.

Keep me reasonably sweet. I do not want to be a saint—some of them are so hard to live with—but a sour old person is one of the crowning works of the devil. Give me the ability to see good things in unexpected places and talents in unexpected people. Give me the grace to tell them so. Amen. (From my mother's little red notebook, source unknown. If any reader can enlighten me, please do.)

The Sweet Running of Household Wheels

"If I am inconsiderate about the comfort of others, or their feelings, or even of their little weaknesses; if I am careless about little hurts and miss opportunities to smooth their way; if I make the sweet running of household wheels more difficult to accomplish, then I know nothing of Calvary love." (Amy Carmichael: *If*, London, SPCK, 1949, p. 45)

Recommended Reading

Ken Wilson: *The Obedient Child* (Servant Publications, P.O. Box 8617, Ann Arbor, MI 48107. \$6.95)

Such a relief to find such love, such wisdom, such straight-shooting Biblical teaching on a subject about which so much ignorance and foolishness is pooled. It is not only possible for, it is incumbent upon, all Christian parents to teach their children to obey. This book will help you do just that.

If You Can't Do What You Like, Like What You Do

A young man working at a resort hotel for the summer: "For about four weeks I was in a total daze as I tried to relate the complex details of the hotel to each other. One day, at the end of my patience, I said, 'This is a waste of time!' I sat down and read Ecclesiastes—'Vanity, vanity. . . .' I realized, like Solomon, that if we fail to recognize God's complete sovereignty over all things, life is just endless, meaningless cycles. After that, I realized that no matter how hard, dirty, or apparently useless my immediate job is, God has a purpose in it and I am to do my work 'heartily as unto the Lord.' So I do, and what *peace* it has brought me! I now *love* my job!"

Another man who through reading *Through Gates of Splendor* heard God's call to mission work, and through *Passion and Purity* decided to trust God completely for his lovelife, writes, "Mrs. Gren, please don't write any more books—I don't think I can handle another major change in my life! Ha!"

New Video Series

I now have a six-part video series entitled "Suffering Is Not for Nothing," available by sending \$75 per set to Ligonier Ministries, P.O. Box 7500, Orlando, FL 32854. *Please do NOT order from the Newsletter.*

An Atheist's Prayer Answered

In his work with the World Evangelical Fellowship my brother David Howard has contact with many who live in countries where there is no freedom. In one of them he heard this true story:

A pastor's son in the second grade faced continuous Marxist and atheistic indoctrination in class every day. One day it went like this:

Teacher: "Some people say there is a God up in heaven who will give you what you ask for. Let's test that out and see if he does. We need more books, workbooks, paper, and pencils in this school. Let's ask God to give them to us."

She then prayed, asking God to send these things. Nothing happened.

"See, children? There is no God up in heaven. He didn't hear us and He didn't send anything."

That afternoon as school was letting out a big truck loaded with educational materials (books, workbooks, paper, and pencils) drove up and began to unload. The children called the teacher: "Teacher! Teacher! Come quickly! Here are the things we asked God to send! See? He sent them!"

Travel Schedule, November-December 1988, January-February 1989

November 3 Edina, MN; Grace Church, (612)926-1884.

November 5 Philadelphia, PA; singles conference, Mike Cavanaugh, (716)582-2790.

November 11, 12 Willowdale, Ontario; Ontario Bible College, (416)226-6380.

December 8-18 England; Saltmine Trust, 384-238224.

January 27-29 Pasadena, CA; Lake Avenue Congregational Church.

February 9 Ft. Monroe, VA; National Prayer Breakfast and Women of the Chapel, Thomas L. Deal, Chaplain (Colonel).

February 10, 11 Newport News, VA; Peninsula Community Chapel Marriage Retreat, (804)595-9019.

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The Elisabeth Elliot Newsletter

January/February 1989

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A Child Learns Self-Denial

One of the countless blessings of my life is having a daughter who actually asks for my prayers and my advice (and heeds the latter). She phoned from California this morning, describing the difficulties of home-schooling three children in grades six, four, and one, when you also have a four-year-old who is doing nursery school and a two-year-old, Colleen, who wants to do everything. And on November 9, Evangeline Mary was born, so a nursing baby now claims attention as well. How to give Colleen proper attention and teach her also to occupy herself quietly for what seems to her long periods? Valerie was deeply concerned over whether she was doing all she should for that little one.

I reminded her of the women of Bible times—while probably not homeschooling her children, an ordinary village woman would have been working very hard most of the time, carrying heavy water jars, grinding grain, sweeping, planting, and cooking while tending children. This was true also of the Indians with whom Val grew up. An Indian mother never interrupted her day's work to sit down with a small child and play or read a story, yet the children were more or less always with her, watching her work, imitating her, learning informally. They had a strong and secure home base, "and so have yours," I told her. "Don't worry! You are not doing Colleen an injustice. Quite the contrary. You are giving her wonderful things: a stable home, your presence in that home, a priceless education just in the things she observes."

The demands on Val, as on any mother of small children, are pretty relentless, of course. She does all the housework (except the heaviest cleaning) with the help of the children (a

schedule of chores is posted on the refrigerator). People usually gasp when I tell them the number of my grandchildren. "Wow," said one, "it takes a special woman to have five children." Special? Not really. Millions have done it. But it takes grace, it takes strength, it takes humility, and God stands ready to give all that is needed.

I suggested to Valerie that perhaps she could define the space which Colleen is allowed to play in during school time, and make it very clear to her that school time is quiet time for her brothers and sisters. When Valerie was Colleen's age she had to learn to play quietly alone, because I was occupied for a good portion of every day in Bible translation work, or in teaching literacy and Bible classes in our house. She knew she was not to interrupt except for things I defined as "important." At that time there were seldom children of her age to play with, and she had neither siblings nor father, yet she was happy and, I think, well-adjusted. (For a certain period we had the added difficulty of living with a missionary family of six children under nine whose mother felt obliged to be more or less available for her children every minute—they were thought too young to learn not to interrupt. It was not an ordered home, and the mother herself was exhausted most of the time.)

Does this training seem hard on the child, impossible for the mother? I don't think it is. The earlier the parents begin to make the laws of order and beauty and quietness comprehensible to their children, the sooner they will acquire good, strong notions of what is so basic to real godliness: self-denial. A Christian home should be a place of peace, and there can be no peace where there is no self-denial.

Christian parents are seeking to fit their children for their inheritance in Christ. A sense of the presence of God in the home is instilled by the simple way He is spoken of, by prayer not only at meals but in family devotions and

perhaps as each child is tucked into bed. The Bible has a prominent place, and it is a greatly blessed child who grows up, as I did, in a hymn-singing family. Sam and Judy Palpant of Spokane have such a home. "Each of our children has his or her own lullaby which I sing before prayer time and the final tucking into bed," Judy wrote. "That lullaby is a special part of our bedtime ritual. Whenever other children spend the night we sing 'Jesus Loves Me' as their lullaby. What a joy it was on the most recent overnighiter to have the three Edminster children announce, 'We have *our* own lullabies now!' Matt, who is twelve and who can be so swayed by the world, said, 'Mine is "Jesus Keep Me Near the Cross."'"

The task of parents is to show by love and by the way they live that they belong to another Kingdom and another Master, and thus to turn their children's thoughts toward that Kingdom and that Master. The "raw material" with which they begin is thoroughly selfish. They must gently lay the yoke of respect and consideration for others on those little children, for it is their earnest desire to make of them good and faithful servants and, as Janet Erskine Stuart expressed it, "to give saints to God."

* * *

Surely it was not coincidence that my friend Ann Kiemel Anderson called just as I was finishing the above piece. She has just received little William Brandt, her fourth adopted son. The others are four and three years old and ten months. She is thrilled, and not nearly as exhausted as she expected to be, thankful for the gift of the child and for the gift of the needed grace and strength for one day (and one night) at a time.

"But oh, Elisabeth!" she said in her huskily soft voice, "when I had only one, I thought I knew all the answers. There is nothing so humbling as having two or three or four children."

I needed that reminder. Jim and I had hoped for at least four children. God gave us one, and that one gave me hardly any reason for serious worry, let alone despair. She was malleable. What "worked" for her may not work for another child, but I offer my suggestions anyway—

gleaned not only from experience as the child of my parents and the parent of my child, but from observation of others. My husband Add Leitch had three daughters. "If I'd only had two, I could've written a book on child training," he told me. One of them proved to him that he couldn't.

God's Curriculum

One day recently something lit a fuse of anger in someone who then burned me with hot words. I felt sure I didn't deserve this response, but when I ran to God about it, He reminded me of part of a prayer I'd been using lately: "Teach me to treat all that comes to me with peace of soul and with firm conviction that Your will governs all."

Where could that kind of peace come from? Only from God, who gives "not as the world gives."

His will that I should be burned? Not exactly, but His will *governs* all. In a wrong-filled world we suffer (and cause) many a wrong. God is there to heal and comfort and forgive. He who brought blessing to many out of the sin of the jealous brothers against Joseph means this hurt for my ultimate blessing and, I think, for an increase of love between me and the one who hurt me. Love is very patient, very kind. Love never seeks its own. Love looks to God for his grace to help.

"It was not you who sent me here but God," Joseph said to his brothers. "You meant to do me harm; but God meant to bring good out of it" (Gn 45:8, 50:20; NEB).

There is a philosophy of secular education which holds that the student ought to be allowed to assemble his own curriculum according to his preferences. Few students have a

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strong basis for making these choices, not knowing how little they know. Ideas of what they need to learn are not only greatly limited but greatly distorted. What they need is *help*—from those who know more than they do.

Mercifully, God does not leave us to choose our own curriculum. His wisdom is perfect, His knowledge embraces not only all worlds but the individual hearts and minds of each of His loved children. With intimate understanding of our deepest needs and individual capacities, He chooses our curriculum. We need only ask, "Give us this day our daily bread, our daily lessons, our homework." An angry retort from someone may be just the occasion we need in which to learn not only longsuffering and forgiveness, but meekness and gentleness, fruits not *born* in us but *borne* only by the Spirit. As Amy Carmichael wrote, "A cup brimful of sweetness cannot spill even one drop of bitter water, no matter how suddenly jarred."

God's curriculum for all who sincerely want to know Him and do His will will always include lessons we wish we could skip. But the more we apply ourselves, the more honestly we can say what the psalmist said, "I, thy servant, will study thy statutes. / Thy instruction is my continual delight; / I turn to it for counsel. / I will run the course set out in thy commandments, / for they gladden my heart" (Ps 119:23, 24, 32; NEB).

When Your Children Grow Up

In response to my question as to what readers would like, one asked "how to look at one's purpose in life when your children are grown up and gone?"

If one's supreme aim in life is to glorify God by doing what He wants, I would suggest a careful study of the characteristics of godly women in the New Testament as set forth in I Timothy 5:5-10 and Titus 2:3-5. Nancy Krumreich of Anderson, Indiana, makes a practical suggestion that fits Paul's advice: "You might write about what you think older women ought to be doing in our world (besides going to

retreats!). It seems to me that there is a gaping need for women in this category to do things other than seek careers, things which teach us younger women how to love our husbands and children. And things which we younger ones should *not* be doing, like being Crisis Pregnancy Center directors, picketers of abortion clinics, spending hours of time volunteering which needs to be spent with our children and/or husbands. Perhaps even things like helping us younger ones with our heavy loads and giving practical guidance and encouragement. . . . Are there churches out there bold enough to teach that older women have this responsibility? It seems to me that the attitude is strong both in church and out of it, that once the youngest child is in school, women are freed up to pursue whatever they wish.

"I'm a young woman in search of a mother-figure, mine having died three years ago when my middle daughter was newborn."

I'm sure Nancy is all for the CPC's, the protests against abortion, and volunteer work—for those who can be free to participate without neglecting the first God-given duties. But if the young women can't do those jobs, and older women choose to pursue something called fulfillment, who is available?

Are there some out there with ears to hear this plea?

* * *

He sufficeth thee: apart from Him nothing sufficeth thee.

—St. Augustine

Prayer

Dear Lord, help me to live this day
quietly, easily;
To lean upon Thy great strength
trustfully, restfully;
To meet others
peacefully, joyously;
To face tomorrow
confidently, courageously.

Lilias Trotter on Tape

Lilias Trotter (1853-1928), a talented English artist, went to North Africa and founded the Algiers Mission Band (now a part of the North Africa Mission). Her little book, *Parables of the Cross*, illustrated with exquisite water-colors of plant life, was dedicated to one "B.A.B.," and to Amy Carmichael (whom she never met). A spiritual classic which profoundly expounds the great principle of the Cross, life out of death, it has been out of print for years. I have tried to persuade publishers to reprint it, but they tell me the cost of reproducing the water-colors is prohibitive. So I have put it on tape. You may order it from Lars Gren, 10 Strawberry Cove, Magnolia, MA 01930 for \$4.50 (includes postage).

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February 10, 11 Newport News, VA; Peninsula Community Chapel, marriage retreat, (804)595-9019.

March 2 Fort Smith, AR; Ozark Conferences women's day, (501)666-3266.

March 3-5 Morgantown, WV; Living for Christ Conferences, (304)455-5322.

March 30, April 1 Camp Manitoqua, IL; Christian Women's Retreat, Mrs. Bea Porter, (312)754-7958.

April 2, 3 Wellington, FL; Women in the Church, Mrs. Barbara Abril, (407)793-0899.

April 4 Ft. Lauderdale, FL; Westminster Academy Auxiliary, (365)771-4600.

April 27, 28 Lancaster, PA; Fellowship of Christian Assemblies, Carl Johnson, (914)634-7828.

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There Are No Accidents, Says Judy

My friend Judy Squier of Portola Valley, California, is one of the most cheerful and radiant women I know. I met her first in a prayer meeting at the beginning of a conference. She was sitting in a wheel chair, and I noticed something funny about her legs. Later that day I saw her with no legs at all. In the evening she was walking around with crutches. Of course I had to ask her some questions. She was born with no legs, she had artificial ones which she used sometimes, but they were tiresome, she said (laughing) and she often left them behind. When I heard of a little baby boy named Brandon Scott, born without arms or legs, I asked if she would write to his parents. She did.

"The first thing I would say is that all that this entails is at least one hundred times harder on the parents than the child. A birth defect by God's grace does not rob childhood of its wonder, nor is a child burdened by high expectations. Given a supportive, creative, and loving family, I know personally that I enjoyed not a less-than-average life nor an average life, but as I've told many, my life has been not ordinary but extraordinary.

"I am convinced without a doubt that a loving Heavenly Father oversees the creative miracles in the inner sanctum of each mother's womb (Psalm 139), and that in His sovereignty there are no accidents.

"What the caterpillar calls the end of the world, the Creator calls a butterfly.' As humanity we see only the imperfect, underside of God's tapestry of our lives. What we judge to be 'tragic—the most dreaded thing that could happen,' I expect we'll one day see as the awesome reason for the beauty and uniqueness of

our life and our family. I think that's why James 1:2 is a favorite verse of mine. Phillips' translation put it this way: 'When all kinds of trials and temptations crowd into your lives, my brothers, don't resent them as intruders but welcome them as friends.'

"I love Joni Eareckson Tada's quote. When I saw it on the front of *Moody Monthly*, October 1982, I was convinced she'd penned the words for my epitaph. Now my husband is aghast to hear me say I want it on my tombstone! Glory be!

People with disabilities are God's best visual aids to demonstrate who He really is. His power shows up best in weakness. And who by the world's standards is weaker than the mentally or physically disabled? As the world watches, these people persevere. They live, love, trust, and obey Him. Eventually the world is forced to say, "How great their God must be to inspire this kind of loyalty."

"The above are my hurried soul thoughts. I can't think too deeply with three little women popping in and out of this letter-writing. But I give you a moment of down-to-earth real life which I am good at, since I am a very 'earthy' person.

"Being Christian didn't shield my family from the pain and tears that came with my birth defect. In fact, ten years ago when David and I interviewed our parents for a Keepsake Tape, I was stunned to hear my mother's true feelings. I asked her to tell the hardest thing in her life. Her response: 'the day Judy Ann was born and it still is. . . .' And yet when we as a family look back over the years, our reflections are invariably silenced by the *wonder* of God's handiwork. Someday I hope to put it in a book and I know it will be to the glory of God.

"Getting married and becoming a mother were dreams I never dared to dream, but God, the doer

of *all* miracles intended that my life be blessed with an incredible husband and three daughters. Emily is nine, Betsy will soon be seven, and Naphtalie Joy is four. I've decided that every handicapped person needs at least one child. They are fantastic helpers and so willing to let me 'borrow their legs' when I need help.

"Well, my friends, I will close for now. Friends and family do care so much, and you as a family have been chosen in a special way to display His unique MasterWork. I pray that your roots of faith will grow deep down into the faithfulness of God's Loving Plan, that you will exchange your inadequacy for the Adequacy of Jesus' resurrection power, and that you will be awed as you witness the fruits of the Spirit manifested in your family."

Why the Newsletter?

I began writing the newsletter in 1982 because kind people of the Word of God Community in Ann Arbor, Michigan, suggested that I write one, and offered all their facilities for the carrying out of the idea.

Now that my radio program, "Gateway to Joy," is in its sixth month I have bethought me again of the need for or the wisdom of continuing the letter. I have, after all, a new channel of communication with many more people than are on my mailing list. Maybe that's enough. But then, maybe radio listeners will be wanting a newsletter. I'm in a quandary.

To call it a "newsletter" is a bit misleading, I admit. It's nothing like a proper one. It doesn't keep you abreast of much of anything. It isn't "relevant" in the popular sense. But I take refuge in C.S. Lewis's remark, "All that is not eternal is eternally out of date," and I try always to include things eternal. I suppose the heart of the matter is a burning desire, amounting perhaps to a compulsion akin to that of the psalmist's ("My heart is teeming with a good word; / I utter what I have framed concerning the King" Ps 45:1; Kay). Often I have some treasure to share which I didn't frame—treasures from the pens of long-dead saints. Because it's getting harder and harder to find some of the writings which have nourished my soul, I give you tastes so that you can ransack old bookstores and feast on spiritual food much more substantial than many contemporary offerings.

I had wanted to give you something for an Easter meditation. Nothing I could frame comes close to this jewel from George Herbert, born in Wales in 1593.

The Agonie

Philosophers have measur'd mountains,
Fathom'd the depths of seas, of states, and kings;
Walk'd with a staffe to heav'n, and traced
fountains:

But there are two vast, spacious things,
The which to measure it doth more behove;
Yet few there are that sound them,—Sinne
and Love.

Who would know Sinne, let him repair
Unto Mount Olivet; there shall he see
A Man so wrung with pains, that all His hair,
His skinne, His garments bloudie be.
Sinne is that presse and vise, which forceth pain
To hunt his cruell food through ev'ry vein.

Who knows not love, let him assay
And taste that juice which, on the cross, a pike
Did set again abroach; then let him say
If ever he did taste the like.
Love is that liquour sweet and most divine,
Which my God feels as bloud, but I as wine.

Too Many Children?

When I learned that my daughter Valerie was expecting number five, my insides tied themselves in knots.

Val and Walt were both very peaceful about it, willing to receive this child as they had received the others—as a gift from the Lord, remembering His words, "Whoever receives this child in my name receives me" (Lk 9:48). But my imagination ran to the future and its seeming impossibilities—"Poor dear Val. She has her hands more than full. What *will* she do with five?" Before she was married Valerie had told me that she hoped the Lord would give her six. I had smiled to myself, thinking she would prob-

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ably revise that number after the first three or four. Practical considerations rose like thunderclouds in my mind. Money. Another room to be built onto the house. Homeschooling (Valerie was teaching two already). How would the new child receive the attention he needed? *Etc., etc.*

Then I began to look at the advantages. I was one of six children myself, and loved growing up in a big family. Children learn early what it means to help and to share, to take responsibility and to make sacrifices, to give place to others, to cooperate and deny themselves. Why all this turmoil in my soul? Well, because I loved my child! She was tired! Her hands were full! Maybe later, maybe when the others were old enough to help more, maybe . . . *O Lord!*

I tried to talk to God about it. Breakfast time came, we ate, washed dishes, school began in the children's schoolroom, and I went to my room, my heart churning. What does one do?

I write this because troubled young women have come to me not understanding their mothers' reactions to the news of another baby. Was it resentment? Did they not love the grandchildren they had? Why would they not want more? Was it nothing but a meddlesome yen to run their children's lives? Was it a revelation of a worse attitude—an unwillingness to let God be God?

It was this last question that I knew I must wrestle with as I knelt in the bedroom. Most things that trouble us deeply come down to that. I had to bring each of my wrong responses definitely and specifically to God, lay them honestly before Him (He already knew exactly what I was thinking), confess my pride and silliness, and then, just as definitely *accept* His sovereign and loving will for Valerie, for her family, and for me as the granny. Only God knew how many countless others, even in future generations, He had in mind in bringing this particular child into the Shepard family. He was granting this family the privilege of offering sacrifices for Him, participating in His grand designs. YES, LORD. Your will is my conscious choice. Nothing more. Nothing less. Nothing else.

Even though the feelings don't evaporate at once, they have been surrendered, and the Lord knows what to do with them. Mine had to be surrendered over and over again, but He took them, and over the next few days He transformed them. And when the news of Number

Six was broken to me last spring, I was able to say *Thank You, Lord*, and to add that tiny unknown one to my prayer list. If you saw the last Newsletter, you know of the birth of Evangeline Mary November 9, lovingly welcomed by all.



The Shepard family, January 1989: Val and Walt, Evangeline 2 months, Colleen 2, Walter III 11, Christiana 7, Jim Elliot 4, Elisabeth (seated) 9.

Thankful for Income Tax

"I actually was thankful that I had to withdraw money from saving and pay a boatload," wrote Liz Armstrong. "Not that I am in agreement with *how* the government spends the money, but I am thankful that God has gifted me with this privilege to live in a *free* country. I remember a dusty evening I had when I was in Morocco, meeting with Christians in a back alley. We sat down for a meal, had a Bible study, and were told, 'Don't say much when you leave here tonight; there will be a man by our door in a trenchcoat smoking his pipe. Just walk by and say nothing.' 'My, my, my,' I thought to myself as I remembered my youth when we would jam into a car and head out for a soda or something. To live in a *free* country—well, taxes don't seem so traumatic. Oh, for this joy of pressing Christ into all we touch!"

Recommended Reading: *The Mother at Home*, The Rev. John S.C. Abbott, written in 1833. Sound wisdom on parental responsibility, teaching obedience in a calm and loving way, maternal authority, a mother's difficulties, and more. Available for \$7.40 (includes postage) from Grace Abounding Ministries, Inc., P.O. Box 25, Sterling, VA 22170.

Prayer Requests

- For the preparation and delivery of radio talks—that I deliver God's message, not mere sweet nothings;
- for the listeners, that they may hear and heed what God wants to say to them;
- for Jan Anderson, originator, producer, director, and announcer of Gateway to Joy;
- for the Lord's going before us as we prepare for the European trip in June. We will be in some places where the Word is not always allowed much freedom.

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April 12 Byfield, MA; Parish Church.

April 27, 28 Lancaster, PA; Fellowship of Christian Assemblies, Carl Johnson, (914) 634-7828.

April 29 Westerville, OH; Hosanna Praise Gathering, Susan Zartman, (614) 431-8222.

May 3 Chula Vista, CA; Evangelical Free Church (619) 421-7733.

May 4 Bellflower, CA; Christian School, Mrs. Laura Williams, 9537 Linden Street.

May 6 Big Bear, CA; PCA women's conference (same contact as above).

May 7 Aliso Creek Presbyterian Church; The Rev. Walter Shepard.

May 15 Liberty Corner, PA; women's day, (215) 332-1676.

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Humdudgeons or Contentment

The word *humdudgeon* is a new one to me and I like the sound of it. It means "a loud complaint about a trifle." Heard any of those lately around your house? One mother thought of an excellent antidote: all humdudgeons must be presented not orally but in writing, "of two hundred words or more." There was a sudden marked reduction in whining and complaining.

Parents, by example, teach their children to whine. No wonder it is so difficult to teach them not to! Listen to conversations in the elevator, at the hairdresser's, at the next table in the restaurant. Everybody's whining about everything—weather, health, the president, the IRS, the insurance mess, traffic, the kids.

Human life is full of trouble, which doesn't come from the dust, said Job's friend Eliphaz, nor does it sprout from the ground. Man is *born* to trouble. Compare your list with one famous man's:

1. he had a difficult childhood
2. less than one year of formal schooling
3. failed in business at age 31
4. defeated for legislature at 32
5. failed again in business at 33
6. elected to the legislature at 34
7. his fiancée died when he was 35
8. defeated for speaker at 38
9. defeated for electorate at 40
10. at 42 married a woman who became a burden, not a help
11. only one of four sons lived past age 18
12. defeated for congress at 43
13. elected to congress at 46
14. defeated for congress at 48
15. defeated for senate at 55
16. defeated for vice president at 56

17. defeated for senate at 58

18. finally elected president.

He was Abraham Lincoln, of course. When I look at his list of set-backs, I wonder if I've ever had a problem.

Adler said, "It is a categorical demand of the neurotic's lifespan that he should fail through the guilt of others and thus be free of responsibility." That sobered me. Is my response to failure instantly to lay the blame on somebody else? Is there always an excuse, a complaint, an inner whine? (May not the present emphasis—even in Christian circles—on delving into one's past exacerbate rather than cure neurosis? Ought we not simply to set about "forgetting those things which are behind," rather than "getting in touch" with them?)

A spirit of calm contentment always accompanies true godliness. The deep peace that comes from deep trust in God's lovingkindness is not destroyed even by the worst of circumstances, for those Everlasting Arms are still cradling us, we are always "under the Mercy." Corrie Ten Boom was "born to trouble" like the rest of us, but in a German concentration camp she jumped to her feet every morning and exuberantly sang "Stand Up, Stand Up for Jesus!" She thanked the Lord for the little parade of ants that marched through her cell, bringing her company. When Paul and Silas were in prison, they prayed and sang. It isn't troubles that make saints, but their response to troubles. Even miracles can't make us holy. Paul reminded the Corinthians that the Israelites were *all* guided by the same cloud, *all* had the experience of passing through the sea, *all* ate the same supernatural food, and *all* drank the same supernatural drink. "In spite of this, most of them failed to please God and their corpses littered the desert" (1 Cor 10:5, Jerusalem Bible). The reason for His displeasure came down to a single root: discontent, which included "wicked lusts for forbidden

things" (idols and illicit sex, for which 23,000 were killed in one day) and *complaining* because they wanted things perfectly legitimate in themselves which God had not given—leeks and onions and garlic and cucumbers and fish—and stood at their tent doors, parents and children together wailing: "Here we are, wasting away, stripped of everything; there is nothing but manna for us to look at!" (Num 11:6, JB) Many were struck with a plague and died.

When Paul's flesh was tormented by a sharp thorn he naturally wanted it removed. He made this request known to God, but the answer was No. God didn't change Paul's physical condition, He changed his spiritual one. He gave him what he needed more than healing. He gave him the high ministry of heaven called grace. Paul not only accepted the answer, he learned even to be very thankful for weakness itself, for "power comes to its full strength in weakness."

Everything about which we are tempted to complain may be the very instrument whereby the Potter intends to shape His clay into the image of His Son—a headache, an insult, a long line at the check-out, someone's rudeness or failure to say thank you, misunderstanding, disappointment, interruption. As Amy Carmichael said, "See in it a chance to die," meaning a chance to leave self behind and say YES to the will of God, to be "comformable unto His death." Not a morbid martyr-complex but a peaceful and happy contentment in the assurance that goodness and mercy follow us all the days of our lives. Wouldn't our children learn godliness if they saw the example of contentment instead of complaint? acceptance instead of rebellion? peace instead of frustration?

May ours be the spirit of the seventeen-year-old Lady Jane Grey who prayed this prayer in her prison cell before she was beheaded in 1554:

O merciful God, be Thou unto me
A strong Tower of defence,
I humbly entreat Thee.
Give me grace to await thy leisure,
And patiently to bear
What Thou doest unto me;
Nothing doubting or mistrusting
Thy goodness towards me;
For Thou knowest what is good for me
Better than I do.
Therefore do with me in all things

What Thou wilt;
Only arm me, I beseech Thee,
With Thine armor,
That I may stand fast;
Above all things taking to me
The shield of faith;
Praying always that I may
Refer myself wholly to Thy will,
Abiding Thy pleasure, and comforting myself
In those troubles which it shall please Thee
To send me, seeing such troubles are
Profitable for me; and I am
Assuredly persuaded that all Thou doest
Cannot but be well; and unto Thee
Be all honor and glory. Amen.

For practical help teaching children not to whine and complain, see Chapter 7 of *The Obedient Child* by Ken Wilson. (Can be ordered for \$9.20 from Servant Publications, P.O. Box 8617, Ann Arbor, MI 48107. *Please do NOT order from the Newsletter.*)

Do It at Once

"No unwelcome tasks become any the less unwelcome by putting them off till tomorrow. It is only when they are behind us and done, that we begin to find that there is a sweetness to be tasted afterwards, and that the remembrance of unwelcome duties unhesitatingly done is welcome and pleasant. Accomplished, they are full of blessing, and there is a smile on their faces as they leave us. Undone, they stand threatening and disturbing our tranquility, and hindering our communion with God. If there be lying before you any bit of work from which you shrink, go straight up to it, and do it at once. The only way to get rid of it is to do it." (Alexander Maclaren)

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Letter to a Missionary

When my father and mother were newly married they sailed for Belgium where they were to work with the Belgian Gospel Mission. They were twenty-four and twenty-three. Recently my brother Jim Howard unearthed a letter written to them by an older missionary of the China Inland Mission dated July 21, 1922. It spoke to me freshly and powerfully when I received it yesterday, so I give it to you:

"My dear Philip:

As this comes into your hands you will be aboard your steamer, and perhaps a bit of a ways on your journey towards Belgium. I do hope that both Katharine and yourself will prove to be excellent sailors, and that the journey will be a very happy and helpful time for you. See all you can, on board ship, everywhere. If conditions permit of it, make the acquaintance of the Chief Engineer, and see the 'works' of the boat! They are worth seeing! Never join the ranks of those who think sanctification means shutting your eyes to everything!!

"My love and esteem for you both says how nice it would be if I could only go with you, and be with you in your service, helping, suggesting, warning, etc. as the case might demand. But how foolish would such a procedure be, if it were possible!! We shall serve you best as we pray for you, daily asking God to do for you in His way, which will be infinitely richer and fuller and better than our best. God's way of speaking to you, and of getting at you, will be through His Word. Dwell in it, therefore. Begin each day with a portion of it. Pray for grace to see when He is speaking to you; and for grace to adjust yourself to what He thus shows you! Do that and you will be a successful Christian and Missionary wherever you are.

"There is one thing, however, I want to mention in particular, and feel sure you won't mind my doing so. If it has not already been done, somewhere in the mid-Atlantic, just dump overboard all the supposed superiority we Americans think we have over most other folks! Enter Belgium merely as a Sinner-Saved-by-Grace, and not as an American! Of course, in one sense, we must never forget our nationality, and must carry ourselves in a way to honor our

native land—but you know what I mean. Don't be going around with a chip on your shoulder looking for your rights. I do not say this because I have seen anything in you which leads me to think it necessary, for, so far as I have observed, you are free from it all. I do know human nature a bit, though, and you will need to keep close to your Lord to prevent this sort of thing coming into your life. Mr. Hoste (a leader of the China Inland Mission) once said to me as I was about to take up a new and responsible post, 'Mr. Whittlesey, you may expect all the honor and esteem you are worthy of receiving, and no more!!' A good text is 'Let your yieldingness be known unto all men.' Phil 4:5 (margin).

"We shall love to hear from you from time to time, and will reply every time. We shall not forget to pray for you all the time, and feel sure you are going to be much used of your Lord in the place He has placed you. With heartiest greetings and love from us all, Roger D. Whittlesey."

Lars's Eyes

Some of you have been praying for my husband Lars since he learned three years ago that he has glaucoma. There are three kinds, all of which lead to blindness if not treated. His is "the kind you *don't* want," his doctor said. He must put drops in his eyes six times per day, including setting an alarm to get up at night. Last December he had laser surgery on the right eye, which did what the drops hadn't adequately done: brought the pressure down where it belongs. Neither drops nor surgery can cure the condition. They merely arrest it. But we can pray for the Touch that "hath still its ancient power," if that would be for the greater glory of God.

Gateway to Joy

This is the name of my radio program, broadcast Monday through Friday for fifteen minutes on more than one hundred stations. If you don't get it in your area, phone your local station and tell them you'd like to. They can obtain it by writing to GATEWAY TO JOY, Box 82500, Lincoln, NE 68501.

Study Guide for Passion and Purity

Joyce Holmes has written a very good study guide to accompany my book (the love story of Jim Elliot and me, framing scriptural principles for bringing one's desires under the authority of Christ). You may obtain it from her for \$4.00. Her address: 216 NE Azala, Corvallis, OR 97330. *Please do NOT order from the Newsletter.*

Keep in Touch

Are you moving? Getting married? Leaving school? *Don't forget to send us your change of address.* The post office DOES NOT FORWARD third class mail like the Newsletter. *Please remove your address label below and send it with your new address to:* The Elisabeth Elliot Newsletter, Post Office Box 7711, Ann Arbor, MI 48107.

Travel Schedule May-August 1989

May 3 Chula Vista, CA; Evangelical Free Church, (619)421-7733.

May 4 Bellflower, CA; Bellflower Christian School, Mrs. Laura Williams, (213)925-6491 or 2950.

May 6 Big Bear, CA, PCA women's conference (same contact as above).

May 7 Laguna Niguel, CA; Aliso Creek Presbyterian Church, The Rev. Walter Shepard.

May 15 Liberty Corner, PA; Women's day, (215)332-1676.

June Belgium, Germany, Austria, Hungary, Vienna, Switzerland.

July 24-29 Tuxedo, NC; Camp Greystone (704)693-3182.

August 15, 16 Orlando, FL; SPRINT (407) 425-5552.

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The Gift of Loneliness

I was not a wife anymore. I was a widow. Another assignment. Another gift.

Don't imagine for a moment that that was the thought that occurred to me the instant the word came. *O Lord* was probably all I could think, stunned as we all were.

One step at a time over the years, as I sought to plumb the mystery of suffering (which cannot be plumbed), I began to see that there is a sense in which everything is a gift, even my widowhood. I hope I can explain.

There would be no widowhood if there were no death. The Bible calls death an enemy. There would be no divorce if there were no sin. Sin is enmity against God. When sin entered the world through what theologians call the Fall of Man, death and all kinds of suffering followed.

But God still loves us. This we know, for the Bible tells us. C.S. Lewis wrote, "You asked for a loving God: you have one. The great spirit you so lightly invoked, the 'lord of terrible aspect,' is present: not a senile benevolence that drowsily wishes you to be happy in your own way, not the cold philanthropy of a conscientious magistrate, nor the care of a host who feels responsible for the comfort of his guests, but the consuming fire Himself, the Love that made the worlds" (*The Problem of Pain*, New York, Macmillan, 1965, p.35).

That inexorable Love had allowed me to become a widow. But "allowed me to become" is not adequate. It even seems feeble to me now, for the Lord of Hosts is absolutely sovereign. He holds power over the universe, He holds

authority over my life—not because He usurps the rights with which He endowed me in creation, but because I had specifically asked Him to be Lord of my life. I had prayed as earnestly as a child and a teenager and a woman can pray, *Thy will be done*. The coming of this transcendent authority into one's life is bound to be an active thing, an immense disruption at times.

This was one of those times. He had done more than merely "allow" a thing to "happen" to me. I do not know any more accurate way of putting it than to say that He had given me something. He had given me a gift—widowhood.

How can I say such a thing?

He does not whisk us at once to Glory. We go on living in a fractured world, suffering in one way or another the effects of sin—sometimes our own, sometimes others'. Yet I have come to understand even suffering, through the transforming power of the Cross, as a gift, for in this broken world, *in our sorrow*, He gives us Himself; *in our loneliness* He comes to meet us.

In His death Jesus Christ gave us life. The willingness of the Son of God to commit Himself into the hands of criminals became the greatest gift ever given—the Bread of the world, in mercy broken. Thus the worst thing that ever happened became the best thing that ever happened.

—Excerpt from my book *Loneliness*

(Small note from the Man Behind the Scene: Are there people out there who might be lonely—single, married, widowed, divorced, male or female? Elisabeth's book is available from me, *NOT from the Newsletter*, at \$11 postpaid. Lars Gren, 10 Strawberry Cove, Magnolia, MA 01930.)

What's a Nice Girl Like You . . .

Young people have the crazy notion nowadays that the only way to *really* "get to know" somebody is to get intimate. That's what's important. No it isn't. What's important is what that person lives for and how much they'd be willing to risk for it. The following is reprinted from *The Pilot*, the Catholic weekly of the Archdiocese of Boston, March 31, 1989, with the permission of author John Mallon:

"One of the few remaining places where a single Catholic male can meet a nice Catholic girl these days is in jail—after being on the sidewalk blocking the entrance to an abortion mill. You can pretty well assume that she takes her faith—and The Faith—seriously and probably doesn't scoff at things like virginity, purity, chastity, and love, or view motherhood as a male plot to oppress women. She will know what she believes—and why—perhaps from bitter experience. She will have a light shining through her. Pro-life women may be the last hope for American womanhood.

"These are the people our society is starting to arrest these days. It is hard to meet such a woman at the Catholic [or Protestant, I might add—EE] universities, which have no shortage of pro-abortion feminists, and others hell-bent on liberating women from the 'oppressive' shackles of Catholicism into the freedom of being 'sexually active'—complete with the right to prevent or dispose of any possible result from that activity.

"With the assault on femininity in full force, what is a simple Catholic boy to do in his search for female companionship except to join the fight for the restoration of womanhood (among other things) by stopping the socially sanctioned killing of babies? What else but get in the way of law-abiding folks who kill babies for a living? Try to rescue the women and children who will suffer from this legalized carnage.

"Could the pro-life movement be the last bastion of feminine loveliness and strength? Young male Christian friends of mine have commented to me on the lovely qualities and virtue of the women they meet at Operation Rescue demonstrations. This is not to trivialize the solemn business of saving children from death and their mothers from trauma. . . .

"It cannot be ignored that modernism's all-out assault on love, family, femininity, masculinity, womanhood, manhood, motherhood, fatherhood, sex, child conceiving, bearing, and rearing has necessarily played havoc with youthful romance. And it is indeed about the business of banishing romance down the same road that it has already driven genteel courtship. What The World takes for romance is really seduction—a race to bed rather than a gentle dance of mutual discovery. A good woman is as hard to find as a good man used to be—a good man perhaps even harder than ever. . . .

"So where can you go to meet a good and faithful young Catholic woman in this day and age? In jail. Where else?"

Prayer

"Always maintain the habit of prayer, be both alert and thankful as you pray. Include us in your prayers, please, that God may open for us a door for the entrance of the gospel. Pray that we may talk freely of the mystery of Christ. . . and that I may make that mystery plain" (Colossians 4:2-4, JBP).

Thank you, all of you who have been praying for Lars and me. The radio program, Gateway to Joy, now reaches over a hundred stations in the U.S. and has just gone into Canada (for information, call 1-800-7284 JOY). Station HCJB in Ecuador carries it overseas by shortwave. We are thankful for this, but awed by the responsibility, aware of Jesus' words, "Without Me you can do *nothing*."

Pray for all who work against the appalling evil of abortion: crisis pregnancy centers, those who open their homes to shepherd pregnant single women, doctors and nurses who refuse to participate in any way in abortions, Operation

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Rescue, Christian Action Council, Right to Life, and all others who stand with Christ against this kind of murder.

Pray for Supreme Court judges who will work to change Roe vs. Wade.

Another Small Note from Lars

Some of you don't know who in the world Lars is. He's my husband (a.k.a. "Mr. Elliot III," he says). He wants you to know that if you received the "Thank You" tape entitled "The Shape of Godliness," the back side has a Question and Answer session that didn't quite fill it up. He hates to waste an inch of tape, so he filled it from other talks. Because it was mastered from a tape rather than live, the quality is not the best. You may notice a voice- or speed-change. "Stay alert," he says, "it's understandable, at least—but maybe blank tape would have been more enjoyable." I join him in thanking you for your help to the Newsletter.

But I Have a Graduate Degree!

A woman was asked to speak to the women students of a seminary about job opportunities for those with seminary degrees. She writes, "I talked to them first principally about being, doing, and going as God wills (not who am I, but *whose* am I). Then I listed both traditional and creative ways to fulfill needs in the Kingdom of God. Three feminists were offended especially that I should mention a nanny among the 70+ jobs. But Aristotle was a 'nanny' to Alexander the Great! These women had bought into the values of the world and were ready to fight for their ten years of executive computer programming. They said my talk had 'put them down more than any man's.'"

Theology means the study of God, but if an earned degree in that field confers a position in life which makes servanthood "beneath us" (three women felt "put down"), something is badly amiss. "The servant is not greater than his master," Jesus said. "Once you have realized these things, you will find your happiness in doing them" (John 13:16, 17; JBP).

Happiness—never mind the "status" of the job. The disciples had been occupied with petty rivalries and questions about greatness. Jesus, "with the full knowledge that the Father had put everything into His hands" (John 13:3, JBP), took into those hands the dusty, calloused feet of each of the twelve, washed them, and dried them with a towel. It was His happiness to do the will of His Father, but it was a shock to those rugged men. The washing of feet hadn't occurred to them as coming under that heading, I suppose, even though they had heard the principle before. I can imagine the bewilderment on their faces. Can't you just hear Peter's tone as he says, "You, Lord, washing my feet?" (vs. 6, NEB).

Values get skewed so easily nowadays, don't they? *Time* (Nov. 7, 1988) carried the testimony of one man who, according to the world's measurement of success, had hit the top. He was playwright Eugene O'Neill and if it's success that makes people happy he should have been the happiest of men. He sounds like the most miserable: "I'm fed to the teeth with the damned theatre. . . . The game isn't worth the candle. If I got any real spiritual satisfaction out of success in the theatre it might compensate. But I don't. Success is as flat, spiritually speaking, as failure. After the unprecedented critical acclaim to *Mourning Becomes Electra* I was in bed nearly a week, overcome by the profoundest gloom and nervous exhaustion."

Lay O'Neill's words alongside Jesus.' *Once you have realized* these things you will find your happiness in doing them. It's hard for us earth-bound mortals to realize them. It's easy to be beguiled by temporal rewards, short-lived promises of fulfilment. The brighter the prospects the world offers, the more obscure become the principles of the Kingdom in which, as Janet Erskine Stuart said, "humility and service are the only expression and measure of greatness."

Guardian Angels

The angels assigned to children, we are told, "always behold the face of the Father." Last March Valerie went into the bathroom where she had left two-year-old Colleen brushing her teeth. The child was flat on her back on the

floor, unconscious, not breathing, eyes rolled back, slightly stiff and beginning to turn blue. She grabbed her up, prayed, "O Lord, HELP ME!", ran downstairs calling to Elisabeth to dial 911, and trying the Heimlich Maneuvre, thinking perhaps Colleen had swallowed something. While Elisabeth dialed Val then tried CPR. By the time the emergency squad arrived Colleen was breathing but not conscious. They took her to the hospital, did a CAT scan, found nothing abnormal. Next day, they sent her home, perfectly well. "In His hand is the breath of every living thing." We are so thankful for that confidence, and for those ministering spirits, the angels, who do His bidding.

Recommended Reading

D.M. McIntyre: *The Hidden Life of Prayer*, Bethany Fellowship Inc. Recently out of print, I'm told, but if you run to your bookstore you might find a copy before they run out. The duty, necessity and obligation of prayer; the equipment; the direction of the mind; worship. Reasons for praying—God instructs us to pray; we are dependents; we need communion and He desires it; we are cooperators with God as we pray. The icing on this very nourishing cake is the abundance of illustrations and quotations, e.g. "God does not delay to hear our prayers because He has no mind to give; but that, by enlarging our desires, He may give us the more largely" (Anselm of Canterbury).

Travel Schedule July-September 1989

July 22-28 Tuxedo, NC; Camp Greystone, (704)693-3182.

July 28 Steubenville, OH; Franciscan University, (614)283-3771.

August 13 Worcester, MA; Booksellers' Convention.

August 15, 16 Orlando, FL; SPRINT, (407)425-5552.

September 23, 24 Lexington, SC; Presbyterian Church, (803)359-9501.

September 28-30 Del City, OK; First Southern Baptist Church, (405)732-1300.

October 5, 6 San Bernardino, CA; Campus Crusade staff women.

Keep in Touch

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A Call to Older Women

In 1948 when I had been at Prairie Bible Institute (a very stark set of wooden buildings on a very bleak prairie in Alberta) for only a few weeks, I was feeling a bit displaced and lonesome one afternoon when there came a knock on my door. I opened it to find a beautiful rosy-cheeked face framed by white hair. She spoke with a charming Scottish burr:

"You don't know me, but I know you. I've been praying for you, Betty dearr. I'm Mrs. Cunningham. If evertt you'd like a cup of tea and a Scottish scone, just pop down to my little apartment."

She told me where she lived and went on to say that my name had been mentioned in a staff meeting (she never said how—was I thought of as a misfit at PBI? I wonder) and the Lord had given her a burden for me. Many were the wintry afternoons when I availed myself of her gracious offer and we sat together in her tiny but very cozy basement apartment while she poured tea for me and I poured my soul out to her. Her radiant face was full of sympathy, love, and understanding as she listened. She would be quiet for a little, then she would pray and, looking up, cheer and strengthen me with words from God. During and after my missionary years she wrote to me until she died. Only God knows what I owe to "the four Katharines"—Katharine Cunningham, Katharine Gillingham Howard (my own mother), Katherine Cumming (my house

mother when I was in college), and Katherine Morgan, the widowed missionary of Colombia who gave me the push that sent me to Ecuador. These and several others have not only shown me what godliness looks like (many have done that), but have significantly graced my life by obeying God's special call to older women.

The Apostle Paul tells Titus that older women ought to "school the younger women to be loving wives and mothers, temperate, chaste, and kind, busy at home, respecting the authority of their own husbands" (Titus 2:4,5 NEB). My dear "Mom Cunningham" schooled me—not in a class or seminar, or even primarily by her words. It was what she *was* that taught me. It was her availability to God when He sent her to my door. It was the surrender of her *time*, an offering to Him for my sake. It was her readiness to "get involved," to lay down her life for one anxious Bible school girl. Above all, she herself, a simple Scottish woman, *was the message*.

I think of the vast number of older women today. The Statistical Abstract of the United States for this year says that in 1980, 19.5% of the population was between ages 45-65, but by 2000 it will be 22.9%. Assuming that half of those people are women, what a pool of energy and power for God they might be. We live longer now than we did forty years ago (the same volume says that the over-sixty-fives will increase from 11.3% to 13%). There is more mobility, more money around, more leisure, more health and strength—resources which, if put at God's disposal, might bless younger women. But there are also many more ways to *spend* those resources, so we find it very easy to occupy ourselves selfishly. Where are the women, single or married, willing to hear God's

call to spiritual motherhood, taking spiritual daughters under their wings to school them as Mom Cunningham did me? She had no training the world would recognize. She had no thought of such. She simply loved God and was willing to be broken bread and poured-out wine for His sake. *Retirement* never crossed her mind.

If some of my readers are willing to hear this call but hardly know how to begin, may I suggest to you:

1. Pray about it. Ask God to show you whom, what, how.

2. Consider writing notes to or telephoning some younger woman who needs encouragement in the areas Paul mentioned.

3. Ask a young mother if you may do her ironing, take the children out, babysit so she can go out, make a cake or a casserole for her.

4. Do what Mom C. did for me—invite somebody to tea, find out what she'd like you to pray for (I asked her to pray that God would bring Jim Elliot and me together!)—and *pray* with her.

5. Start a little prayer group of two or three whom you can cheer and help. You'll be cheered and helped too!

6. Organize a volunteer housecleaning pool to go out every other week or once a month to somebody who needs you.

7. Have a lending library of books of real spiritual food.

8. Be the first of a group in your church to be known as the WOTTs (Women of Titus Two), and see what happens (something will).

"Say not you cannot gladden, elevate, and set free; that you have nothing of the grace of influence; that all you have to give is at the most only common bread and water. Give yourself to your Lord for the service of men with what you have. Cannot He change water into wine? Cannot He make stammering words to be instinct [imbued, filled, charged] with saving power? Cannot He change trembling efforts to help into deeds of strength? Cannot He still, as of old, enable you in all your personal poverty 'to make many rich'? God has need of thee for the service of thy fellow men. He has a work for thee to do. To find out what it is, and then to do it, is at once thy supremist duty and thy highest wisdom. 'Whatsoever He saith unto you, do it.'" (Canon George Body, b. 1840)

Letters

Here is one who has, in an unusual way, answered God's call.

"After four long years of unexplainable, puzzling infertility, God surprised us with joy in pregnancy. During those years of yielding to God my heart's desire for more children, I knew that in His withholding, God is wise above my finite thinking, and loves me with an everlasting love. Yet each time my period came, I cried in surrender and began sewing for other children besides my own. The aides in my grandma's nursing home so needed the touch of God's love, so I sewed for their children and told them of the personal God who loves them and compels His own to give. Our rich Heavenly Father always provided enough for my own and enough to give. God blessed and honored my staying within my husband's budget of \$100 per child per year for physical needs and \$220 per month for fabric, food, and gas. I prayed, 'Lord, just provide enough for our necessities and plenty to pour into the love of others.' Often I sent clothes anonymously to those who might be offended, with a note of God's care to encourage. . . . It is His love that brings wholeness into my once fragmented life. I will never forget from what and how He has saved me."

Recommended Reading

E. Herman: *Creative Prayer*. A spiritual classic, written before World War I. Forward Movement Publications, 3024 Springboro St., Cincinnati, OH 45202, paperback \$2.00.

Darlene Rose: *Evidence Not Seen*. The riveting true story of the difference Christ made in a World War II prison camp. Harper and Row, \$13.95.

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Many thanks to all who responded to my uncertainty about continuing the Newsletter. I'll keep it up as long as I can. One young woman wrote:

"My parents died years ago and I think I depend on you for the same straight talk that I used to get from my mother. . . . I suspect you have two groups of readers: the first, spiritually strong women who read every word you write, nodding in agreement with every paragraph, and who then say, 'Amen, Sister!' and the second, spiritually wavering women who need constant roadsigns to guide them to the Celestial City. Of course our Lord is all sufficient in this regard, but I firmly believe He uses you (and others) to help."

The Solace

Kathleen R. Lewis

I am waiting, Lord, on Thee,
Show me what You want for me.
I am resting; Thou art doing.
I am listening; Thou art wooing.
In the beauty of Thy will,
Draw me close, my being still.

I am trusting, Lord, in Thee,
Show the path I cannot see.
I am foll'wing; Thou art leading.
I am hung'ring; Thou are feeding.
While I yield, though through my tears,
Pour Your comfort, calm my fears.

I am resting, Lord, in Thee,
Keep my eyes on Calvary.
I am praying; Thou art giving.
I am dying; thou art living.
Not my will, but Thine instead,
Poured-out wine, and broken bread.

Do Not Forecast Grief

Sitting one still and sunny afternoon in a tiny chapel on an island in the South I thought I heard someone enter. A young woman was

weeping quietly. After a little time I asked if I could help. She confided her fears for the future—what if her husband should die? Or one of her children? What if money ran out?

All our fears represent in some form, I believe, the fear of death, common to all of us. But is it our business to pry into what may happen tomorrow? It is a difficult and painful exercise which saps the strength and uses up the time given us *today*. Once we give ourselves up to God shall we attempt to get hold of what can never belong to us—*tomorrow*? Our lives are His, our times in His hand, He is Lord over what *will* happen, never mind what *may* happen. When we prayed "Thy will be done," did we suppose He did not hear us? He heard indeed, and daily makes our business His, and partakes of our lives. If my life is once surrendered, all is well. Let me not grab it back, as though it were in peril in *His* hand but would be safer in *mine*!

Today is mine. Tomorrow is none of my business. If I peer anxiously into the fog of the future I will strain my spiritual eyes so that I will not see clearly what is required of me now.

"Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof"—and the work thereof. The evil is not a part of the yoke Jesus asks us to take. Our work is, and He takes it with us. I will overextend myself if I assume anything more.

God chains the dog till night; wilt loose the
chain
And wake thy sorrow?
Wilt thou forestall it, and now grieve
tomorrow,
And then again
Grieve over freshly all thy pain?

Either grief will not come, or if it must,
Do not forecast;
And while it cometh, it is almost past.
Away, distrust;
My God hath promis'd; He is just.

(George Herbert, from "The Discharge")

Travel Schedule: September-December 1989

September 23, 24 Lexington, SC; Presbyterian Church, (803)359-9501.

September 28-30 Del City, OK; First Southern Baptist Church, (405)732-1300.

October 5, 6 San Bernardino, CA; Campus Crusade staff women.

October 21 Spokane, WA; Moody Bible Institute seminar, (312)329-4000.

October 26 Grand Rapids, MI; Calvary Church, (616)956-9377.

October 27-29 Madison, WI; Buckeye Evangelical Free Church, 222-8586.

November 4 Charlotte, NC; Glad Tidings radio ministry banquet, (704) 536-7062.

November 7 S. Hamilton, MA; Gordon-Conwell Seminary, pastors and wives workshop, (617)468-7111.

November 10 Quakertown, PA; Crisis Pregnancy Center, (215)538-3180.

November 11 Princeton, NJ; Presbyterian Church, (609)443-7484.

November 18 Nashua, NH; women's breakfast, Vilma Zuliani, (603)883-5192.

December 29, 30 Hamilton, Ontario; Student Mission Advance, (416)523-0682.

Prayer

- For my radio talks, and each speaking engagement on the itinerary, that my words may be His words, spoken faithfully and with grace.
- For women to hear the call of God to offer themselves, their time, their strength to other women who need their help.

Keep in Touch

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European Diary

Sitting in the third-floor guest room of Kees and Toos Rosies' old house in Heverlee, Belgium last June, I was trembling a little as I tried to finish preparing for the first talk of our European trip. Nervousness because of having to speak has not much plagued me, but I had been pondering for several days a statement I had read:

"Only the man who has died to himself and risen in the charity of the Holy Spirit can be present to others and bring them salvation."

It was to be an interesting trip, touching six countries, but I prayed that it would be not merely that. Many of you prayed for me, too, and I want to thank you, from my heart. Second Corinthians 11:1 came true, I think: "You also must help us by prayer so that many will give thanks on our behalf for the blessing granted to us in answer to many prayers." We were conscious of the Lord's accompanying presence all the way, and of His supply of what we did not have and could not do.

Of course I can't give you a day-by-day account, just a few vignettes. A croissant breakfast for Flemish-speaking women at the Belgian Evangelical Mission (the one my parents were working under when I was born in Brussels). Toos, an exuberant Dutch mother of four whom we had met two years ago in Holland, was my (*superb*) translator. An afternoon meeting by translation into French, and dinner with former director of the Belgian Bible Institute, George Winston, with whom I more or less grew up (we used to sing duets together and our parents thought we'd make a great match!), whom I had not seen for forty-one years. There were several opportunities to speak in English to interna-

tional groups before we went on to:

Black Forest Academy in Germany. There was a minute or so of tenseness as we boarded the train when I managed (I've no idea *how*) to fall between the train and the platform but caught myself by the elbows on step and edge. Kees, however, lunged to save me, and fell right to the tracks. A couple of months earlier a student had done the same thing and lost both legs. Neither Kees nor I was injured in the slightest (thank you again for praying—the angels were alert), but I did put a teensy hole in a good skirt.

Oh, the cleanliness, order, and efficiency of Germany—it did my soul much good. Crisp, impeccable linen on the breakfast table. Gleaming windows. Scrubbed floors. Nary a gum wrapper in the streets of Kandern. It was cherry season in the Forest, and near our pension we were allowed to pick as many as we could eat there (not to be carried home). The (mostly American) students of the Academy were open and surprisingly receptive. Grade school children stood in line to hug me and even the high school boys came to hear me talk about Passion and Purity. The junior high kids—so bright, polite, and sweet—prepared excellent questions to ask me.

Dear Erna Martens, one of those indispensable salt-of-the-earth single women (she had arranged much of our tour), sent us off on the train to Vienna supplied with fresh rolls, ham, pastries, fruit, fruitjuice and chocolate bars—and money to eat in the dining car. A superfluity of kindnesses.

The train took us from Basel to Vienna through the Tyrol. Spectacularly beautiful day, velvet meadows (with wild flowers bedight), sleek taupe-colored cows with melodious bells, neat villages, each with its red-and-white-spired church on a pinnacle; houses and hay fields at altitudes you wouldn't believe (old men peacefully turning hay with pitchforks); great gray crags and glistening snow peaks on all sides, and

everywhere cleanliness and flowers and sunshine (Heaven will be like that, won't it!).

Vienna. What can one say of such a fascinating city? Won't try. Many meetings there, some by German translation, some in English (e.g. a lunchtime group comprising many nationalities at the UN). Heidi Van Dam of Operation Mobilisation was our organizer there, Barbara Silvis our hostess. To the Vienna Symphony one evening—flashing bows, rhythmically bending bodies, and the most marvelous little conductor, an engine of energy, pumping, swaying, jumping up and down, and ceaselessly smiling, as he conducted (O bliss!) Mozart.

On June 15, boat to Budapest. Our first glimpse of Eastern Europe as we passed Bratislava, Czechoslovakia. Lovely old buildings, a great stone lion; a Hungarian city on our right, ugly modern hi-rises. On the wharf in Budapest stood Anna Marie Kool, a young Dutch woman, smiling and holding up a copy of my book, *Through Gates*. She was, for us as for others, "broken bread and poured-out wine," another of those indispensables whom we quickly came to love. She tried to teach us a bit of Hungarian (I can still say *Isten aldjón*, God bless you), and was our constant servant. An old lady in a wheel chair told me she had prayed for me in 1956; another offered me a chocolate bar ("Please accept this gift from one who has prayed for you"); yet another sang to me (in Hungarian) the Aaronic blessing. What would that do to you? A pastor had us to his house for a little supper of cold pork, bread, and tea. "I thought I would hear from you a missionary success story," he said. "Instead I heard a message much more important to us here" (I had spoken from 2 Tim 1:12). And how shall I tell you of Sara and Dora and Kornel, Krista and Sandor and others? I can't. But they are people who have found their way into my heart and my prayers.

Back to Vienna (we watched people waltz and we ate lunch in the Vienna Woods); more meetings in Eisenstadt and Linz, accompanied by my German translator, an American named Jo Neukirchner, married to an Austrian. We "clicked" at once, it seemed. As we drove along the Danube she got out a hymn book and asked me to sing old gospel songs such as "Loved with Everlasting Love" and "Out of My Bondage." When

we came to a robbers' castle, although I was wearing my "speaking dress," I put on my walking shoes and we climbed the steep hill, then bought cheese and rolls in the little village of Wachau, sat at an outdoor table in lovely vineyard country.

In Salzburg (a wonderful chunk of the Old World with church bells and cobblestones and castles and monasteries and things), a young couple expecting their first child told me they would not forget my talk on the Christian family. Visited Hitler's hideaway, Berchtesgaden—and lost our camera with the one exposed film we'd taken. Drove on to Winterthur, Switzerland for a women's meeting in a casino. En route back to Vienna Lars (by the most astonishing linguistic gyrations—he understands much more German than I do, since his mother tongue is Norwegian) found us a little lunch place way up a most unlikely-looking dirt road. We sat on a deck in sunshine—singing birds, towering mountains, fir trees, a plate of potatoes and wurst. Drove over Albergpass—clouds, tundra, free-range cattle, and the same cold, wet freshness of the high Andes of Ecuador; great, thick, feathery firs, pale slashes of scree, and steel braces to prevent snowslides from blocking roads.

Last of all was a trip to Czechoslovakia. You can figure out why I can't tell you much of that memorable visit. It is disquieting to see TV monitors on the corners of buildings, and police in unexpected places. Things are very precarious there for Christians, but I was allowed to speak in small churches and meet with eager young people, one of whom asked me for names of foreign missionaries they might pray for and write to. Joni Tada was there not long before on an "official" visit, no holds barred, and the impact of her testimony, they told me, was enormous.

I confess that I had been apprehensive about

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going to Europe. It was too long away from home (oh the work that piles up!), too many places and languages (I spoke by translation into five), too little information about what would be expected of me in some of them (in one the average was almost five talks per day). But I kept thinking of Amy Carmichael's verse when she sailed for Japan: "When He putteth forth His sheep, *He goeth before.*" As always, God was better than all my fears. He went before. He prepared the way and He prepared us, and showed us every day how great is His faithfulness. *Why do I ever fear?*

The Effectual Fervent Prayer of a Mother

"Thou sentest Thine hand from above, and drewest my soul out of that profound darkness—my mother, that faithful one, weeping to Thee for me, more than mothers weep the bodily deaths of their children. For she, by that faith and spirit which she had from Thee, discerned the death wherein I lay, and Thou heardest her, O Lord; Thou heardest her, and despisedst not her tears, when streaming down, they watered the ground under her eyes [he alludes here to that devout manner of the Eastern ancients, who used to lie flat on their faces in prayer] in every place where she prayed; yea Thou heardest her . . . Thine ears were towards her heart. O Thou God omnipotent, who so caredst for every one of us, as if Thou carest for him only; and so for all, as if they were but one!"

(Confessions of St. Augustine)

Note from Lars

The first time you heard from me it was, I trust, a lowkeyed appeal for financial support and you responded. I've said thank you twice—for *not* having to ask. Let me thank you again.

Being married to E.E. has its rewards and many enjoyable and amusing moments—as when someone asks, "How are you, Mr. Elliot?" Sometimes I say, "I'm Mr. Elliot III, but we're the Grens in private." My wife once got a card that began "Dear Ms. Elliot or whoever's wife you are now." I got a letter addressed to Dr. Addison Leitch %

Lars Gren. Add of course was E.E.'s husband #2 who died in '73. Never responded to that letter. I did have a dream once where I saw Add in the lobby of a hotel and he said to me "How's it going, son?" I had no reply.

It's the rewards that bring me to my purpose. My reward is meeting a lot of you at different places where E. speaks, and helping her overall work. Doing this took me to Hungary in June. There I was introduced to an unusual man who told me of the amazing changes in the country. Freedom of movement, freedom to bring Christian books in, and now freedom to print Christian books in Hungary. This man is a publisher who has a team of translators who have been working for this opportunity. He has *Shadow of the Almighty* and *Through Gates of Splendor* ready to go to print. You guessed it: funds are needed. He wants to print 10,000 copies for \$20,000. You may ask how much profit will he make? I said he was unusual. Cost of production will be \$2 per book and they will be sold for \$1. The average wage in Hungary is \$100 per month and a person needs more than one job to make it. They have already printed books by George Mueller, John Stott, Joni Eareckson Tada and others.

Christians in Hungary are *hungry*—for good solid books. My publisher friend asked what I might give him, so I'm offering you a chance to be a part of this project as I will be. If you'd like to make a tax deductible contribution, make your check payable to: Grace Church (be sure to mark it "Hungarian Printing Project") and mail it to: Grace Church, Attn: Bob Kingsbury, 3021 Blume Dr., Los Alamitos, CA 90720. **DO NOT SEND YOUR CHECK TO THE NEWSLETTER.**

Last week a lady suggested that my wife should write about me. I said that since my wife always seems to write about husbands who are dead I'd just as soon stay out of print for awhile. Anyway I do enjoy hearing stories about #1 and #2.

E. mentioned my glaucoma in a past letter. I want to thank you for your prayers and notes. Laser surgery was done on my left eye and it appears that it will help lower the pressure as it did in the right one. So I thank God and continue taking my 10 drops and 2 squirts of jell in my eyes per day. Thank you for your response.

Little Colleen

Last April Valerie found her two-year-old (now three) Colleen unconscious on the bathroom floor. A CAT scan and EEG revealed no abnormalities, but she had three more seizures. Epilepsy is the diagnosis, a form halfway between Grand Mal and Petit Mal. Her neurologist has said that in her case it is possible that she will outgrow this, perhaps between five and seven years of age. Of course we pray for healing, and would ask you to join us. She is on phenobarbitol, which controls the seizures but causes mild hyperactivity, a trial at times to the family.

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November 7 S. Hamilton, MA; Gordon-Conwell Seminary, pastors and wives workshop, (617)468-7111.

November 10 Quakertown, PA; Crisis Pregnancy Center, (215)538-3180.

November 11 Princeton, NJ; Presbyterian Church, (609)987-1166 or 799-1269.

November 18 Nashua, NH; women's breakfast, Vilma Zuliani, (603)883-5192.

December 28 Philadelphia, PA; Campus Crusade for Christ, (413)733-8100.

December 29, 30 Hamilton, Ontario; Student Mission Advance, (416)523-0682.

January 29-February 1 Kerrville, TX; Laity Lodge, women's retreat, (512)896-2505.

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Little Things

When we were growing up our parents taught us, by both word and example, to pay attention to little things. If you do a thing at all, do it thoroughly—make the sheets really *smooth* on the bed, sweep all the corners and move all the chairs when you sweep the kitchen, roll the toothpaste tube neatly and put the cap back on, clean the hair out of your brush each time you use it, hang your towel straight on the rod, fold your napkin and put it into the silver ring before you leave the table, never wet your finger when you turn pages. They kept promises made to us as faithfully as they kept those made to adults. They taught us to do the same. You didn't accept an invitation to a party and then not turn up, or agree to help with the Vacation Bible School and back out because a more interesting activity presented itself. The only financial debt my parents ever incurred was a mortgage on a house, which my father explained was in a special class because it was *real estate* which would always have value.

When I went to boarding school the same principles I had been taught at home were emphasized. There was a hallway with small oriental rugs which we called "Character Hall" because the headmistress, Mrs. DuBose, could look down that hall from the armchair where she sat in the lobby and spot any student who kicked up the corner of a rug and did not replace it. She would call out to correct him, "It's those tiny little things in your life which will crack you up when you get out of this school!" In the *little* things our character was revealed. Our response would make or break us. "Don't go around with a Bible under your arm if you don't sweep under the bed," she said, for she would have no pious talk coming out of a messy room.

"Great thoughts go best with common duties. Whatever therefore may be your office regard it as a fragment in an immeasurable ministry of love" (Bishop Brooke Foss Westcott, b.1825).

It is not easy nowadays to find children or adults who are dependable, careful, thorough, and faithful. So many lives seem honeycombed with small failures, neglectful of the little things that make the difference between order and chaos. Perhaps it is because they are so seldom taught that visible things are signs of an invisible reality; that common duties may be "an immeasurable ministry of love." The spiritual training of souls must be inseparable from practical disciplines, as Jesus so plainly taught; "The man who can be trusted in little things can be trusted in great; the man who is dishonest in little things will be dishonest in great. If then you cannot be trusted with money, that tainted thing, who will trust you with genuine riches? And if you cannot be trusted with what is not yours, who will give you what is your very own?" (Luke 16:10-12, Jerusalem Bible. The footnote to "your very own" says, "Jesus is speaking of the most intimate possessions a man can have; these are spiritual.")

Homeschooling

A reader asks me, as grandmother and outside observer of homeschooled children, to answer her questions. Is *any* school out of the question for a Christian?

While homeschooling is an alternative I would urge all parents carefully to consider and earnestly to pray about, I would not say that a regular school is "out of the question for a Christian." I went to public schools myself through the ninth grade (public schools were quite different fifty years ago from what they are now, I think), and then to a Christian boarding school, mainly because I wanted Christian friends. There was no such thing as a Christian day school that we knew of.

I had a good many misgivings when my daughter and her husband decided to try homeschooling. Would the children receive the *best* education this way? Could Valerie possibly cope with that, in addition to all her other “mothering” duties? Would the children rebel? I have been happily surprised at the “proof of the pudding”—*e.g.* when the oldest, Walter, finished second grade he tested at twelfth grade reading level. The rate at which the children learn is astonishing when given individual attention and allowed to work at their own speed. There were many interruptions and distractions with three pre-school-age children in the house, but the work seems to get done, perhaps not always triumphantly but somehow.

But what about the argument that Christian children ought to be in public schools sharing the gospel, as salt and light? my correspondent asks. That seems to me an exceedingly heavy burden to place on a child. A Christian child can witness just by being obedient, diligent, and honest, of course, but I would not make the decision to place him there for that reason. The importance of strong nurturing at home, without separation from parents during the crucial first eight years or so, can hardly be exaggerated in today’s world. But again, this is a matter for the parents themselves to decide before God.

A fascinating book which not only allayed my fears but opened to me compelling reasons for homeschooling that I had not thought of before is David and Micki Colfax’s *Homeschooling for Excellence*, Warner Books (available through your local Christian bookstore). They homeschooled four sons from kindergarten through high school. All four went to Harvard. Read the book before you make a decision for your family! It’s an eye-opener.

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Gateway to Joy

A sign painter from North Carolina wrote to say that he and his crew listen to my radio program every afternoon. “She could talk about assembling a bike and I’d still be refreshed in spirit!” Another man, on his way to his lawyer to begin divorce proceedings, tuned in, listened, and decided to turn around and go home. Isn’t it nice to know *men* are willing to listen? I’ve been surprised at the number who have written or called. Will you keep on praying for Jan (who is a newlywed now—she married Lauren Wismer, an attorney who is also organist in her church in Lincoln, in November) and me and all those who help with book and tape orders, answer mail, edit programs, and do everything else that a radio program requires? For stations in your area see the November/December 1989 Newsletter, or write to Box 82500, Lincoln, NE 68501.

Prayer and Feelings

Our adversary the devil has many tricks to keep us from praying effectively. C.S. Lewis gives us a glimpse at some of them in his *Screwtape Letters*, in which an older demon is instructing a younger one in a few of those tricks:

“Whenever they are attending to the Enemy [*i.e.*, God] Himself we are defeated, but there are ways of preventing them from doing so. The simplest is to turn their gaze away from Him toward themselves. Keep them watching their own minds and trying to produce *feelings* there by the action of their own wills. When they meant to ask Him for charity, let them, instead, start trying to manufacture charitable feelings for themselves and not notice that this is what they are doing. When they meant to pray for courage, let them really be trying to feel brave. When they say they are praying for forgiveness, let them be trying to feel forgiven. Teach them to estimate the value of each prayer by their success in producing the desired feeling; and never let them suspect how much success or failure of that kind depends on whether they are well or ill, fresh or tired, at the moment” (*The Screwtape Letters*, pp. 19-21).

A Cesspool Transfigured

My brother Dave wrote of the Lausanne II Congress in Manila that the highpoint was the brief testimony of a Chinese who had spent eighteen years in hard labor camp.

"Because he was a Christian they wanted to give him the worst job in camp. So he was assigned to clean out the cesspool every day, as the Chinese cart off the waste as fertilizer. There was only one cesspool for the whole large camp, so it always overflowed on the ground around it. Therefore he had to literally wade through human excrement to get to the pool to empty it. But he said, 'I rejoiced at this, because I was able to get alone with the Lord in a way that was not possible for anyone else.' He began to think of the cesspool and surrounding filth as his garden where, as he waded through the waste, he would sing, 'I come to the garden alone.' I used to think of that as a sickly sweet, rather sentimental song. But my whole concept of it changed as I heard him quote the whole song and apply it to his situation: 'And He walks with me, and He talks with me, and He tells me I am His own; and the joy we share as we tarry there none other has ever known.' Put that in the context of wading through sewage! Then he sang the whole song to us in Chinese, and I doubt that there was a dry eye in the auditorium. . . . I felt unworthy even to shake his hand."

"Inclusive" Language

In many churches today the hymns, prayers, and Scriptures are revised to make the language "inclusive." This means that whenever the generic term *man* is used it is deleted or replaced by a word like person, people, others, men and women, etc. A line of the grand old hymn, "Holy, Holy, Holy"—"though the eye of sinful man Thy glory may not see"—has been revised to read, "though the sinful human eye," which of course is a Manichean (see below) heresy. It stops me cold every time we sing it. And at Harvard University professors demand the use of "non-sexist" language such as (I'm not making this up) the "freshperson" class. Is it mere ignorance of the meaning of *generic* which produces this outrageous mutilation of

our glorious language, or is it a far more insidious and calculating determination to alter our vision of the nature God created when He designed man and woman? My brother Tom Howard explained his objections to "inclusive" language. Here's part of what he said:

"I use the traditional word 'men' because I am not a Manichaeon (a Persian system of belief which held that the soul is good and the body evil). The ancient edifice of language judges us, not we it. I am not prepared to leach away the almost sacramental solidity of words by expunging the rich and protohistoric 'men' and 'women' in favor of the eviscerate 'persons.' Remember, the word 'man' somehow bespeaks all of us mortals and sinners; and the word 'woman' bespeaks us *as we receive* the approaches of the Divine. You and I must accept the mystery of our gender, and wear it with dignity and grace."

A Good Sleeping Pill

When I was a little girl this poem hung on the wall of the room where I slept in our summer cottage. I learned it then and often go to sleep on it. A framed copy, illustrated by my brother Jim (forgive me for mentioning three of my brothers, all in one issue of the Newsletter!) hangs now on my guestroom wall. I wish I knew the author.

Sleep sweetly in this quiet room,
O thou, who'er thou art,
And let no mournful yesterdays
Disturb thy peaceful heart;
Nor let tomorrow scare thy rest
With thoughts of coming ill,
Thy Maker is thy changeless Friend,
His love surrounds thee still.
Forget thyself and all the world,
Put out each feverish light,
The stars are watching overhead—
Sleep sweetly, then. Good night.

Prayer Requests

- For the fight against abortion and drug imports.
- For men and women to lay down their lives as spiritual fathers and mothers.

Escape from Rape

Two letters have come telling me horror stories of attempted rape. One woman was at home vacuuming in the morning when suddenly a man appeared in the living room and hustled her out to a nearby woods. Another was sound asleep when a man broke the apartment door and entered her bedroom. Both women used the only defense they had: prayer. Both prayed out loud for the Lord's protection and deliverance, and in both cases the men "lost interest" and fled, the second into the arms of the police who had been called by a neighbor.

Another friend was jumped as she walked to her car late one night in a shopping center. Two men forced her into the front seat, demanded

her keys, and headed for the stateline. She prayed loudly and continuously for *them* until, completely unnerved by this strange behavior, they put her out near a motel—but not before she asked if she might take her packages from the back seat!

"More things are wrought by prayer than this world dreams of."

Keep in Touch

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February 16-18 Sedona, AZ; women's retreat, Jan Webb, (602)482-5604.

March 1-4 Tucson, AZ; Casa Adobes Baptist Church World Missions Fair, (602)297-7238.

March 8-18 Scotland; **19** Cambridge, England.

March 30-April 1 Toronto, Ontario; Alliance Women's Retreat, Louella Gould, (416) 639-9615.

April 1 Willowdale, Ontario; Bayview Glen Church.

April 20, 21 Concord, CA; Nazarene Women's Retreat, Barbara Latter, (415)932-1202 or 935-0158 (home).

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April 26 Atlanta, GA; Mt. Paran Church of God, Mel Holmes, (404)261-0720.

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April 29 Matthews, NC; Church of the Savior missions banquet, (704)882-3453.

The Elisabeth Elliot Newsletter

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The Elisabeth Elliot Newsletter

March/April 1990

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Virginity

My heart goes out to the countless women in their thirties and forties who write to me in real agony of soul because they are still single. There were two letters in this morning's mail. One said, "I am a Christian woman thirty years of age and I am facing the possibility of a life of singleness." The other: "I am forty-one years old. I never dreamed I would not be married—I've been praying for a husband ever since I was sixteen."

This phenomenon, due in part, I suppose, to what demographers are calling "the postponed generation" (the Baby Boomers, born between 1946 and 1964) has reached catastrophic proportions. Men postpone marriage ten or twenty years beyond what used to be considered the marrying age. When the mirror tells them they're fast aging they decide it's time to settle down. Feeling that a young wife will lend a certain assurance that they are not quite over the hill, they pass up women of their own age. Everywhere my husband and I go we meet lovely Christian women, beautifully dressed, deeply spiritual, thoroughly feminine—and *single*. They long for marriage and children. But what is it with the men? Are they blind to feminine pulchritude, deaf to God's call, numb to natural desire? I am reminded of the conversation I had with Gladys Aylward thirty years ago. She had been a missionary in China for six or seven years before she ever thought of wanting a husband. When a British couple came to work near her she began to watch the wonderful thing they had in marriage, and to desire it for herself. Being a woman of prayer she prayed—a straightforward request that God would call a man from England, send him straight out to China, and have him propose. She leaned toward me on the sofa on which we were sitting, her black eyes

snapping, her bony little forefinger jabbing at my face. "Elisabeth," she said, "I *believe* God answers prayer! He *called* him," then, in a whisper of keen intensity, "but he *never came*."

Where are the holy men of God willing to shoulder the full responsibility of manhood, to take the risks and make the sacrifices of courting and winning a wife, marrying her and fathering children in obedience to the command to be fruitful? While the Church has been blessed by men willing to remain single *for the sake of the Kingdom* (and I do not regard lightly such men who are seriously called), isn't it obvious that God calls most men to marriage? By not marrying, those whom He calls are disobeying Him, and thus are denying the women He meant for them to marry the privileges of being wife and mother. (See my Newsletter, "A Man Moves Toward Marriage," July/Aug '88.)

But what shall I say to the women who write to me in such sorrow and perplexity? First of all, it is not our job to set about trying to coerce the men. They must answer to God, who made *them* the initiators. But a woman must answer to God by her acceptance of singleness, seeking to know Him in it and converting it into good by a peaceful YES, LORD! rather than into real evil by a rebellious NO!

At lunch today Lars said, "I'll tell you what would change things fast—if *all* women decided they would not 'give out,' I mean give men what they're looking for but are unwilling to make a commitment for."

One young woman wrote in desperation, agreeing with what I believe is God's order, "YEAH! That's the way it should be!! Unfortunately, that's not the way it *is*!"

God's order is not changed by men's (or women's) disobedience. It stands as He ordained. In the long run we gain nothing and lose much if we take things into our own hands. A woman may "gain" a husband, of course. The more obvious she makes herself, the better her

chances seem to be in today's society. But a man who is attracted to such a woman, and a woman who is out to "get" men are not submissive to God's order, it seems to me. Let's not follow that pattern. To follow His is to lose nothing, in the long run, and to gain much—"lose your *life*," as Jesus put it, "for My sake, and you'll find it." Few seem to believe that enough to stake their all on it.

Is there a formula which will "work"? I am asked. My parents' formula "worked" for me: they prayed for spouses for us six; they taught us to pray and trust God. Mother told me, "Keep them at arm's length, don't chase them." This will not "work" in the sense of providing a surefire method of snaring a husband (I never *snares* any one of the three God has given me—He brought them to me in most astonishing and unlikely ways). But it is in keeping with a Christian woman's modesty and willingness to have what God wants for her. She is not putting hooks out, but rather doing quietly the work God has given her to do, confident that His promise can be trusted, "No good thing will He withhold from them that walk uprightly" (Psalm 84:11). If marriage is a good thing, God will see to it that you receive that gift. Only He knows whether it is good for you. Are you willing to be and have what He wants you to be and have, and nothing else? Will you surrender all your own hopes, dreams, and plans to Him?

"That's easy for you to say," some answer. "Look what God has given you." Yes, but I did not know that He would ever give me a husband when I gave Him my hopes, dreams, and plans. I *did not know*. I had to surrender to Him, believing that whatever He gave or did not give would be *best*.

Friends offer all sorts of advice to single women: don't be too aggressive or too backward, too friendly or too hard-to-get, too intellectual or too dumb, too earthy or too heavenly. Hang around till the bitter end of the singles barbecue—he might want to take you home. Or, don't go to the singles barbecue at all. Just stay home and read your Bible and pray. It's terribly confusing.

"Is my Father in charge here or am I supposed to take over?" He is in charge if you want Him to be. He will not invade your freedom to choose to "take over." But if you want His way, nothing

more, nothing less, and nothing *else*, you've got to leave it to Him. It's easy to be deceived here—telling ourselves we really want His will, but meaning "I want it so long as it includes marriage!"

"I don't know how to play the game," wrote one frustrated girl. Nobody does. It's chaos, frustration, confusion, and emotional devastation. It was never meant to be a game, so don't try to play it. Leave it all in the Hands that were wounded for you.

Another who was trying to take the burden onto her own slim shoulders said it was making her "just plain sick." I do not wonder at that. She is taking burdens He never meant her to bear. "Come to Me," He says, "all who are tired and overburdened, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn of Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart." It's all a question of utter surrender in love for God above all others. "Everything that happens fits into a pattern for good to them that love God," Romans 8:28 tells us. Loving God means a final and unreserved YES to all of His holy will, and if His holy will is singleness, that too fits the pattern and the pattern is good. Selah.

"How can a Christian single woman enter into the mystery of Christ and the Church if she never experiences marriage?" is the question of a very thoughtful young woman.

The gift of virginity, given to everyone to offer back to God for His use, is a priceless and irreplaceable gift. It can be offered in the pure sacrifice of marriage, or it can be offered in the sacrifice of a life's celibacy. Does this sound just too, too high and holy? But think for a moment—because the virgin has never known a man, she is free to concern herself wholly with the Lord's affairs, as Paul said in 1 Corinthians 7, "and her aim in life is to make herself holy, in body and spirit." She keeps her heart as the Bride of Christ in a very special sense, and offers to

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the Heavenly Bridegroom alone all that she is and has. When she gives herself willingly to Him in love she has no need to justify herself to the world or to Christians who plague her with questions and suggestions. In a way not open to the married woman her daily "living sacrifice" is a powerful and humble witness, radiating love. I believe she may enter into the "mystery" more deeply than the rest of us.

"How can she enter into the mystery of the Father loving His children if she never has children?" But she *can* have children! She may be a spiritual mother, as was Amy Carmichael, by the very offering of her singleness, transformed for the good of far more children than a natural mother may produce. All is received and made holy by the One to whom it is offered.

There. I've taken nearly the whole Newsletter for this subject, but my correspondence files tell me it is a pressing subject indeed, and I do long to help in any way I can those who find no help or comfort or support whatsoever from the world, and, alas, precious little sometimes from the Church itself.

"If you had been of the world," said our Savior, "the world would love its own; but because you are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you" (John 15:19). Remember this, too—"The world and all its passionate desires will one day disappear, but the one who is following the will of God is part of the Permanent and cannot die" (1 John 2:17).

Prayer Requests

- Pray for Christians in the newly-opened Eastern Bloc countries, that they may be strong to witness, in new political freedom, of the freedom Christ wants to give. Pray that God will help them to keep steady and clear their focus on Him.
- I need your prayers so very, very much. I'm aware sometimes of battle with unseen forces, tempting me to carelessness, hardness, discouragement, self-indulgence (to name only *some* of the sins).

Child-Parent Relations

(Dan Tompkins, fourteen-year-old son of my dear friend Barb of Tucson, Arizona, wrote this for his school paper:)

One of the problems that I and many of the students come across is child-parent relations. God has told us to honor and obey our parents (Eph 6:1-3). Here are some things to keep in mind:

1. Remember that you're the child and they're the parent.
2. Realize that parents know what you are going through. They've been there.
3. Understand their side and their imperfection.
4. Cooperate (they're trying to help you!).
5. Communicate without yelling and be open and truthful.
6. Be determined to clear things up.
7. Say you love them. Accept their decision—it's for the better!

"How I hated discipline. . . I would not obey my teachers or listen to my instructors. I have come to the brink of utter ruin in the midst of the whole assembly" (Prov 5:12-14).

Recommended Reading

Alice von Hildebrand: *By Love Refined* (Manchester NH, Sophia Institute Press, 1989, \$14.95). Warm, sympathetic letters to a young bride, packed with practical wisdom about almost every potential marital stumbling block.

A Finished Holiness

It is the will of God that every one of us should be *holy* (see 1 Thess 4:3). Of Janet Erskine Stuart someone wrote: "Her state of suffering combined with such patience and sweetness, and such lavish spending of herself for souls was a silent but forcible witness to her finished holiness."

Correction from September 1989

In the September/October 1989 issue I recommended the book *Creative Prayer*, from Forward Movement Publications, but the wrong address and price was given. The book may still be ordered from Forward Movement; the correct address is 412 Sycamore St., Cincinnati, OH 45202. The correct price is \$2.75, which includes postage.

Keep in Touch

Are you moving? Getting married? Leaving school? *Don't forget to send us your change of address.* The post office DOES NOT FORWARD third class mail like the Newsletter. *Please remove your address label below and send it with your new address to:* The Elisabeth Elliot Newsletter, Post Office Box 7711, Ann Arbor, MI 48107.

Travel Schedule, March-May 1990

March 8-18 Scotland.

March 19 Cambridge, England.

March 30-April 1 Toronto, Ontario; Alliance Women's Retreat, Louella Gould, (416) 639-9615.

April 1 Willowdale, Ontario; Bayview Glen Church.

April 2 Scarborough, Ontario; Dayspring Christian Fellowship, (416)752-7520.

April 20, 21 Concord, CA; Nazarene Women's Retreat, Barbara Latter, (415)932-1202 or 935-0158 (home).

April 23 Laguna Niguel, CA; Aliso Creek Presbyterian Church, women's retreat, Valerie Shepard, (714)951-1468.

April 26 Atlanta, GA; Mt. Paran Church of God, Mel Holmes, (404) 261-0720.

April 27, 28 Raleigh, NC; Providence Baptist Church, Whole Woman Event.

April 29 Matthews, NC; Church of the Savior missions banquet, (704)882-3453.

May 1, 2 Lincoln, NE; Back to the Bible 50th anniversary conference, (402)474-4567.

May 7 Minneapolis, MN; Marie Sandvik Center, (612)870-9617.

May 17, 18 Albany, GA; women's seminar, Dr. Wm. Eidenire, (912)436-6612.

May 19 Huntsville, AL; Whitesburg Baptist Church.

May 20 Morrow, GA; Clayton Community Church.

May 23 Collingswood, NJ; Women Alive, Dot Worth, (609)858-6750

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Chronicle of a Soul

I kept a five year diary from high school through college, and began spiritual journals during my senior year in college (1948) which I continue to keep. These are chronicles of growth, mental, emotional, and spiritual. It is astounding to go back through them and learn things I had completely forgotten. It is wonderfully faith-strengthening to see that indeed "all the way my Savior leads me," hears my prayers, supplies my needs, teaches me of Himself. As God said to Israel, "Thou shalt *remember* all the way which the Lord thy God led these forty years in the wilderness." My memory is poor. A journal is a record of His faithfulness (and my own faithlessness too—which teaches me to value His grace and mercy). If you decide to begin recording your pilgrimage, buy yourself a notebook (or one of those pretty flowered cloth-bound blank books available in gift and stationery stores) and begin to put down (not necessarily every day):

1. Lessons learned from your reading of Scripture. (If you put these in a journal instead of marking up your Bible, you will find new things each time you read the Bible instead of reading it through the grid of old notes. Worth a try?)

2. Ways in which you intend to apply those lessons in your own life. (Reading your journal later will reveal answers to prayer you would otherwise have overlooked.)

3. Dialogues with the Lord. What you say to Him, what He seems to be saying to you about some problem or issue or need.

4. Quotations from your spiritual reading other than the Bible.

5. Prayers from the words of hymns which you want to make your own.

6. Reasons for thanksgiving. (Caution: when you get into the habit of recording these the list gets out of hand!)

7. Things you're praying about. You might choose to have a separate notebook for this, or an "appendix" in another section of the same book—date on which a prayer was prayed; date on which answered, with space for *how* the answer came in some cases. If you have a family, I would strongly urge you as a family to keep a prayer notebook together. This will help everybody first of all to learn to *pray* about *everything*, instead of merely talking or worrying or arguing. It will also help you to be specific, to hold your requests before the Lord together, and then to note the answers and give thanks together (especially when the answers weren't the ones you were looking for).

As George MacDonald wrote, "No gift unrecognized as coming from God is at its own best: therefore many things that God would gladly give us, things even that we need because we are, must wait until we ask for them, that we may know whence they come: when in all gifts we find Him, then in Him we shall find all things."

"Where I found Truth, there found I my God, the Truth itself, which since I learnt, I have not forgotten. . . . Too late I loved Thee, O Thou Beauty of ancient days, yet ever new! too late I loved Thee! And behold, Thou wert within, and I abroad, and there I searched for Thee. . . Thou calledst, and shoutedst, and burstest my deafness. Thou flashedst, shonest, and scatteredst my blindness. Thou breathedst odors, and I *drew in breath* and *pant for Thee*. I tasted, and *hunger and thirst*. Thou touchedst me, and I burned for Thy peace." *Confessions*, St. Augustine (*italics his*).

Mail

An unsigned letter came from a man in Atlanta who says he had written me a three-page letter last year. "If a person, male or female, digs deep to share with you, it seems to me that a reply, no matter how brief, would certainly be appropriate."

Lars says, "The alarm goes off at 4:50 a.m., breakfast at 8, lunch at noon, dinner at 6, bed about 8:30. You're saying, 'Gee, that's exciting.' For variety we hear the weather and news while dressing, walk nearly two miles every afternoon, E. tunes in a talkshow sometimes while she fixes dinner (the TV is a 12-incher that sits on the counter). We have no VCR, no answering service. Our 'staff' is a neighbor lady who types and a live-in student who does anything we ask that can fit into his seminary schedule. This is life in Strawberry Cove, and we enjoy it. When I think of what my wife accomplishes it amazes me. She has five major things besides me to think about each day: book (current work-in-progress), correspondence, Newsletter, radio, and next year's speaking schedule. In order for her to do this, I try to cover the telephone. People are sometimes surprised to hear me instead of someone saying, 'One moment please, I'll see if they're in.' I arrange travel, send out book and tape orders, sweep up the floor and vacuum the rugs. Whatever errands there might be I do in the afternoons. By far the greatest burden on E. has been the mail, because she has always felt that every person deserves an answer. Now it has gotten out of hand with radio mail, even though a lot of this is answered by the Gateway to Joy people in Lincoln. Mail that comes here we always read and answer. 'Possum,' as I sometimes call my wife, is a sensitive person, so when the above-quoted letter arrived I didn't want to read it to her because it's not true. The man's first letter may never have reached us. This happens sometimes when mail is sent to publishers, but had the man put his name and address on this one, surely he would have had a reply and more than likely I'd have sent one of E's books or tapes as a peace offering or as throwing a hat into the ring.

"Don't feel bad for our lack of social life, and not being up on sitcoms! When we travel, which we do about a third of the time, our life is turned

upside-down, with non-stop gracious entertainment given to us, and lots of people to meet and talk to, and this we do appreciate and enjoy. 'The lines have fallen to us in pleasant places.' Thank you for your encouragement and prayers for us."

And may I (E.) add first, that Lars doesn't mention *most* of the work he does, and second, that when I can't answer every letter, I do indeed *read* them and *pray* over them. I can't be Ann Landers or King Solomon, but when questions come which I can respond to, and think are of general interest, I'll continue to try from time to time to answer here. Will you still keep praying for me? Will you still offer the cheering word now and again?

The Absence of Feeling in the Devotional Life

"I am sporadic in my devotions," writes a Newsletter reader (who happens to be my daughter!), "though I am up pretty regularly by 5:30 a.m. There are many mornings when my mind and heart are too dull and cold to learn of Him."

Here's part of what I wrote to her: It is in the total absence of feeling that our faith is most faithful and most accurately gauged—if we go on getting up early, putting ourselves faithfully before the Lord whether we feel like it or not, even "just going through the motions," when we know that the deepest desire of our hearts is to know and love the Lord. He knows that deepest desire, and I can look back over the years, remember my own hopelessness and helplessness to drum up any very spiritual feelings when I thought I should have them, and I can see that God was at work all the time, loving me, hearing my cry, shaping me into His image, in spite of my terrible failures and faithlessness. Oh, if you knew how I've repented of my own failures toward you—things I did and things I failed to

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do that I can't bear to think about now, yet God has been merciful, has proved His mercy a thousand times over.

Spiritual writers of long ago have helped me, for example, St. Francis de Sales: "Should you find neither delight nor consolation in meditation, do not be disheartened, but have recourse occasionally to vocal prayer (as opposed to mental or silent), tell your trouble to the Lord, confess your unworthiness, and say with Jacob, 'I will not let Thee go except Thou bless me,' or with the Canaanitish woman, 'Yea, Lord, yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their master's table.' . . . Do not be disheartened, however great your dryness, only continue to present yourself devoutly before God. How many courtiers daily appear before their sovereign without a hope of speaking with him, content to be seen by him and offer their homage? So we must pray purely and simply in order to do homage to God and show our faithfulness." (Introduction to the Devout Life)

Feeling Good about Doing Bad

Charles Krauthammer wrote an essay (*Time*, Feb. 5, 1990) about the state of education in this country. I want to jump up and down, yell BRAVISSIMO!, and shout it from the housetops. Americans, he said, did worst of six countries who gave a standardized math test to 13-year-olds. Koreans did best, but when asked to respond to the statement, "I am good at mathematics," Koreans came in last, Americans first.

This is what the self-esteem curriculum has done for our children. Feelings, not results, have become the focus. The notion of "inclusion," an ideology "masquerading as education and aspiring to psychotherapy . . . demands outright lying." Not all groups in America have contributed to the development of all aspects of our society. "There is little to be said, for example, about the Asian-American contribution to basketball . . . or the contribution of women to the Bill of Rights."

We may learn to feel good about ourselves, but we won't be educated. The way to true self-esteem, Krauthammer tells us, is through *real achievement* and *real learning*. If we do not insist on this, our schools will continue to "do

bad, for which feeling good, no matter how relentlessly taught, is no antidote."

Need I add a warning about what "self-esteem" and "inclusiveness" have done to Christian thinking?

The Shepards

Readers do ask about my daughter and her family and many of you have told me you pray for them, especially Colleen who has a form of epilepsy. She is doing well on phenobarbitol—no seizures since, but they are concerned about recent news that this drug can damage children's brain cells. Two readers have sent suggestions about alternate treatments. Thank you! Allergies (to wheat, sugar, certain fruits, eggs, and more) trouble several of the children. Val is very conscientious about trying to feed her family on nourishing, sensible, economical foods (which isn't easy, as you mothers know), and is sometimes distressed about health problems, wondering what she's doing wrong. Last time I visited them I noted three (3) kinds of milk on the table because of allergies—goat, cow, and soy. It's a complicated world.



At back, Walter III, 12; next row, Evangeline, 1; Elisabeth, 10; Christiana, 7; Jim, 5; Valerie; Walter D. Shepard Jr.; Colleen, 3

Note from Lars

Greetings and thanks from Lars for your good response for Hungarian printing funds.

Here's the address again in case some meant to contribute and forgot. (We don't mean to say, "Thank you and how about another gift?")

Grace Church, 3021 Blume Dr., Los Alamitos, CA 90720, Attn: Bob Kingsbury. **DO NOT SEND YOUR CHECK TO THE NEWSLETTER**

Recommended Reading

Mary Wilder Tileston: *Joy and Strength*, (World Wide Publications, Minneapolis, hardback \$8.95, pb \$5.95). A real treasure of daily readings: Scripture, hymns, poetry, and quotations from many authors. Here's a sample (some of you won't be surprised that I'd choose this one):

Do It At Once

"No unwelcome tasks become any the less unwelcome by putting them off till tomorrow. It is only when they are behind us and done that we begin to find that there is a sweetness to be tasted afterwards, and that the remembrance of unwelcome duties unhesitatingly done is welcome and pleasant. Accomplished, they are full of blessing, there is a smile on their faces as they leave us. Undone, they stand threatening and disturbing our tranquility, and hindering our communion with God. If there be lying before you any bit of work from which you shrink, go straight up to it and do it at once. The only way to get rid of it is to do it." (Alexander Maclaren, born 1826)

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May 19 Huntsville, AL; Whitesburg Baptist Church.

May 20 Morrow, GA; Clayton Community Church.

May 23 Collingswood, NJ; Women Alive, Dot Worth, (609)858-6750.

June 4 Ottawa, Ontario; Ottawa Christian Counselling Service, Roger C. Moyer, (613) 729-8454.

June 11 Virginia Beach, VA; TV appearance on CBN.

June 18-21 Beverly Farms, MA; Howard family reunion.

June 22 Topsham, ME; commencement, Servants of the Cross School, (207)725-7577.

July 7 Anaheim, CA; Pacific Coast Conference of Free Methodists; missions banquet, (213) 822-8094.

July 17, 18 Muskegon, MI; Maranatha Bible Conference, women's day, (616)798-2161.

July 29 East Middlebury, VT; (802)388-4267.

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Spiritual Opposition

When Lars and I returned from a fortnight in Scotland and England there was the expected pile-up of work awaiting us, and the usual temptation to feel overwhelmed by it. The suitcase had to be unpacked, clothes washed, mail opened, read, and answered. The house had been partially cleaned by the student who lives with us, but upstairs I had to deal with the dust. There were phone messages waiting, and phone calls we needed to make to family members. Do you know the feeling of utter inadequacy to cope? I'm sure you do. But I believe the enemy of our souls is specially alert at such times, seeking to use them to turn us in on ourselves rather than upwards to the One who stands ready to be our Refuge and Helper.

Laying all the work before the Lord on the first morning after our return, I asked for His help to do it faithfully, carefully, and in an orderly way. I believe He answered that prayer—I'm sure He did. Everything that had to be done in those first three days was done, and I couldn't possibly have done it on my own. Then there was the lovely respite of Sunday, with time to read and think. I looked forward to tackling Monday's work (radio talks, scheduling of speaking) at a clean desk.

Monday came. The day was committed to God as always. But I felt like the wheels of the Egyptian chariots which "drave heavily." There were interruptions, distractions. I could not get on as expected. My mind was dull, confused. At the end of the day I could not see what I had done with my time. It is late Tuesday afternoon now, and I had thought I could write the leader for the Newsletter this morning. Where did those hours go? I took my usual walk after lunch around Ocean Drive—a cloudless sky, a glittering sea, I walked alone today, talking to God about my failures, asking Him to clarify things, help me to know what His word was to be for you. Such an unexpected source of help came to hand—a letter written to my father thirty years

ago by an old missionary. Things were not going well at that time with the paper, *The Sunday School Times*, of which my father was editor, and he was on the verge of what was then called a nervous breakdown. He had asked counsel of this old veteran, E.L. Langston, in Africa.

"The devil does not like that paper nor its articles, and is evidently attacking you in your inmost heart, not causing you to doubt so much as causing a spirit of discontent. Fortunately we both know that temptation is not sin, it is yielding to temptation that causes us to sin and I feel that you must count it joy that you are passing through these times of difficulty, for they are sure signs that the Lord is blessing you...."

"There is another reason, I think, for the cause of the feeling within us. It comes from the flesh and self-introspection. It is good for us to look at self and know how loathsome it is, but with one look at self we must take ten looks at Christ...."

"No one goes to church more than the devil does, and no one appears as an angel of light as he does. We are in the thick of facing powers of darkness who are determined to rob us of Him and rob God of us, and you and I, my brother, have just got to hope in Christ and rely on Him for His Spirit to direct our thoughts, our ways, and our works so that it is not us but Christ in us."

Wasn't it wonderful that that letter had been preserved so that I "chanced upon it" in the hour of my need? But that is so like the Lord, for it is through the tender austerity of our very troubles that the Son of Man comes knocking. In every event He seeks an entrance to my heart, yes, even in my most helpless, futile, fruitless moments. The very cracks and empty crannies of my life, my perplexities and hurts and botched-up jobs, He wants to fill with Himself, His joy, His life. The more unsatisfactory my "performance," the more He calls me to share His yoke (I should know by now that mine makes me tired and overburdened), and to learn of Him ("I am gentle and humble in heart").

A Little Courtesy Won't Kill You

A young man writes, "From a man's point of view, I don't mind telling a date she looks really nice and opening doors for her. But I would like to be told that I look nice—and it does not hurt to say thank you. A few years ago while I was going to Bible college I opened a door for two girls. Neither said thank you. One started talking to the other about how rude the guys here at college were."

My old friend Dorothy Collins, now with the Lord, used often to talk to me about the importance of truth. It's fashionable now to unload one's negative feelings on people; it is called honesty, and it often disguises a deep dishonesty about ourselves before God. Dorothy believed in coming straight out with an honest compliment, to a friend, to the mailman, to the waitress. "Tell them now, Betty dear. Don't wait till they're dead." It's wonderful what that kind of truth can do for one's spirits, isn't it?

THANKS to Leila Pare of La Salle, Ontario, for furnishing the author of "Sleep Sweetly" which appeared in the January issue. "Anon." turns out to be Ellen M. Huntington.

A Modern Jericho

A friend in eastern Europe writes, "Many do not know that the collapse of the Wall was preceded by prayer marches led by the pastor of the Lutheran Church in Leipsig...freedom marches were organized and every week after a prayer meeting which included specific prayer for the tearing down of the Wall, the believers marched through the city. Following the seventh march, guess what happened. The next day the announcement was made that the Wall was to be torn down. The book of Joshua, anyone?"

Valerie's Homeschooling

A number have written to ask about my daughter Valerie's homeschooling. She has as little time to write

letters as most mothers, so I asked her to write one for all inquirers, telling how she goes about it. If you'd like a copy, send me (not to the Newsletter, please) a self-addressed, stamped envelope: 10 Strawberry Cove, Magnolia MA 01930.

Taking Care of My Little Sister

(Reprinted by permission from *The Home Sweet Home Newspaper of the Shepard Family*, Vol. I, No.1. The writer is my granddaughter, Christiana, age eight.)

"Last night my mother and father were gone and I had to put Evangeline* down for bed. My mom had put on her diapers and I had to put on her pajamas. This is how it started. I put Evangeline on Colleen's bed and I said, 'Evangeline, stay here!' and of course she went off the bed, crawled down the stairs, and of course I went after her and said, 'Evangeline, come here!' Finally I got her and put her on the kitchen table and put her pajamas on and she saw her bottle on the kitchen counter and I gave it to her and took her back upstairs. Then I prayed with her and wound up the 'Hark, the Herald Angels Sing' music box and said good night. Whew!"

*(aged sixteen months when this was written)

Use of Fetal Tissue in Finland

Dr. Pekka Reinikainen, in *Ethics and Medicine*, winter 1989, 5.3, reported on brain cell transplantation, using dead human fetuses to treat Alzheimer's dementia. Professor Urpo K. Rinne said that abortion techniques needed to be modified "so that better quality tissue could be obtained." Deeper research revealed that Finnish researchers had, beyond doubt, been involved in dubious research with *living* human fetuses. Eight human fetal heads, obtained by abdominal hysterectomy at 12-17 weeks' gestation, were perfused

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(forced, as a liquid) through the internal carotid arteries of eight human fetuses of approximately 10-23 weeks while the placenta remained in the uterus. "For *in vivo* experiments each fetus, immediately after removal from the uterus, was injected During this period the heart continued to beat and spontaneous movement was seen."

A "Hard Time"

Following a talk I gave on what older women are to teach younger, according to Titus 2:3-5, someone raised this objection in the question period:

"I have a hard time with that verse about staying home."

It's an expression we often hear—"I have a hard time with that." Usually the tone is one of argument, and the words are a euphemism for "I don't like that," or "Surely that doesn't apply to my case." If the speaker were convinced that the verse did not apply to his case, he would not be having a hard time with it. He could dismiss it at once. But if the person really means he or she is having difficulty, what is the exact nature of the difficulty? I can think of four possibilities:

1. Does this apply to me?
2. I want to do it but I can't.
3. I ought to do it but I don't want to.
4. I wish God hadn't said it.

What shall we do with the difficulties? To the first I would say that if we come to God with an empty cup, asking Him to reveal His will and help us to do the right thing, no matter what it costs, He will certainly show us. For the second we have the promise, "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me." God never gave a command for which He will not supply the power to obey. For the third we know that we have been created with the will to choose. We may choose to do what we ought to do, and God will help us. If the last describes our "hard time" let's be straightforward with God, confess the truth, and submit to His Word as an obedient servant. Obedience always leads finally to *joy*.

Correction About Two Books

Word had somehow gotten round that two books I had recommended are no longer available. It's not true. John

S.C. Abbott: *The Mother at Home* (on training children), and Elizabeth Prentiss: *Stepping Heavenward* (a diary, beginning at age 16, taking the woman through engagement, marriage, motherhood; a wonderfully helpful and practical chronicle of spiritual growth), may be obtained from G.A.M. Publications, PO Box 25, Sterling VA 22170. Special prices for Newsletter Readers: \$6.95 and \$10.95 respectively.

Prayer

- For help in completion of two books I've been working on.
- For Alma Griffin who answers most of the mail that comes to my radio program, Gateway to Joy. She and her husband were missionaries for fourteen years in Nigeria. She is a nurse, mother of five, grandmother of ten. We both need divine wisdom to know how to help people with their appalling problems.

Prayer

"When Thou rememberest what relates to me, think of me only in the light of Thy mercy—forget all else, O Thou, my injured and justly offended God, my unspeakably gracious Benefactor. Put out of sight all that has severed between me and Thee." (William Kay's note on Psalm 25:7)

Question

"I struggle to please the Lord in my attitude. Yet I also want to be a wife and mother to a man of God. Are these two desires diametrically opposed?"

Only God knows whether marriage and motherhood are in His plan for you. Certainly your desire is not a sinful one. What matters is that you surrender all desires and hopes to God, asking that He choose for you what is best. The desire is not likely to evaporate. It is "brought into captivity" to the obedience of Christ (2 Cor 10:5) as you entrust it to Him.

Keep in Touch

Are you moving? Getting married? Leaving school? *Don't forget to send us your change of address.* The post office DOES NOT FORWARD third class mail like the Newsletter. *Please remove your address label below and send it with your new address to:* The Elisabeth Elliot Newsletter, Post Office Box 7711, Ann Arbor, MI 48107.

Travel Schedule *July - September, 1990*

July 7 Anaheim, CA; Pacific Coast Conference of Free Methodists, missions banquet, (213) 822-8094.

July 17, 18 Muskegon, MI; Maranatha Bible Conference, women's day, (616) 798-2161.

July 29 E. Middlebury, VT; Valley Bible Church.

August 20 Edmonton, Alberta; Canadian Christian Booksellers Convention.

September 8 Atlanta, GA; Perimeter Church, women's seminar; Susan McEntyre, (404) 399-2635.

September 21, 22 New York, NY; L.I.F.E. conference on sexuality, Mrs. Ron Highley, (212) 239-9629.

September 29 Lima, OH; WTGN anniversary celebration, (419) 227-2525.

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Lord, Please Remove the Dilemma

Because my husband is a Norwegian who would happily eat fish three times a day if I'd give it to him (I seldom do), I often have fishheads and fishbones to discard. I don't like the noise the disposal makes if I put them in there, so I fire them out the window onto the grass. A prompt and thorough garbage service is provided free of charge by the seven resident crows who materialize out of nowhere (nine minutes is the maximum time it has taken them to detect my offerings). Recently I watched one of them attempt to stuff all the pieces into his beak before his buddies realized I had spread them a feast. He carefully picked up everything except one long backbone. Here was a dilemma. How was he to handle (is *beakle* a better word?) the backbone without dropping the beakful he already had? Solemnly he surveyed the scene, stepped slowly around the bone and cogitated. So everything is done by instinct, is it? I don't believe it. He was reasoning. He made a decision. He dropped the smaller pieces, grasped the bone right in the middle and raised it. Too unwieldy. More cogitation. Then, delicately, he lifted one end of the backbone, bent it around and picked up the other end. Now, holding both ends in his beak he succeeded somehow (I couldn't for the life of me see exactly how) in gathering all but a few small bits and flew off, triumphant, to relish his find in solitude.

Is there anyone reading this who is not faced with a perplexity of some sort? Some of you face serious dilemmas. We want to pray, "Lord, please remove the dilemma." Usually the answer is "No, not right away." We must face it, pray over it, think about it, wait on the Lord, make a choice. Sometimes it is an excruciating choice.

St. Augustine said, "The very pleasures of human life men acquire by difficulties." There are times when the

entire arrangement of our existence is disrupted and we long then for just one *ordinary* day—seeing our ordinary life as greatly desirable, even wonderful, in the light of the terrible disruption that has taken place. Difficulty opens our eyes to pleasures we had taken for granted. I recall one of the times my husband Add was released from the hospital when he had cancer. I did not suppose he was cured, but just having him at home once more was all I asked for that day. I set the table in the dining room with candlelight as I always did for dinner. I had fixed his favorite meal—steak, baked potato, salad, my homebaked apple pie. As he bowed his head to give thanks in the usual way I had a sudden urge to do something very unusual—to drop to the floor and clutch his hands and sing "Let us break bread together on our knees." I didn't do it. Things proceeded in the ordinary way, but there was a new radiance about them simply because we had been deprived for a while, and knew we would soon be deprived again, probably permanently.

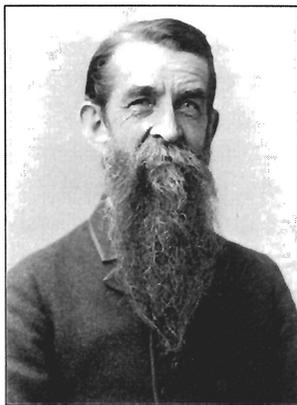
Paul said he had been "very thoroughly initiated into the human lot with all its ups and downs" (Phil 4:12, NEB). He was hard-pressed, bewildered, persecuted, and struck down. God in His mercy did not choose to remove the dilemmas with which he was faced (some of His greatest mercies are His refusals), but chose instead to make Himself known to Paul *because* of them, in ways which would strengthen his faith and make him a strengthener and an instrument of peace to the rest of us. Hard-pressed he was, but not hemmed in—God promised none of us would ever be tempted beyond our power to endure. Bewildered he was, but *never* at wit's end—God promised wisdom to those who ask for it. Persecuted, but he never had to "stand it alone"—God promised His unfailing presence, all the days of our lives. Struck down, Paul was not left to die, though some of his rescues were ignominious in the extreme—the great apostle, let down over a wall in a basket, and on another occasion making it to land on a chunk of flotsam! Hardly the means he would have envisioned God's using to fulfil His promises. But on

second thought, why not? The absurdity of it all does us good. Life is absurd—on the surface of things—but every bit of it is planned, as Paul goes on to say:

“It is for your sake that all things are ordered, so that, as the abounding grace of God is shared by more and more, the greater may be the chorus of thanksgiving that ascends to the glory of God” (2 Cor 4:15, NEB). Maybe Paul’s testimony which has cheered countless millions will cheer somebody who still faces a dilemma he has begged the Lord to remove. All of Paul’s were solved, but not all of them in Paul’s way or Paul’s time. *Selah*.

Training a Child to Self-control

Shall I brace myself for the inevitable charge of ancestor-worship which is bound to come? This is not the first time I’ve quoted my forebears, and probably won’t be the last, but it’s worth the risk of a taunt or two! Henry Clay Trumbull, a chaplain in the Civil War, was my great-grandfather, and only recently I found that his book, *Hints on Child Training*, has been brought back into print. His reason for writing it was a friend’s having asked for his theory of child training. “Theory?” he responded, “I have no theory, in that matter. I had lots of theories before I had any children [he had eight]



Henry Clay Trumbull

but now I do, with fear and trembling, in every case just that which seems to be the better thing for the hour, whether it agrees with any of my old theories or not.”

A book written one hundred years ago which a publisher now deems worthy of reprint must be good. The publisher is Wolgemuth and Hyatt, Brentwood TN; price

\$8.95. Here’s an excerpt from Chapter Ten:

“A child who is trained to self-control—as a child may be—is already a true man in his fitness for manly self-mastery. A man who was not trained, in childhood, to self-control, is hopelessly a child in his combat with himself; and he can never regain the vantage-ground which his childhood gave him. . . . It is in a child’s earlier struggles with himself that help can easiest be given to him, and that is of the greatest value for his own developing of character. . . . It rests with the parent to decide, while the child is still a child, whether the

child shall be a slave to himself, or a master of himself; whether his life, so far, shall be worthy or unworthy of his high possibilities of manhood.

“A child’s first struggle with himself ought to be in the direction of controlling his impulse to give full play to his lungs and his muscles at the prompting of his nerves. As soon as the nerves make themselves felt, they prompt a child to cry, to thrash his arms, to kick, and to twist his body on every side, at the slightest provocation—or at none. Unless this prompting be checked, the child will exhaust himself in aimless exertion, and will increase his own discomfort by the very means of this exhibit. . . .

“When a child has fallen and hurt himself, or has cut his finger, or has burned his hand . . . it is natural for him to shriek with pain and fright, and it is natural for his tender-hearted mother to shrink from blaming him just then for indulging in this display of grief. But even at such a time as this, a mother has an unmistakable duty of helping her child to gain a measure of control over himself, so as to repress his cries and to moderate his exhibit of disturbed feeling. . . .

“Coaxing and rewarding a child into quiet at such a time is not what is needed; but it is the encouraging a child into an intelligent control of himself, that is to be aimed at by the wise parent. It is only a choice between evils that substitutes a candy-paid silence for a noisy indulgence of feeling on a child’s part. . . . Dr. Bushnell, protesting against this method of coaxing a child out of a state of irritation, in a fit of ill-nature, by ‘dainties that please the taste,’ says forcefully, ‘It must be a very dull child that will not cry and fret a great deal, when it is so pleasantly rewarded. Trained in this manner to play ill-nature for sensation’s sake, it will go on rapidly, in the course of double attainment, and will be very soon perfected in the double character of an ill-natured, morbid, sensualist, and a feigning cheat besides. By what methods or means can the great themes of God and religion get hold of a soul that has learned to be governed only by rewards of sensation, paid to

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affectations of grief and deliberate actings of ill-nature?’

“That control of himself which is secured by a child in his intelligent repression of an impulse to cry and writhe in physical pain is of advantage to the child in all his lifelong struggle with himself; and he should be trained in the habit of making his self-control available to him in this struggle. . . . Every child needs the help of his parents in gaining control over his body, instead of allowing his body to gain the control of him. The appetites and passions and impellings of the outer man are continually striving for the mastery over the inner man; and unless one is trained to master these instead of being mastered by them, he is sure to fail in his life struggle.

“A parent ought to help his child to refrain from laughing when he ought not to laugh; from crying when he ought not to cry; from speaking when he ought not to speak; from eating that which he ought not to eat, even though the food be immediately before him; from running about when it is better for him to remain quiet; and to be ready to say and to do just that which it is best for him to say and do, at the time when it needs to be said and done. Self-control in all these things is possible to a child. Wise training on the parent’s part can secure it. The principle which is operative here, is operative in every sphere of human existence. By means of self-control a child is made happier, and is fitted for his duties, while a child and ever after, as otherwise he could not be. Many a man’s lifecourse is saddened through his hopeless lack of that self-control to which he could easily have been helped in childhood, if only his parents had understood his needs and been faithful accordingly.”

Would you like help in beginning at birth to teach a child self-control? Read *My First 300 Babies*, written by a midwife who stayed to help new mothers put their babies on a happy schedule so that the infant did not rule the household. Windsor Publications, 335 Laurel Ave., Arcadia CA 91006; \$8.95 plus \$1.50 for shipping and handling; 6% sales tax in CA, 6 1/2% in L.A. county.

Wheat Honey Bread

My years as a missionary, when store-bought bread wasn’t available, have pretty well ruined me for anything but homemade. Lars likes this kind, of which a single slice (with a cup of coffee) often makes his breakfast.

Pour 6 c. warm water over 2 c. old-fashioned oats
Add 1/2 c. honey, 1/2 c. blackstrap molasses*
Sprinkle 3 Tblsp. dry yeast on top. (Make sure water is not hot.)

Allow to stand 5 min. Then add:

1/2 c. vegetable oil

10 c. stoneground wholewheat flour*

1 heaping Tblsp. salt.

Mix well. Add:

1 c. wheat germ

1/2 c. sunflower seeds

1 c. soy flour*

1/4 c. sesame seeds*

6 c. unbleached white flour

Turn out on board or counter, knead till smooth and elastic. Put into clean, oiled bowl, turn dough over so that top is oiled. Cover with wet towel, let rise in warm place till double in bulk. Punch down. Let rise again. Punch down and form into four loaves. Place in loaf pans. Let rise a third time till double. Bake at 350° for 45 min. Turn out of pans at once, cool on racks.

* Available at health food stores. But these items are optional, may be omitted or substitutions made.

Ten Commandments

It’s much easier to memorize verse than prose. This, from McGuffey’s *Reader*, will help your child (maybe you, too) to remember the commandments:

Above all else love God alone;

Bow down to neither wood nor stone.

God’s name refuse to take in vain;

The Sabbath rest with care maintain.

Respect your parents all your days;

Hold sacred human life always.

Be loyal to your chosen mate;

Steal nothing neither small nor great.

Report, with truth, your neighbor’s deed;

And rid your mind of selfish greed.

Prayer

• For the greatest need of today’s children: holy parents. Pray for them, that God will give them holy wisdom in

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A Christmas Offering

Instead of incense, blessed Lord, if we
Can send a sigh or fervent prayer to Thee,
Instead of myrrh if we can but provide
Tears that from penitential eyes do slide,
And though we have no gold, if for our part
We can present Thee with a broken heart,
Thou wilt accept; and say those Eastern kings
Did not present Thee with more precious things.

Nathaniel Wanley

Men, Women, and Biblical Equality

A few months ago a double-page advertisement with the above heading appeared in Christian magazines, containing a statement drawn up by seven Christian leaders, and signed by (if I counted correctly) 164 others. It appeared to be a direct rebuttal to The Council on Biblical Manhood and Womanhood which was formed several years ago. [address of this Council: P.O. Box 1173, Wheaton, IL 60183. I recommend a fine little booklet they publish, John Piper's *What's the Difference?*]

In the section on Creation, the MWBE advertisement states: "The word 'helper' (*ezer*), used to designate woman in Genesis 2:18, refers to God in most instances of Old Testament usage (*e.g.* Sam 7:12; Ps 121:1,2). Consequently the word conveys no implication whatsoever of female subordination or inferiority." That makes sense. The English word would convey no such

implication either. But let's not overlook texts which do clearly convey subordination (not to be confused or equated with inferiority of worth). While we know that the Lord is our Helper, and human helpers are often superiors (parents, teachers, coaches, public servants who hold political office), we also take for granted that a helper may be a subordinate (an assistant, a flunky, a gofer, a servant). The Lord of the Universe Himself was willing to accept the status of a slave. The position in no way diminished His worth, much less did it cancel His lordship, but He did not consider equality something worth grasping (see Philippians 2:6).

It's the idea behind that expression "biblical equality" that gags me. For years we've been told that biological sexual differences mean nothing beyond reproduction. Isn't this anti-Christian? We look not only at the reality of physical things but beyond the visible to the invisible meaning. Research and logic have been twisted to support the idea of an "androgynous," a wonderful new blending of masculine and feminine traits into a supposedly new human type. Unfortunately this concept has taken strong hold of theology, with vastly destructive results. It's a hoax, of course, for the design (our respective human forms) is the vehicle of deep theological mysteries—the relationship between Christ and His bride. The Genesis account shows clearly who was made first, and what God's purpose was in creating Eve.

She was meant to be a helper. So far as I can see, this is not in the least demeaning—for her or for any of us who follow the Master. It is a privilege and a vocation. Much resentment has arisen in women's minds because of the suggestion (strong in the advertisement and in nearly all feminist literature) that one's position defines one's worth, a grossly secular view. Ought not Jesus' position (born in a cattle shed, raised in poverty, rejected by those to whom He came, then acting the part of the household slave when He washed the disciples' feet, and, at last, forsaken by His nearest friends, bound and imprisoned and flogged and finally nailed to a cross) prove to us beyond any least doubt that there is no such

equation? Was His worth impaired by these humiliations? He told His followers that whoever is chief is meant to be the servant of all. Why should we who have the high and holy calling of being His servants, ever protest for equality in the sacred realms of marriage, home, and church? These are not political arenas, for here a much higher law than the civil one is in operation, the law of love.

Most of what MWBE's advertisement says I think most Christians would accept. It is what they have chosen not to say that disturbs me deeply. The section on Community deals with the Holy Spirit's coming on both men and women; both have spiritual gifts. True enough, but were there not certain restrictions (for both men and women) placed on the use of these gifts? Is there no such thing as church order which manifests a heavenly hierarchy?

Why no mention of this? Hierarchy—that graduated splendor in which cherubim, seraphim, archangels, angels, saints, apostles, prophets, and martyrs have their divinely appointed places—is treated, in fact, as a bad word. Is not Christian marriage a mysterious representation of the ineffable love between Christ and His Bride? Must we insist on “mutual submission,” as does MBWE?

Years ago I heard Letha Scanzoni lead a seminar on “Egalitarian Marriage,” in which she used Ephesians 5:21 (“Be subject to one another out of reverence for Christ”) as her proof text, omitting the following verses which spell out the specifics of that subjection (wives to husbands, children to parents, slaves to masters). During the discussion period I asked whether she saw any difference at all between a wife's submission to her husband and his submission to his wife. The answer was no. “May I then reverse the nouns in the verses which follow?” Yes. So I began to read, “Husbands, be subject to your wives as to the church, for the wife is the head of the husband as the church is the head of Christ.” She stopped me. “Oh, you can't carry the analogy that far.”

Well? Can we drain the analogy of its mystery? Can we infer nothing but mutual submission? May the Lord give to us, men and women alike, His sublime indifference to secular categories, and His perfect willingness to be subject to the Father—a subordination which did not end with His earthly life, as I Corinthians 15:28, 29 (JBP) so clearly shows: “When everything created has been obedient to God, then shall the Son acknowledge himself subject to God the Father, who gave the Son power over all things. Thus, in the end,

shall God be wholly and absolutely God.” Yes, we are to “fit in with each other,” as Phillips translates Ephesians 5:21. We are to sacrifice, give in, forbear, forgive. But is that all? Is there no special command to us wives? There is. “Wives, be subject to your husbands, as to the Lord” (Eph 5:22). Why is this verse in the Bible? Why does MWBE omit it? Well, they think it's dangerous. Anything the Bible teaches can be dangerous, of course, if misconstrued, misunderstood, misapplied. It's not our business to edit the Scriptures because they are often disobeyed. It is our business to obey, and to speak out for that obedience, no matter how we may be reproached for so doing and no matter how difficult we women (none of us was born submissive!) find it to be.

The word to husbands is far more difficult. They are to love their wives as Christ loved the church. This kind of love is radically sacrificial and radically cuts across a man's nature (they were not born with any great desire to lay down their lives). Both husband and wife must be submissive and obedient to the will of God—he in loving, she in accepting his appointed headship. Jesus found His very meat in submission. It is the route to fulfilment and joy. To aim at a mere fifty-fifty accommodation of each other is a half-hearted way of pretending to obey. It is not the love of Christ and the church. It does not demand that kind of sacrifice.

Men have disobeyed by misusing their authority, and women have disobeyed by refusing it. We are not therefore at liberty to drain the word headship of its obviously hierarchical meaning. Let's be careful not to overlook the all-important word *as*: “Wives, be subject to your husbands as to the Lord, for the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is head of the church” (Eph 5:22, 23). In what sense is Christ head of the church? It's a physical metaphor Paul is using. Is not the human head of the human body the part from which all other parts take orders? Yes, I've read pages and pages of arguments about that Greek word *kephale*. Some would insist that it means only source, and carries no thought of authority. But I insist that metaphors are metaphors

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and they mean more, not less, than the mere words could mean in another context. One wonders if these humorless, nearsighted, nit-picking, theological pedants have ever read a book in their lives! (At least one of them has, I know—my friend Roger Nicole is not humorless, and he does read books—he has about 35,000 or so in his basement—but oh Roger, what will you do with the mystery we’re talking about here? Please tell us about that mystery!)

No wonder churchgoers are bored and men don’t know how to court women anymore and marriages are dissolving. God’s arrangement of things (so much more fascinating than “equality”) has been discarded. A concern for fairness doesn’t fit in at all with the concept of sacrifice. It is in suffering and sacrifice, willed and accepted because of a deep and disciplined love, that the still, small Voice is heard: Lose your life for Me and find it! It is in losing ourselves that the ego is transcended and real happiness discovered. One can’t help trying to picture what this “biblical equality” looks like at the breakfast table, in the bedroom, or when it’s pouring rain and two separate but equal spouses have to decide whose turn it is to race through the parking lot and bring the car to the door of the restaurant. It has never occurred to Lars to allow a discussion about this. He is my protector (and, of course, my helper here), which means he’s the one who gets wet! He has the greater responsibility before God. The buck stops with him. (No letters, please, asking for more details!)

As Mrs. Bush said in her commencement address last spring to the women of Wellesley, feminists must not indulge in self, but must “believe in something larger than yourself.” In a rebuke to the ill-humored feminist leadership (“anyone seen Molly Yard smile lately?” asks columnist Cal Thomas), she told them that, first and foremost, “life really must have joy.”

Something larger than yourself. That’s what we need, isn’t it? A much grander vision of things than politics can ever provide, busy (as it must of necessity be) about terribly banal things like rights and equality. God forbid that we Christians should introduce politics into marriage or the church. A glad surrender to the divine order is like a dance—one leads, one follows, each by his or her obedience freeing the other to do what God assigns. There is harmony then, true liberation, and peace. I know. I’ve tried it both ways (my way more often than I like to remember), and only God’s way works. [My books on masculinity, *The Mark of a Man*, and femininity, *Let Me Be a Woman*, attempt to spell these things out in greater detail.]

A Reader Writes

A woman in Michigan felt relieved when she got the May/June Newsletter, having felt “a little intimidated by your pronouncements and unshakable opinions, not to mention your portrayal of your daughter, who seemed to me to be held up as an unattainable model.” To learn that Valerie sometimes experienced dryness in her devotions, that the Shepard family had health problems, and that Lars calls me a sensitive “Possum” convinced her that there was a human side, so she read those bits to a friend who had cancelled her subscription “in part because she didn’t see enough sympathy with her daily struggles” in what I wrote.

I’m truly sorry for coming across so fiercely, and Val would be horrified to be thought of as an unattainable model. She’s not one of those. Many are the struggles she has, many are the tears I’ve seen her shed, but thank the Lord, He’s not finished with us yet.

Return That Card!

People keep on asking us why we aren’t sending out the Newsletter anymore. The answer is simple: we are, but if your friends are not getting it, tell them it’s because they didn’t return the card we send out periodically. If we don’t get the card, you don’t get the letter. Money is *not* the requirement. The return of the card *is*!

Prayer Requests

- for Colleen, my granddaughter, four, for healing of the seizures she has occasionally, and for wisdom for Val and Walt and the doctor.
- for God’s own will to be done about a possible film dealing with the Auca story.
- for older men and women to obey the Lord in teaching younger adults (by example and by caring enough to give them *time* individually) how to walk with Him, preserve virginity, love their spouses, discipline their children, shine like lights in this dark world.
- for God’s control over the floods of printed matter rushing into Eastern Europe and Russia—everything from Bibles to pornography.

Travel Schedule November 1990 - February 1991

November 9 - 11 North East, MD; Women Alive Ministries (301) 287-5433.

November 13 Gordon-Conwell Seminary, women's seminar; Dr. Robert Fillinger, (508) 468-7111.

November 23 - 25 Colorado Springs, CO; Navigators singles conference; Randy Eims, (719) 598-1212.

November 28 Corona del Mar, CA; Grace Fellowship Church; Linda Roberson, (714) 854-9635.

November 29 Newport Beach, CA; Grace Fellowship Church women; Bill Beck, (714) 645-6276.

December 8 San Diego, CA; Spirit of Christ Christian

Church Fellowship, Rita Cefalu, (619) 483-5106 or 581-0982.

December 16 Daytona Beach, FL; First Baptist Church.

January 18-20 Winnipeg, Manitoba; Missionfest; David Robbins, (204) 956-5379.

January 22 Waco, TX; Columbus Ave. Baptist Church; Beth Durham, (817) 752-1655

February 16 Tucson, AZ; city-wide women's seminar, Christ Community Church; Cynthia Heald, (602) 298-5810.

February 26 Laguna Niguel, CA, Aliso Creek Presbyterian Church women's day.

Keep in Touch

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The Elisabeth Elliot Newsletter

January / February 1991

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The Childless Man or Woman

Children, God tells us, are a heritage from Him. Is the man or woman to whom He gives no children therefore disinherited? Surely not. The Lord gave portions of land to each tribe of Israel except one. "The tribe of Levi . . . received no holding; the Lord God of Israel is their portion, as he promised them" (Joshua 13:14, REB). Withholding what He granted to the rest, He gave to Levi a higher privilege. May we not see childlessness in the same light? I believe there is a special gift for those to whom God does not give the gift of physical fatherhood or motherhood.

I have known many women (and a few men) who have sorrowed deeply over being childless. My brother-in-law Bert Elliot and his wife Colleen, missionaries in Peru for about forty years, longed for children of their own. They asked the Lord for children if that would best glorify Him. His answer was no. They wondered about adoption, which would not have been nearly so difficult there as it is in the States. Again the answer seemed to be no, but God has given them the privilege of fathering and mothering hundreds of Peruvians, both white and Indian, in the jungle and in the high Andes, where they bear on their shoulders the care of dozens of little churches.

A woman of about fifty wrote, "Each Mother's Day became a little harder for me as I realized another year had gone by and after many years of marriage I am still childless—the only woman in my Sunday School class who is not a mother. The morning service started. . . I could not see the pastor for the tears in my eyes. Almost at the end of his message he said, 'I know there are some of you women here this morning who would like to be mothers, but for some reason God has chosen differently. Don't question Him. He has a reason.'"

Childlessness, for those who deeply desire children, is real suffering. Seen in the light of Calvary and accepted in the name of Christ, it becomes a chance to share in His sufferings. Acceptance of the will of the

Father took Him to the Cross. We find our peace as we identify with Him in His death and resurrection.

Look around your church. If you are a parent, look for those who aren't. Might they not be ready to "father" or "mother" you or your children, to be adopted as a grandparent, for example, or an aunt or uncle? My life was enriched by unmarried aunts and friends who paid attention to us children, celebrated our birthdays and sometimes even helped us with homework. The love they would have poured out on their own children had God given them marriage, they poured out instead on us and we were blessed as we could not have been had they had children. Their loss was our gain, and, as Ugo Bassi said, we are to measure our lives "by loss and not by gain; not by the wine drunk but by the wine poured forth, for Love's strength standeth in Love's sacrifice, and he who suffereth most hath most to give."

What of the thousands who have not had the mothers and fathers they desperately longed for while they were growing up? Is not God calling all whose ears are open to Him to recognize the wounds of the world and to pour forth His love to the lonely young man whose relationship with his father seems to have destroyed his fitness for manhood? Or to the expectant mother whose own mother is far away, or indifferent, or dead, who longs for a mother to share her joy? Whose will be the strong shoulder of sympathy (the word means "to suffer *with*") ready to bear another's burdens?—not with the tepid sentimentality which only weakens, but with the burning love which gives hope and cheer and strength?

My correspondent says God has given her "several kids adopted in my heart to pray for whose mothers say they haven't time to pray." Another girl asked her to be grandmother to her new baby. "Well, what a blessing and how this has changed my life!" she says. "If I had sat around and felt sorry for myself look at the above blessings I would have missed. What a thrill on Mother's Day this year to get a Grandmother card!"

And what of the *young* childless woman? Is she merely to mark time, hoping against hope that someday she will be given a child? There are always younger people who need a boost, some encouragement in their

struggles against the pull of the world, a listening ear when they face hard decisions, someone who will simply take time out from his own concerns to pray with them, to walk with them the way of the Cross with its tremendous demand—the difficult and powerful life of glad surrender and acceptance. As the branches of the vine pour out their sweetness so young women may see their opportunity, as branches of the True Vine, to pour out their lives for the world.

Starting a WOTTs Group

Men and women who are committed to obedience to Titus 2:1-5 are desperately needed in the world, in the church, and in the home. Writing on what I called spiritual motherhood I referred to them as WOTT's (Women of Titus Two). A reader asks if I have guidelines, structure, organization, information about such a group. Well, not much—for this reason: as soon as you organize, you have to have meetings! What we don't need is one more meeting to take us away from our homes and telephones. My suggestions are simply these:

1. Pray. Ask God to show you the needs and ways in which you yourself can help. Pray (perhaps on the phone if it's difficult to get together) with one or two others who understand the need.

2. Ask your pastor if he might preach on the Titus passage. It will take courage for him to do this.

3. In Bible studies, Sunday School classes, over your kitchen table or wherever you have opportunity, raise the subject of spiritual motherhood. Tell others of the blessing your own spiritual mothers have been to you. (If you had none, find a model in a book, as I did in Amy Carmichael. Then seek to be one.)

4. Post a list on the church bulletin board of the WOTT's—women who earnestly desire to be available. Mothers (in the usual sense and in the spiritual) are people who must be available—not all the time, not to meet every demand, but as needs arise which they can meet, they are prepared to do so, no matter how humble and unsung the job. In the article above I have outlined the deepest needs—godly examples, ears to hear, shoulders to cry on, hearts to pray. Then there are the humble tasks which lighten others' burdens: drive someone to the doctor, do somebody's ironing, take a friend and go clean somebody's refrigerator and oven (jobs young mothers find it hard to get around to); babysit—in your house or theirs. Rock a baby, read a story, cook the supper, do the mending. Take an old

person shopping and to lunch. Clean their house, do the gardening, write letters at their dictation or tell them about government postcards—so cheap, so easy to write a note on if *you* address them first. God will give you many other ideas if you ask Him.

The Angel in the Cell

My brother Dave Howard does a lot of traveling and comes back with wonderful stories. Last June when the six of us Howards with our spouses got together for a reunion Dave told us this one, heard from the son of the man in the story.

A man whom we'll call Ivan, prisoner in an unnamed country, was taken from his cell, interrogated, tortured, and beaten nearly to a pulp. The one comfort in his life was a blanket. As he staggered back to his cell, ready to collapse into that meagre comfort, he saw to his dismay that someone was wrapped up in it—an informer, he supposed. He fell on the filthy floor, crying out, "I can't take any more!" whereupon a voice came from the blanket, "Ivan, what do you mean, you can't take any more?" Thinking the man was trying to get information to be used against him, Ivan didn't explain. He merely repeated what he had said.

"Ivan," came the voice, "Have you forgotten that Jesus is with you?"

Then the figure in the blanket was gone. Ivan, unable to walk a minute before, now leaped to his feet and danced round the cell praising the Lord. In the morning the guard who had starved and beaten him asked who had given him food. No one, said Ivan.

"But why do you look so different?"

"Because my Lord was with me last night."

"Oh, is that so? And where is your Lord now?"

Ivan opened his shirt, pointed to his heart—"Here."

"O.K. I'm going to shoot you and your Lord right now," said the guard, pointing a pistol at Ivan's chest.

"Shoot me if you wish. I'll go to be with my Lord."

The guard returned his pistol to its holster, shaking

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his head in bewilderment.

Later Ivan learned that his wife and children had been praying for him on that same night as they read Isaiah 51:14, "The cowering prisoners will soon be set free; they will not die in their dungeon, nor will they lack bread."

Ivan was released shortly thereafter, and continued faithfully to preach the Gospel until he died in his eighties.

A Child's Lesson in Trust

Last fall my daughter Valerie, with her husband's urging, came to visit me for a week, leaving all six children in California. Elisabeth, her oldest daughter, age eleven, wrote, "Evangeline wet the floor twice. Oh Mom, it seems like she goes every five minutes!" To me she wrote, "Evangeline's potty training is getting me discouraged (here she drew a face with a bemused expression). My mother told me to trust in God. I am trying very hard."

God honored her efforts. One evening when the three younger ones were in bed, their father Walt asked the three older ones what they were learning in this experience of having their mother gone. Elisabeth spoke up: "Daddy, I'm really learning to trust the Lord for Evangeline. He is helping me!"

A Day in the Life of...

Take a Monday, for example, last August. Hot. Windows open. Wind blew from the south all night, whistling in the balcony door, rattling my study door, bringing rain this morning. Waves break on the rocks—a noisy and wonderful sound-and-light show.

Up at usual hour, breakfast at eight. Dishes, vitamin pills, and all the et ceteras. To desk to work. Long phone call about a film somebody might someday make. Dictate letters. Later morning, mail arrives. The sorrows of others:

- 1) a mother can't stay home with her two-year-old, must work.
- 2) pastor-husband has no desire to live with the family or return to the Lord.
- 3) "been sanctified seven times—still not perfect"
- 4) mother of four—"financial despair, very little help from husband"
- 5) "lost best friend/prayer partner"
- 6) "lost my husband, my best friend, and my

brother—I never had all in one man."

7) "poor health, welfare, indifferent children, suicidal."

I pray over these letters, try to answer with words from the Word.

Afternoon: walk with Lars. Desk work. Make a zucchini/curry/cream soup. (I make a gourmet soup for company? while others suffer so?) Sprinkle clothes for ironing, trying to think through what folks mean when they speak of wanting to be a "whole person." Some talk as though a single individual, in one short life, could pursue *all* his interests seriously, carefully, responsibly, and somehow achieve wholeness, balance, fulfillment—without being a mere dilettante. (I had to ask somebody today who Irwin Shaw is. Answer: "One of the most famous writers of this century." Name rang only the faintest of bells. So much for my "whole personhood"!)

Don't try to decipher any hidden meaning from the above. It's just a day, picked at random. People ask us what we *do*. While I'm doing the above Lars is in his office next to my study, usually on the phone—shielding me from answering, fielding questions, dealing with travel agents and publishers, ordering books for our next trip. When he's not on the phone he's painting the house, fixing the car, running errands, wrapping tapes and books for mail orders, and who knows what else. We both love what we do—we believe God gave it to us and are very thankful.

Note from Lars

Greetings for the New Year! I know you missed my Christmas note. Do want to tell you why. Contributions of 1990 covered all of our expenses and enabled us to send the Newsletter to many who can't pay and to overseas readers. I'm thankful that in only two of the nine years we've been publishing have I made any mention of money. Hope there are some of you out there who have been with us that long, and to all of you I say thank you for making my job easy.

My identification with Elisabeth is becoming more and more entwined. Recently I received a letter addressed to Mr. Lars Elliot and not long ago someone wrote that Elisabeth should change her name to Gren so that I would have a "whole wife." I tried to explain the reasoning for her using a pen name, and assured him I had never had a "partial" wife. Of course Elisabeth doesn't escape entirely—she had a card addressed to "Mrs. Elisabeth Elliot or Whosever Wife You Are Now."

Travel Schedule January - May 1991

January 18-20 Winnipeg, Manitoba; Missionfest; David Robbins, (204) 956-5379.

January 22 Waco, TX; Columbus Ave. Baptist Church; Beth Durham, (817) 752-1655.

February 16 Tucson, AZ; city-wide women's seminar, Christ Community Church; Cynthia Heald, (602) 298-5810.

February 26 Laguna Niguel, CA; Aliso Creek Presbyterian Church women's day.

March 1, 2 Sun Valley, CA; Grace Community Church women; Linda Dunning, (818) 363-0974

March 7 Lancaster, PA; Friendship Foundation; Dona Fisher, (717) 560-1550

March 8-10 Dayton, OH; Fairhaven Church, (513) 434-8627.

March 16 Worcester, MA; Catholic Charismatic Renewal; Julie A. Pierce, (phone number to be sent).

April 21 Chicago, IL; Moody Church missions banquet; Evelyn Rankin, (312) 943-0466.

April 23, 24 Wheaton, IL; Billy Graham Center; Dr. Tim Beougher, (708) 945-8800, ext. 343.

May 6 West Bridgewater, MA; New England Ladies' Seminar; Mrs. Thomas Ward, (508) 584-5188.

May 16 Rochester, NY; Mars Hill Broadcasting Co. banquet; Gordon Bell, (315) 469-5051.

May 17 Syracuse, NY; radio banquet; same sponsorship as Rochester.

Keep in Touch

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Disclaimer

My endorsement on the dust jacket of *Dating with Integrity* by John Holzmman is no longer valid. The manuscript was drastically altered *after* I endorsed it, and does not now at all represent my views. The quotation from my newsletter in chapter six is misused.

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The Key to Supernatural Power

The world cannot fathom strength proceeding from weakness, gain proceeding from loss, or power from meekness. Christians apprehend these truths very slowly, if at all, for we are strongly influenced by secular thinking. Let's stop and concentrate on what Jesus meant when He said that the *meek* would inherit the earth. Do we understand what meekness truly is? Think first about what it isn't.

It is not a naturally phlegmatic temperament. I knew a woman who was so phlegmatic that nothing seemed to make much difference to her at all. While drying dishes for her one day in her kitchen I asked where I should put a serving platter.

"Oh, I don't know. Wherever you think would be a good place," was her answer. I wondered how she managed to *find* things if there wasn't a place for everything (and everything in its place).

Meekness is not indecision or laziness or feminine fragility or loose sentimentalism or indifference or affable neutrality.

Meekness is most emphatically not *weakness*. Do you remember who was the meekest man in the Old Testament? Moses! (see Nm 12:3) My mental image of him is not of a feeble man. It is shaped by Michelangelo's sculpture and painting and by the biblical descriptions. Think of him murdering the Egyptian, smashing the tables of the commandments, grinding the golden calf to a powder, scattering it on the water and making the Israelites drink it. Nary a hint of weakness there, nor in David who wrote, "The meek will he guide in judgment" (Ps 25:9, KJV), nor in Isaiah, who wrote, "The meek also shall increase their joy in the Lord" (Is 29:19, KJV).

The Lord Jesus was the Lamb of God, and when we think of lambs we think of meekness (and perhaps weakness), but He was also the Lion of Judah, and He said, "I am *meek* and lowly in heart" (Mt 11:29, KJV). He told us that we can find rest for our souls if we will

come to Him, take His yoke, and learn. What we must learn is meekness. It doesn't come naturally to any of us.

Meekness is teachability. "The meek will he teach his way" (Ps 25:9, KJV). It is the readiness to be shown, which includes the readiness to lay down my fixed notions, my objections and "what if's" or "but what about's," my certainties about the rightness of what I have always done or thought or said. It is the child's glad "Show me! Is *this* the way? Please help me." We won't make it into the kingdom without that childlikeness, that simple willingness to be taught and changed and helped. "Receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls" (Jas 1:21, KJV).

Meekness is an explicitly spiritual quality, a fruit of the Spirit, learned, not inherited. It shows in the kind of attention we pay to one another, the tone of voice we use, the facial expression. One weekend I spoke in Atlanta on this subject, and the following weekend I was to speak on it again in Philadelphia. As very often happens, I was sorely tested on that very point in the few days in between. That sore test was my chance to be taught and changed and helped. At the same time I was strongly tempted to indulge in the very opposite of meekness: sulking. Someone had hurt me. He/she was the one who needed to be changed! I felt I was misunderstood, unfairly treated, and unduly berated. Although I managed to keep my mouth shut, both the Lord and I knew that my thoughts did not spring from a depth of loving-kindness and holy charity. I wanted to vindicate myself to the offender. That was a revelation of how little I knew of meekness.

The Spirit of God reminded me that it was He who had provided this very thing to bring that lesson of meekness which I could learn nowhere else. He was literally putting me on the spot: would I choose, here and now, to *learn of Him*, learn *His* meekness? He was despised, rejected, reviled, pierced, crushed, oppressed, afflicted, yet He did not open His mouth. What was this little incident of mine by comparison with my Lord's suffering? He brought to mind Jesus' willingness not only to eat with Judas who would soon betray Him, but also to kneel before him and wash his dirty feet. He

showed me the look the Lord gave Peter when he had three times denied Him—a look of unutterable love and forgiveness, a look of meekness which overpowered Peter's cowardice and selfishness, and brought him to repentance. I thought of His meekness as He hung pinioned on the cross, praying even in His agony for His Father's forgiveness for His killers. There was no venom or bitterness there, only the final proof of a sublime and invincible love.

But how shall I, not born with the smallest shred of that quality, I who love victory by argument and put-down, ever learn that holy meekness? The prophet Zephaniah tells us to *seek* it (Zep 2:3). We must walk (live) in the Spirit, not gratifying the desires of the sinful nature (e.g. my desire to answer back, to offer excuses and accusations, my desire to show up the other's fault instead of to be shown my own). We must "clothe" ourselves (Col 3:12) with meekness—put it on, like a garment. This entails an explicit choice: I *will* be meek. I *will not* sulk, will not retaliate, will not carry a chip.

A steadfast look at Jesus instead of at the injury makes a very great difference. Seeking to see things in His light changes the aspect altogether.

When Prudence, in the House Beautiful, asks Christian, "Can you remember by what means you find your annoyances at times, as if they were vanquished?"

"Yes," says Christian, "when I think what I saw at the Cross, that will do it."

The message of the cross is foolishness to the world and to all whose thinking is still worldly. But "the foolishness of God is wiser than man's wisdom, and the weakness of God is stronger than man's strength" (1 Cor 1:25, NIV). The meekness of Jesus was a force more irresistible than any force on earth. "By the meekness and gentleness of Christ," wrote the great apostle, "I appeal to you.... Though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds" (2 Cor 10: 1, 3-4, NIV). The weapon of meekness counters all enmity, says Von Hildebrand, with the offer of an unshielded heart.

Isn't this the simple explanation for our being so heavy-laden, so tired, so overburdened and confused and bitter? We drag around such prodigious loads of resentment and self-assertion. Shall we not rather accept at once the loving invitation:

Come to Me. Take My yoke. Learn of Me—I am gentle, meek, humble, lowly. I will give you rest.

Recommended Reading

J.I. Packer: *Rediscovering Holiness*. In the wonderfully lucid style we expect from Dr. Packer he tells us what holiness is and why it matters. His brilliance as a theologian does not prevent him from putting the hay where the sheep can reach it. It's a book for all of us who hunger and thirst to be more like Jesus. You can order the book from Servant Publications, P.O. Box 7455, Ann Arbor, MI 48107-7455. \$16.99 + \$3.25 shipping/handling. MI residents add 4% sales tax.

Bible Study Helps for Children

Requests come to me for suggestions. Scripture Union publishes excellent helps for all ages, including adults. I recommend any and all. For children 7-10, ask for Quest; for 11-15, One-to-One. Each book covers three months, sent out four times per year, total cost \$15. 1-800-621-LAMP.

Chambers on Self-Realization

Our Lord's teaching is always *anti*-self-realization. His purpose is not the development of a man; His purpose is to make a man exactly like Himself, and the characteristic of the Son of God is self-expenditure.... Spiritually, we cannot measure our life by success, but only by what God pours through us, and we cannot measure that at all.

—Oswald Chambers,
My Utmost for His Highest, Sept. 2

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The Universal Thump

It's so refreshing to find some encouragement to work and to be cheerful and take orders, instead of what is more common today, an outright dislike, even hatred, of work and an unwillingness to take orders from anybody. We've really had just about enough of that, don't you think? So here's an antidote in the musings of a sailor in Herman Melville's great classic, *Moby Dick*:

What of it if some old hunks of a sea-captain orders me to get a broom and sweep down the decks? What does that indignity amount to, weigh, I mean, in the scales of the New Testament? Do you think the archangel Gabriel thinks anything the less of me because I promptly and respectfully obey that old hunks in that particular instance? Who ain't a slave? Tell me that. Well, then, however the old sea-captains may order me about, I have the satisfaction of knowing that it is all right; that everybody else is one way or other served in much the same way—either in a physical or metaphysical point of view, that is; and so the universal thump is passed round, and all hands should rub each other's shoulder-blades, and be content.

Most of us are not exactly under the orders of "some old hunks of a sea-captain," but we *are* meant to be willing and cheerful servants of anybody who happens to need us. Have I a true servant-heart? I should have. I will not be anything like my Lord Jesus if I haven't, for He came not to be served but to serve. He set for us a radiant example of how practically He meant it. He washed feet. Knowing His own origin and destiny, He did it with grace and He did it with love.

And what is our origin? Our destiny? We, too, "come from God and are going back to God." Is there any job, then, that is really "beneath us"? Any "thump" that we really mind?

"You, my brothers, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the sinful nature; rather, serve one another in love" (Gal 5:13, NIV).

Last summer a certain fifteen-year-old worked at a ranch, where his job included not only dishwashing but cleaning out the garbage truck. They weren't jobs he'd have opted for (he'd far rather have exercised horses or even mucked out stables), so I gave him "Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men, since you know that you will receive

an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. *It is the Lord Christ you are serving*" (Col 3:23-24, NIV). He wrote me a sweet letter, said God was helping him.

Boasting

A Sunday School teacher asked the children to comment on Jeremiah 9:23-24: "Let not the wise man boast of his wisdom or the strong man boast of his strength or the rich man boast of his riches, but let him who boasts boast about this: that he understands and knows me, that I am the Lord, who exercises kindness, justice and righteousness on earth, for in these I delight" (NIV).

A ten-year-old named Christiana wrote,

This verse is talking about boasting about the things we own or have. Verse 24 talks about *only boasting about* knowing God.

Boasting is awful, as the verse is telling us. Because the verse says that God does *NOT* delight in boasting. Do you boast about your clothes, your children, your parents, your jewelry, your house, your pets, your TV, your Nintendo games, your cute little baby brother or sister ("gulp"), your warm bed? C'mon, say some things you have or boast about, or if you have heard other people boast about. But always remember, the only thing you *should* boast about is... (say it with me) **KNOWING GOD!**

A Model Worth 1,000 Words

Do you know someone contemplating an abortion, or someone who's a little shaky in his convictions about this issue? No argument will be as strong as this visual aid. You can obtain a plastic model of an 11-week-old fetus (the size of most aborted babies) from Project "Young One," Inc., 2125 West Lawn Ave., Racine, WI 53405, (414) 634-8697. Price: \$.30 each for 25 to 2,000 models, plus \$2 handling (\$3.50 Canadian).

He Has For Thee

A light for every shadow,
A plan for each tomorrow,
A key for every problem,
A balm for every sorrow.

(Quoted by Amy Carmichael in *Thou Givest*, p. 22. No source given.)

Travel Schedule

January-April 1993

January 12 Laguna Hills, CA; Calvary Chapel; Peggy Estrada, (714) 770-6038, office (714) 770-7650.

January 12-14 Taping for *Gateway to Joy*.

January 16 Valley Center, CA; Community Church; Nancy Meador, (619) 741-7218, office (619) 749-1127.

January 25 Jacksonville, TX; Jacksonville College, (214) 586-2518.

January 29-30 Boston, MA; Evangelistic Association of New England, (617) 229-1990.

February 5-6 Broomall, PA; Covenant Fellowship, (215) 359-1180.

February 12 (snow date, February 19) Plymouth, NH; Crisis Pregnancy Center, (603) 536-2111.

February 24-28 Olympic and Kitsap peninsulas, WA; Mrs. Neil Smith, (206) 683-8448.

March 13 Chattanooga, TN; Woodland Park Baptist Church; Debra Martin, (615) 899-9185, home (615) 894-0216.

March 22-24 Taping for *Gateway to Joy*.

April 7-11 Madrid, Spain; Pocket Testament League.

April 16 Frederick, MD; Crisis Pregnancy Center, (301) 662-5300.

April 17 Sterling, VA; Faith Bible Church, (703) 430-1345.

April 18 Reston, VA; Reston Bible Church; Mary Wolfe, (703) 620-4263.

April 23 Kansas City; Christian Association for Psychological Studies convention; Dr. Mack Harnden, (913) 345-0033.

April 23-24 Hudson, FL; Word of Life, (813) 856-7575.

April 28-May 2 Ketchikan, Sitka, Juneau, AK; Mrs. Ann Graham, PO Box 5544, Ketchikan, AK 99901.

Prayer

Help us, Lord, to give all that we know of ourselves to all that we know of You, for Jesus' sake. Amen.

Keep in Touch

Are you moving? Getting married? Leaving school? *Don't forget to send us your change of address.* The post office DOES NOT FORWARD third class mail like the Newsletter. *Please remove your address label below and send it with your new address to:* The Elisabeth Elliot Newsletter, Post Office Box 7711, Ann Arbor, MI 48107.

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The Elisabeth Elliot Newsletter

March / April 1993

ISSN 8756-1336

The Supremacy of Christ

Last October I received a copy of the Auca (now known as Waorani) translation of the New Testament. The orthography has been greatly altered since my day, so I can't read much of it now, but leafing through the pages I thought long, long thoughts. I had had nothing to do with the translation. I was with the Aucas only two years, during which Rachel Saint and I worked on reducing the language to writing, but we had barely begun to translate a few Bible stories when my daughter Valerie and I returned to Quichua work.

Sometimes I am asked to speak to young people who are toying with the idea of being missionaries. They want to know how I discovered the will of God. The first thing was to settle once and for all the supremacy of Christ in my life, I tell them. I put myself utterly and forever at His disposal, which means turning over *all* the rights: to myself, my body, my self-image, my notions of how I am to serve my Master. Oswald Chambers calls it "breaking the husk of my individual independence of God." Until that break comes, all the rest is "pious fraud." I tell these earnest kids that the will of God is always *different* from what they expect, always *bigger*, and, ultimately, infinitely more *glorious* than their wildest imaginings.

But there will be deaths to die. Paul found that out—daily, he said. That is the price of following the way of the cross—of course. If our object is to save others we must be clear that we cannot save ourselves. Jesus couldn't either.

This scares people. Yet what is there to fear when Christ holds first place in our lives? Where, other than in the will of the Father, shall we expect to find significance, security, and serenity?

God's guidance for me has been so different from my early notions—I was to be a jungle missionary for life! The complete futility, *humanly* speaking, of all the

language work I did (Colorado, Quichua, and Auca for various reasons, all came to nothing) was a deep lesson in the supremacy of Christ. Whom had I set out to serve? May He not do as He wills, then, with His servant and with that servant's work? Is anything offered to Christ ever wasted? I thought about the sacrifices of Old Testament times. When a man brought a lamb, the priest laid it on the altar, slit its throat, and burned it. The offering, then, was *accepted*. But what was left of it? Amy Carmichael taught me the implications of a *living sacrifice*. She wrote:

"But these strange ashes, Lord, this nothingness,
This baffling sense of loss!"
Son, was the anguish of My stripping less
Upon the torturing cross?
Was I not brought into the dust of death,
A worm, and no man, I,
Yea, turned to ashes by the vehement breath
Of fire, on Calvary?
O son beloved, *this* is thy heart's desire:
This, and no other thing
Follows the fall of the Consuming Fire
On the burnt offering.
Go on and taste the joy set high, afar,—
No joy like that to thee;
See how it lights the way like some great star.
Come now, and follow Me.

I want to put it down right here that I have certainly "tasted the joy." I cannot imagine a more wonderfully blessed life than mine. Faithfulness of a loving Father—that's what I've found, every day of every week of every year, and it gets better. How I do hope those prospective missionaries will believe me!

Gateway to Joy

If my daily (M-F) radio program, *Gateway to Joy*, is not heard in your area and you wish it were, you can obtain a demonstration tape to give to your local station. Call Linda Meyers, 1-800-759-4569.

Thank You for Praying

To all of you who pray for me—I need it, and I do thank you, from my heart. Will you also mention before the Lord the people who look to me for help? Ask Him to give me wisdom as I answer letters. Pray also for Alma Griffin, the wonderful woman who answers most of the radio mail. She sends it on to me, I read it, pray for over it, and answer a few. Here's a sampling you could pray for:

- "I seem to be incompatible around most women. I hope you good Sisters-in-Christ won't presume to offer me inappropriate and useless advice! I love you all in Jesus. Brother R_____."
- Husband killed in a car crash in 1991; in 1992 eight-year-old daughter accidentally shot and killed her thirteen-year-old brother (he had a twin sister).
- Husband on drugs and in prison for the third time.
- (from Saskatchewan) "While working the combine at night have been following the story of Glenda.... We are hurting. Our good-looking crop is frozen black, we have all production costs to pay so could easily get depressed. But—both of us are born again to our loving Savior, so will take one day at a time and praise Him!"
- (from Manitoba) "While trucking grain heard your program on Heaven.... We have two babies there. Please send tapes."
- Lost son, seventeen, to cystic fibrosis. Heard program while washing dishes and crying and praying.
- "Took two exams. I know in my heart I failed. Can God make me pass anyway?"
- "Have been suffering for six years about a past abortion. My husband and I stayed up till early morning hours crying about it. Since we couldn't do anything for the baby I made a small quilt, put it in a shoe box to bury. My husband put in a handkerchief because of the many tears we've shed.... I heard your program about the woman who thought God could never forgive her. 'What did *she* do that was so bad?' I wondered, 'I'm the one who's really bad.' She'd had an abortion! You said God forgives. It took my breath away. I cried on my baby's quilt, tears of sorrow and tears of joy—some day I will be with my child in Heaven!"

The Most Vexing Thorn

Feminism is not going to go away. Last November a threshold was crossed when the Anglican Church admitted women to the priesthood. *Time* magazine said feminism is rapidly emerging as "the most vexing thorn for Christianity." *Time* is a bit slow on the draw. Feminism from its inception more than twenty years ago has been a seriously vexing thorn for Christianity. It's not just now "emerging" as such. Trouble is relatively few Christians have bothered to think through even the social implications of this movement, let alone the shaky theology on which it rests.

It is interesting to see how many secular writers have noted the fallacies and contradictions of feminist ideology. Ann Berk, a radio station manager, wrote:

As working mothers, we embraced "quality versus quantity" because it's such an eminently sensible theory about child rearing and because we desperately needed a rationale to cling to as we went off to conquer the world, leaving the babies at home. But doubt lingers and nags, because we really don't know if the fruit will be bitter or sweet. Is there any substitute for being there? Does a phone call from the office take the place of touching?...

But there are those books again, promising happy unisex kids, growing up free. Whoopee. I'm tired of the lot of them, tired of the theories, the posturing, the preaching—the smugness.... Get a few of us together with our feet up and the awful truth pops out like chicken pox.

Then there's William Raspberry, a writer for the *Washington Post*:

I have long thought that feminists were playing on dangerous ground. It made sense to me that they wanted to get rid of the gender-specific constraints that had limited women's economic options. It was

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the next step that made me nervous: that women couldn't really be free unless men also were freed of their gender-specific roles and attitudes. The success of feminism, in short, would require the creation of a "new man."

Well, we've got him. He doesn't want to get married. If he was married, very likely he isn't now. If he had children, he isn't paying support. He's having fun. Feminism has liberated the man from the responsibility to grow up and put away childish things. He need not stick his neck out to ask for dates, open doors, send flowers, pick up the tab, or commit himself to anything. As for *sacrifice*, the kind that love, marriage, and fatherhood entail, he hasn't a thought. No longer inclined to do the thing he was made for—to be in charge, take responsibility and answer to God for it—the "new man" today seems to feel quite comfortable in going along with whatever the little lady (oops—*woman*—we're no longer to be called ladies, I'm told) wants.

Alas. This isn't really the new man. It's as old as Adam. He too went along with his wife's decision, and God held him responsible. "The mission of Christ's church is damaged," *Time* quotes, "when half its members are denied the chance to use their God-given gifts." Caution: is priesthood a gift God gives to women? I don't believe it is. Eve, too, felt cheated that she wasn't allowed to eat the fruit of *all* the trees in the garden. Everything that was good for her and Adam God gave. In His sovereign love He forbade the fruit that would destroy them. He had not designed human beings to bear the load of the knowledge of good and evil. I don't believe He designed us women to bear the weight of highest authority in either the church or the home, any more than He designed men to bear children. Ought we not to receive with thanksgiving what is given, glad that He withholds, for very good reasons, the not-given?

Ann Widdecombe, a member of Parliament and junior minister in the Conservative government, quit the Anglican church after the vote. "Its doctrine is doubt, its creed is compromise, and its purpose appears to be party politics. This was just the last straw."

Thank God there are still many men with conscience and clear vision. One of them, age thirty, who works with college students, told me he was seeking to speak out against the secular worldview of feminism: "The whole spirit that is conveyed is competitive and self-seeking. I see aggressive behavior, clinging to rights, taking initiative, and their zeal for 'equality' tends to obliterate all differences between men and women." He asks, "What is the key principle that I should stress?"

Mary, the mother of the Lord, expressed the principle which should characterize both men and women: the readiness to receive the gift God gives, no questions asked. Ephesians 5:22ff spells out the great mystery: the husband's gift of headship which requires sacrificial love; the wife's gift of subjection (we are *liberated!* The buck stops with the husband!). These "roles" can no more be reversed or equalized than can the relative positions of Christ and His church.

Jesus abandoned all equality, all rights, *all*, when He prayed, "Not my will, Thine." My friend Carla Brewington, a former card-carrying, raging feminist who has done a 180-degree turnaround, pierced directly to the heart of the feminist heresy: "It denies the Cross."

Recommended Reading

In 1988 I recommended *Stepping Heavenward* by Elizabeth Prentiss (1818-1878). She wrote to a friend, "Every word of that book was a prayer and seemed to come of itself. I never knew how it was written, for my heart and hands were full of something else."

One Reverend Marvin Vincent said, "The response to *Stepping Heavenward* was instant and general. Others of her books were enjoyed, praised, laughed over, but this one was taken by tired hands into secret places, pored over by eyes dim with tears, and its lessons played out.... It was one of those books which sorrowing Mary-like women read to each other, and which lured many a bustling Martha from the fretting of her care-cumbered life to ponder the new lesson of rest in toil."

Many have told me how greatly they've been helped by it, so I'm glad to be able to recommend a new edition, available from Calvary Press, Box 805, Amityville, NY 11701; (516) 789-8175. Special price for Newsletter readers: \$10 postpaid.

Too Much Fuss

"People make too much parade of their troubles and too much fuss about them; the fact is we are all born to tribulations, we also are born to innumerable joys, and there is no sense in being too much depressed or elated by either. 'The saddest birds a season find to sing.'"

—From a letter by Elizabeth Prentiss, 1872

Travel Schedule

March–July 1993

March 13 Chattanooga, TN; Woodland Park Baptist Church; Debra Martin, (615) 899-9185, home (615) 894-0216.

March 22-24 Taping for *Gateway to Joy*.

April 7-11 Madrid, Spain; Pocket Testament League.

April 16 Frederick, MD; Crisis Pregnancy Center, (301) 662-5300.

April 17 Sterling, VA; Faith Bible Church, (703) 430-1345.

April 18 Reston, VA; Reston Bible Church; Mary Wolfe, (703) 620-4263.

April 21 Boston, MA; Park Street Church luncheon; James Benson, (617) 523-3383.

April 23 Kansas City; Christian Association for Psychological Studies convention; Dr. Mack Harnden, (913) 345-0033.

April 23-24 Hudson, FL; Word of Life, (813) 856-7575.

April 28-May 2 Ketchikan, Sitka, Juneau, AK; Mrs. Ann Graham, PO Box 5544, Ketchikan, AK 99901.

May 11 Collingswood, NJ; Women Alive Ministries; Shirley Hughes, (609) 858-6750.

May 14-15 Boring, OR; Good Shepherd Community Church, (503) 663-5050.

June 25-26 Rancho Cucamonga, CA; Calvary Chapel; Janice Orate, (714) 276-9782.

July 24-25 Tuxedo, NC; Camp Greystone, (704) 693-3182.

July 26 Omaha, NE; Pope Paul VI Institute; Dr. Thomas W. Hilgers, (402) 390-6600.

Breakfast

Dump into the blender one or two bananas, a raw egg, a teaspoon or two of honey, a cup of yogurt, 1/2 cup of orange juice (or a few dollops of unthawed frozen o.j.). This will make about three glasses. A good breakfast, especially with bran muffins.

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The Elisabeth Elliot Newsletter

May / June 1993

ISSN 8756-1336

What Is a Wife To Do?

Many women write to me about their husbands—some of them so thankful for the godly men they've been given, some of them deeply troubled by ungodly behavior. I hear stories of professing Christians, pastors, church leaders who abuse their wives, neglect their children, spend money foolishly, etc. Recently several have written about men who habitually indulge in sexual sin of one sort or another. Usually the wife tells me she has confronted him with God's word, requested that he desist, begged him to submit to Christian counselling, discussed the deleterious effect it has on their marriage, and asked him to understand how deeply he is hurting those who love him. He turns a deaf ear.

What is a *wife* to do? *That* is the question I am asked. If I were asked what the husbands should do the answer is simple: quit it. When I say simple, of course, I do not mean easy. First a man must repent and admit his helplessness, which may be harder for a man than for us. Then he may be willing to accept the help of others who have walked the same path. Accountability and encouragement can help him see his sin for what it is.

God has given us a will, and promises the strength to say no to temptation. He never allows us to be tempted beyond our ability to resist. He will give us all the help we are *willing* to receive. "I will obey your decrees. I call out to you; save me and I will keep your statutes. I rise before dawn and cry for help; I have put my hope in your word. My eyes stay open through the watches of the night, that I may meditate on your promises" (Ps 119:145-148, NIV). The man whose temptation is pornography, for example, is not *forced* to go to the blue movie, open the pornographic mail or magazine, or visit the "adult" bookstore. But he, of

course, is not asking me or anyone else for advice. He doesn't want it. No amount of counselling, professional or otherwise, will change his lust unless he is willing to be changed. There must be a readiness to do what God says. "It is God's will that you should be sanctified: that you should avoid sexual immorality; that each of you should learn to control his own body in a way that is holy and honorable, not in passionate lust like the heathen" (1 Thes 4:3-5, NIV). That is what God has to say about it, and He has never given a command which he will not enable us to obey. It is ALWAYS possible to do the will of God.

In some cases the wife has not felt that it was *her* duty to confront him. While my first impulse was to say she should, further thought and prayer convinced me that she may be right. Are we not to have a gentle and quiet spirit? Is it the wife's place to confront, in view of 1 Peter 3:1-2, 6? "[Your husbands] may be won over without words by the behavior of their wives, when they see the purity and reverence of your lives. ... You are [Sarah's] daughters if you do what is right and do not give way to fear" (NIV). Things that are impossible with us are possible with God. He is in the business of changing men's hearts and transforming lives—often in answer to a wife's prayers.

It may not be amiss for the wife to seek human help, perhaps in a spiritual "mother," a woman who has walked with God for years and knows how to pray and how to keep a confidence. If professional counselling is sought, let it be truly Christian, i.e., Christ-centered, cross-centered. This week I received a letter from a woman who had had an apparently immovable obstacle in her relationship with her husband. She had struggled, prayed, searched desperately for answers, went with her husband to two Christian counsellors who were, in the end, as baffled as she was. Then one day, while working around the house, she prayed "just about every minute of the day, asking God to get through to me on what I needed to do." Next day's

sermon was an encouragement to step out in faith if one has a word from the Lord. She wrote,

I remembered your saying on the radio that when people tell you their problems, you often ask them what they think the Lord wants them to do. I was very surprised at the time to find I had an answer to my problem! A simple thing, acting against my feelings. I had tried to do what I thought God wanted me to do then, but decided it was too hard and wouldn't work anyway. I determined to try again. Things did not change overnight, but I persevered. Things changed dramatically. My husband can hardly believe the change in his wife! I can hardly believe it either!

In difficulties of all kinds I've been wonderfully helped by taking time to look at them in the light of Christ Himself. Do you know the hymn, "Beneath the Cross of Jesus"? (if not, you'd find it a great comfort to learn it by heart). That is where we must take our stand. It was at the cross that Jesus dealt with all our sins, griefs, and sorrows. He calls us to give up all right to ourselves, take up the cross, and follow. This hard place in which you perhaps find yourself, so painful and bewildering, is the very place in which God is giving you opportunity to look only to Him, to travail in prayer, and to learn long-suffering, gentleness, meekness — in short, to learn the depths of love that Christ Himself has poured out on all of us. It is *His* love that must be manifest in you as you quietly submit to what hurts you (Jesus submitted, too); treat your husband as we are commanded to treat enemies—with love (so did Jesus); refrain from taking moral responsibility for your husband (it is not our assignment as wives to do an overhaul job!), except as you daily lift him up to God. This form of suffering is your opportunity to learn to *leave with God what only God can do*. It is His mercy that offers it to you, and don't forget that "Love is His meaning," as Mother Julian of Norwich wrote.

One of the most transfiguring truths I know is that of our being called to *share* the sufferings of Christ. Colossians 1:24 and 1 Peter 4:12-19 put a wholly different perspective on the matter than any of us could have come up with. It's up to God to change hearts. It's up to us to do the simple (not always *easy*), humble,

sacrificial thing, and to faithfully leave the rest to God. "Continue to do good" (1 Pt 4:19, NIV), which means just **DO THE NEXT THING**, whatever that may be (mend those trousers? starch a white shirt?).

The fretting friction of our daily life,
Heart-weariness with loving patience borne,
The meek endurance of the inward strife,
The painful crown of thorn,
Prepare the heart for God's own dwelling place,
Adorn with sacred loveliness His shrine,
And brighten every inconspicuous grace,
For God alone to shine.

— Mary E. Atkinson

Recommended Reading

William K. Kilpatrick, *Why Johnny Can't Tell Right From Wrong*, Simon & Schuster, \$23.00. Are we aware that forty years ago American schools deliberately abandoned traditional character education? In its place we now have what's called the "non-judgmental" approach, celebrating the pupil's ego and feelings to the exclusion of moral principles. The loss of the capacity to form convictions threatens the fabric of society.

The author's prescription: **READ TO YOUR CHILDREN!** Expose them to literature that offers real characters from whom we can learn about real life. He gives an excellent reading list which includes Dickens' *Great Expectations* and Tolkien's *The Hobbit*.

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Recommended Listening

This is a first, and may be the last, but Bill Brehm just sent me his tape, *Ev'rything!* You all know that I am terribly partial to the *great, old*, strong-theology-filled HYMNS of the church. I find most modern gospel songs quite thin theologically, often grammatically insupportable, lacking in coherence, and set to music which has no real melody, let alone a tune one can memorize easily. *Ev'rything!* is gospel songs, but the voices are true singing voices, and most of the melodies are eminently singable. Best of all is the lyric of the title song. William K. Brehm, 4061 Ridgeview Circle, McLean VA 22101-5809, (703) 241-0588, \$4.00 (an accompanying book also available, \$4.00).

Got A Problem?

Jungle Indians had no problems. They hadn't even a word for it. Whatever life dealt out they seemed to accept with good humor and humility, did whatever needed to be done, and went on to the next thing. But in North America? We're different. Riddled with problems. We make problems where there aren't any. We're problem-oriented, and often come to a dead halt instead of quietly viewing the thing in the presence of God. Here's what two saints who seemed to view things that way wrote, many years ago.

Any problem that comes between God and myself springs out of disobedience; any problem, and there are many, that is alongside me while I obey God, increases my ecstatic delight, because I know that my Father knows, and I am going to watch and see how He unravels the thing.

— Oswald Chambers
My Utmost for His Highest, Dec. 14

It is good that we should have to submit to what we do not understand, it teaches us the laws of faith and hope.

It is good that we should have to do what we should rather not, in circumstances not of our choice.

It is good that there should be always something to prick us on, something to remind us that we are in an enemy's country, belonging to a marching column.

It is good that every creature we lean upon should fail or disappoint us.

It is good that we should meet with checks and failures in what we undertake, to keep us humble and prayerful.

All these things belong to sowing in tears.

— Janet Erskine Stewart

She refers here to Psalm 126:5-6: "Those who sow in tears will reap with songs of joy. He who goes out weeping, carrying seed to sow, will return with songs of joy, carrying sheaves with him" (NIV). Should not my particular problem today, if I receive it as a trust from the Lord, lead to songs of joy?

A Child's Hymn

Each night until we children were perhaps eight or ten years old, one or the other of our parents tucked us into bed, prayed for us, and sang with us. The earliest hymn we learned, I think, was this, a lovely one for a child to go to sleep on. Many a night in the jungle, as Valerie lay in the little bed her father had made for her just before he died, or on a bamboo slab in her blanket, she and I sang this together.

Jesus, Tender Shepherd, Hear Me

Second Tune
BROCKLESBURY
In unison, simply

87. 87

Melody by
CHARLOTTE A. BARNARD, 1868

1 Je - sus, ten - der Shep - herd, hear me; Bless thy lit - tle lamb to - night;
2 All this day thy hand has led me, And I thank thee for thy care;

Through the dark - ness be thou near me, Keep me safe till morn - ing light.
Thou hast warmed me, clothed, and fed me; Listen to my eve - ning prayer. A - men.

The musical score is written for two staves (treble and bass clef) in G major (one sharp). It consists of two systems of music. The first system contains two verses of lyrics. The second system contains the concluding line of the hymn. The melody is simple and suitable for unison singing.

Intercession

The women of two different churches have promised to "take me on" as a specific prayer burden. For this I am unspeakably grateful, and for each of you Newsletter readers who prays, I do thank you in Jesus' name. How *much* I need that help.

Pray for the many who have cancer and for the families that love them (so many write of their anguish); for our lawmakers and all who stand against laws which seem to open the floodgates of evil.

Prayer

"When Thou rememberest what relates to me, think of me only in the light of Thy mercy—forget all else, O Thou, my injured and justly offended God, my unspeakably gracious Benefactor. Put out of sight all that has severed between me and Thee." (William Kay's note on Psalm 25:7)

Keep in Touch

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May 14-15 Boring, OR; Good Shepherd Community Church, (503) 663-5050.

June 25-26 Rancho Cucamonga, CA; Calvary Chapel; Janice Orate, (714) 276-9782.

July 23 Haywood County, NC; Bethel Baptist, (704) 648-6621.

July 24-25 Tuxedo, NC; Camp Greystone, (704) 693-3182.

July 26 Omaha, NE; Pope Paul VI Institute; Dr. Thomas W. Hilgers, (402) 390-6600.

August 16-18 Taping for *Gateway to Joy*.

September 13-15 Asheville, NC; Billy Graham Training Center, (704) 298-2092.

September 16-18 Eagle River, MI; Lois Stout, (906) 482-1435.

October 15-16 Bakersfield, CA; Fruitvale Community Church, (805) 589-9733.

October 22-24 Whiting, NJ; America's Keswick, (908) 350-1187.

The Elisabeth Elliot Newsletter

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The Elisabeth Elliot Newsletter

July/August 1993

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The "S" Word

Submission. What does it mean? The question, asked of me by women only, never seems to refer to submission to civil law, military officers, the boss one works for, or the school teacher. It's submission to a *husband* that is the sticking point.

Instead of resorting to Webster this time, I'll give you Oswald Chambers' definition: "Submission means, etymologically, surrender to another, but in the evangelical sense it means that I conduct myself actually among men as the submissive child of my Father in heaven."

How do I learn to do that? Any perplexity ought to send me first to Jesus. How did *He* submit? His whole life on earth demonstrated an unconditional surrender to the glorious will of His Father: "I have come down from heaven not to do my will but to do the will of him who sent me" (Jn 6:38, NIV). Do we want to follow Him in this? Yes, we say, oh yes. But then—oh dear!—what if the will of the Father happens to be our submission to the will of a man? Nothing could be less to our liking. We search for every loophole.

"Wives, submit to your husbands as to the Lord" (Eph. 5:22, NIV). Many are the discussions I've heard on this one, almost all of them directed to what it "can't possibly mean," rather than to the plain word of the Lord. The statement is simple. Not easy for women like me, but *simple*, that is, I understand it only too well. As Mark Twain said, "I have far more trouble with the things I do understand in the Bible than with the things I don't understand." Worst case scenarios are immediately put forward—"What if my husband asks me to do something immoral?" Heads nod vigorously. Cases are described. But the question was what submission *means*. Chambers has put it well—that I conduct myself as God's child. The spirit of God's Son was the spirit of submission, no questions asked as to His own safety or comfort, no effort to engineer things for Himself, but rather an utter handing over of all His powers to His Father, a perfect confidence that the consequences of this obedience lay in His Father's hands.

"But my husband is fallible," you say. So's mine. But my submission to him *is* obedience to God. How far am I prepared to trust myself into my Father's hands? That is the real question. We must learn to *submit* our "What if's" and "Yeah, but's." To the humble and honest soul who does not proudly and arrogantly assume that God's arrangement of things will not "work" in her case, the light of grace will always be given.

"But Elisabeth—you don't seem to realize that *my* case is an exception!" Is it? Then it's not my business. I try to stick to what the Bible does say, not to what it doesn't say. God didn't give us any footnotes. Take your special case to the foot of the cross. Have a long, honest look at it there. Let the light of Christ illuminate your situation. Then do whatever *He* tells you.

Why should a wife submit to a husband rather than the reverse? Are we not equal? No, not equal in the sense of interchangeable. The heart of the matter is a mystery: the mystery of Christ and the church. Try reading Ephesians 5:22-24, reversing the nouns. It's nonsense. God assigned husbands and wives different *positions*, each representing a tremendous verity: the husband representing Christ, the wife the church, His bride. This is a divine arrangement, not chosen, earned, or deserved by either husband or wife, not conferred by either on the other, but designated by God Himself. I am thankful for this arrangement because I know it is a revelation of divine wisdom and love, given for our freedom and peace.

I have been thinking, talking, writing, about this for years—not because it's my favorite subject (far from it!), but because it keeps coming up. I confess that I am not Exhibit A of the submissive woman, but in my old age the Lord in His wonderful patience and mercy is showing me how simple it is just to keep my mouth shut. That's what it comes down to most of the time. *Sometimes*, of course, my responsibility as a helper for my husband requires my gently calling to his attention something he has perhaps overlooked in making a decision. He listens, and occasionally sticks with his original plan anyway. Do I fall in with it graciously, quietly, in the spirit of Christ? Most of my testings come in the *little* things, when I automatically want to put forward

my own preferences, arguments, logic, clarifications. Relinquishing those has meant a new freedom from stress and a new thankfulness for my husband Lars Gren. Isn't that amazing? It shouldn't be—I knew all along that trust and obedience are the *only* way "to be happy in Jesus," as the old gospel song says.

"If you obey my commands," Jesus said, "you will remain in my love, just as I have obeyed my Father's commands and remain in his love. I have told you this so that my JOY may be in you and that your JOY may be complete" (Jn 15:10-11, NIV, emphasis added).

And what about the husbands? They've been given a far tougher assignment: love your wives as Christ loved the church. Give yourself up for her to make her holy. Love your wives as your own bodies (Eph 5:25-28). Who could balk at submission to a man who really did that? No man does it perfectly, but even if he did, we'd still balk, I guess, for we balk at submission to Christ Himself, who loves us perfectly!

*Oh Lord, have mercy upon us and
incline our hearts to keep Your law.*

Shall We Go for the Gold?

Anna Alexander of Roswell, Georgia, whose 37-year-old husband died very suddenly in 1985, wrote:

I remember saying to the Lord the morning after Mike died, "Silver would have been just fine.... Did we have to go for the gold?" But since I'm in the furnace my goal is to come forth as pure gold and to challenge everyone I come in contact with to do the same. Job 23:10 has become my life verse: "He knows the way that I take; when He has tested me I will come forth as gold." I'd like to share an acrostic that includes four principles I've lived and I believe can apply to any trial:

G God doesn't make any mistakes

(Ps. 46:10, Is. 45:9)

O Operate with eternity's perspective

(2 Cor 4:17, 2 Pt 3:14)

L Live one day at a time

&

Look for a blessing each day

D Do something for someone else

(Mt. 25:40)

Two Sisters' Pact

We had a free airline ticket that had to be used before the end of March. My first thought is always grandchildren. Might one of them come from California to see us? Lars consented, so we told Walt and Valerie to decide which child it should be. Walter, the oldest, is tied up with the swim team. Jim and Colleen had had their turn. Two are too young. So it was to be Christiana, eleven, or Elisabeth, thirteen. Christiana told this story:

When we found out that one of us was going to go, we were waiting expectantly for Mom and Dad to tell us which one it would be. Elisabeth pulled me into the bathroom and said, "Christiana, we need to talk about this. Let's make a deal. If I go, you'll promise not to get upset, whereas, if you go, I won't be upset." I said, "Of course I'll promise." We shook hands and went and told Mama what we had done. After we had begged and begged my dad said quietly, "We've decided to let Christiana go." And Elisabeth said, "I'm very happy for you." My mom and I hugged her and said, "Oh, that's very sweet of you, Elisabeth—thank you!"

She's here as I write this, sitting in the recliner by the window in our bedroom, doing math homework. She leafs through an old hymnbook and plays and sings; she washes dishes, sets the table, irons, reads George MacDonald, walks with us in the snow, teaches me to play Dutch Blitz, listens to an Isak Dinesen tape, helps me with print-outs for the computer, writes in her journal, plays her favorite tapes for me, quotes a British comedienne (with excellent English accent), and generally blesses us.

"Grandchildren are the crown of old age" (Prv. 17:6, NEB).

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Qualified?

Lord, who am I to teach the way
To little children day by day,
So prone myself to go astray?

Lord, if their guide I still must be,
O let my little children see
The teacher leaning hard on Thee.

—Leslie P. Hill

A Love Story

From a young woman who was “prepared by the Lord by reading *Passion and Purity*.” She left an active dating life to trust the Lord first and fully in the area of romance. She wrote:

I decided to “will” the romantic side to sleep, as it were, until it would please the Lord to awaken it. For eight months, at twenty-seven years old, I didn’t date.... I knew I was not to be “romantic” or use men in being taken to dinner, etc., when I knew they were not who the Lord had for me.

Then, I met Charles (not his real name) who asked me to lunch.... My “romantic” side was awake, but I knew he needed time to do what I had done in making the Lord first in the lovelife. We didn’t date for a couple of months until he felt the “go ahead” with three rules from the Lord: 1. Quiet time daily. 2. Bridle your heart. 3. Don’t touch her. That was in March. At Easter he held my hand for the first time when my father initiated it at prayer for dinner. June 6 he asked me to be his wife and one week later he kissed me for the first time. We’ll be married in thirty-four days and counting!

Charles is thirty-five, never been married. We are both highly active, social, professionals. We have discovered true romance in having “not a hint of impurity,” and seeking first His kingdom. I am so blessed. I have *such* respect for Charles and am so honored by him. Praise be to God for the great things He has done.

Women in the Work World

Because I want to be faithful to what Scripture *does* say I often refer to that passage which tells me, as an older woman, what I am supposed to say to younger women: Titus 2:3-5. But, they want to know, is it wrong for a single mother to work? Is it wrong for a woman who has no children at home to work? Is it wrong for a woman to work because her husband insists on it? The last question is not quite so difficult, since a wife must submit and trust the results to God. I cannot answer the first two. So, for you who so far have found it necessary to work I want to offer some encouragement and comfort.

1. “My God will meet all your needs according to his glorious riches in Christ Jesus” (Phil 4:19, NIV). Just remember that *God* must be the judge of our needs. Being wise, powerful, and loving, He can be fully trusted to do just what He says.

2. You only know what you have to do *today*. None of us knows the future. Be faithful today—do your work faithfully, thoroughly, honestly, and gratefully. “Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving” (Col. 3:23-24, NIV).

3. Be a lady. Betty Greene, pilot during World War II and later with Mission Aviation Fellowship, told me, “I made up my mind if I was to ‘make it in a man’s world,’ I had to be a lady.” A true lady is recognized and respected by men. Keep your honor, your distance, and your close touch with God. He will protect you.

4. If you are truly abandoned to the Lord, He will show you if/when He has a different assignment for you. Stay in touch with Him.

Bible Study for Little Ones

The Find Out series has been specially written for parents to use with their five and six-year-old children. A set of six books, 50 readings in each, is \$21.95 postage included. Scripture Union, 7000 Ludlow St., Upper Darby PA 19082. (1-800-621-LAMP)

Prayer

The Dohnavur Fellowship suffered great damage to trees and buildings during a cyclone. Thank the Lord that though many in the district were killed, Dohnavur people were spared. (I am not authorized to solicit funds for them, but many of you who love the writings of Amy Carmichael, who founded the DF, would want to know. Checks made out to The Dohnavur Fellowship may be sent to Mrs. Charles Schwartz, 3260 SW 20th St., Miami FL 33145.)

Praise God for the heartening response we receive from listeners to Gateway to Joy and readers of the Newsletter and books. Thank Him with us for the excellent health and daily strength He gives Lars and me; for His constant help in our work together.

Pray this prayer for your church: Gracious Father, we pray that You will fill us with all truth, in all truth with all peace. Where we are corrupt, purify us; where we are in error, direct us; where in anything we are amiss, reform us. Where we are right, strengthen us; where we are in want, provide for us; where we are divided, reunite us; for the sake of Jesus Christ Your Son our Savior. Amen.

Keep in Touch

Are you moving? Getting married? Leaving school? Don't forget to send us your change of address. The post office DOES NOT FORWARD third class mail like the Newsletter. Please remove your address label below and send it with your new address to: The Elisabeth Elliot Newsletter, Post Office Box 7711, Ann Arbor, MI 48107-7711.

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July–November 1993

July 16 Windham, NH; Windham Bible Chapel, (603) 898-9899.

July 23 Haywood County, NC; Bethel Baptist, (704) 648-6621.

July 24-25 Tuxedo, NC; Camp Greystone, (704) 693-3182.

July 26 Omaha, NE; Pope Paul VI Institute; Dr. Thomas W. Hilgers, (402) 390-6600.

August 16-18 Taping for *Gateway to Joy*.

September 13-15 Asheville, NC; Billy Graham Training Center, (704) 298-2092.

September 16-18 Eagle River, MI; Lois Stout, (906) 482-1435.

September 26 St. Louis, MO; Eagle Forum, Phyllis Schlafly, (202) 544-0353.

October 15-16 Bakersfield, CA; Fruitvale Community Church, (805) 589-9733.

October 22-24 Whiting, NJ; America's Keswick, (908) 350-1187.

November 5-7 Grosse Pointe, MI; Christ Church, (313) 885-4841.

November 11-12 Charleston, SC; College of Charleston, Ellenor Mahon, (803) 792-5640.

November 13 Spartanburg, SC; Westgate Family Physicians Training Center, Donald Dunlap, (803) 574-0070.

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Church Troubles

When the church prays "hallowed be thy name" it is usually pretty obvious that that holy name is far from hallowed in the way we as church members behave. In our travels we see and hear much about church troubles, and I am always reminded of the high-priestly prayer of the Lord Jesus just before He went to the cross. As He prayed for believers ("those you have given me") His petition was, "Holy Father, protect them by the power of your name—the name you gave me—so that they may be one as we are one" (Jn 17:11, NIV). For those who would later believe He prayed, "that all of them may be one, Father.... May they be brought to complete unity to let the world know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me" (Jn 17:21, 23).

The answer to that prayer seems yet remote. Ought we not to put ourselves, each of us as individuals, in a position to cooperate with God in His bringing about this unity? How shall the world recognize His love unless we act in love toward one another? No one, I feel sure, would disagree here—in theory. *Love each other*. The obstacle is our selfish, self-determined selves.

Most churches have problems with the choir. Martin Luther said, "If you can confine the devil's work to the choir, do so." But let's suppose that the problem seems to be the pastor. (I confess to a certain bias in favor of these harried souls—I have a nephew, two-nephews-in-law, a son-in-law, and a brother who are pastors.) He's too young or too old, too conservative or too liberal, his sermons are irrelevant to our needs, or too long or too pointed for this congregation, he's a social mismatch, not sensitive to the variety of folks we've got here, he's partial—in short, we got the wrong man, it's a bad mix, the solution is simple: get rid of him. Then all will be well.

Before we take such a position of sovereignty, assuming we *know* the root of the trouble and are warranted in enforcing our "solution," might we not ask

ourselves a few questions? (I do *not* refer here, of course, to cases which unequivocally call for dismissal, such as immorality or heresy.)

1. Who called this pastor? Was it the bishop? The church? Was the decision prayed over? Do we believe in the Holy Spirit's guidance?

2. Do we understand the shepherd of the flock to be one who bears responsibility and authority? "Encourage and rebuke with all authority" was the apostle Paul's word to a young shepherd (Ti 2:15, NIV). To Timothy he said, "Command and teach" (1 Tm 4:11, NIV). "Obey your leaders and submit to their authority...so that their work will be a joy, not a burden" (Heb 13:17, NIV). Have we respected that divine assignment?

3. If the sheep send the shepherd out of the fold, will not the sheep themselves be devastated, as well as the shepherd? Spiritual devastation is often the result of taking things into our own hands. No humility is wrought in us, no more robust faith is born.

4. Have we learned the meekness which understands the power of patience, of quiet waiting on God, and the futility of employing massive methods to get our own way? What about the reverence that trusts God's hidden, seemingly slow, working out of His own mysterious purposes? Impatience hardens.

5. Have we challenged evil with the wrong weapons? "By the meekness and gentleness of Christ, I appeal to you.... Though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds" (2 Cor 10: 1,3-4, NIV).

6. Are we willing to accept suffering? How much do we know of costly action, sacrificial love? Have we been willing to lay down our lives for this man, travail in prayer, accept the cross in the depths of our own hearts? The demands of faith cut across human logic and politics, and often oppose all ordinary methods and even common sense.

7. Have we pondered Jesus' warning not to expect His church to be without spot or wrinkle? The net brings in good fish and bad. The tares grow along with

the wheat. He is at work perfecting His own bride—we'll never manage it ourselves.

8. Are we willing to let the cross cut painfully—humbly to relinquish our grasp of what we believe to be the true nature of the conflict, let go of our certainties of what "ought to be," and of our particular "rights"? Can we, in the spirit of Christ, mortify our whims, accept setbacks, accustom ourselves to misunderstanding, quit asking "What about *my* needs?" Let God take care of those—He promised He would, ALL of them.

"The Christian turns again and again from that bewildered contemplation of history in which God is so easily lost, to the prayer of filial trust in which He is always found, knowing here that those very things which seem to turn to man's disadvantage may yet work to the Divine advantage. On the frontier between prayer and history stands the Cross, a perpetual reminder of the price by which the Kingdom is brought in" (Evelyn Underhill, ABBA).

Perhaps, if we would earnestly and prayerfully consider these things, both pastor and flock might be changed and the severance thus avoided. Perhaps not, but in the process we, the sheep, will certainly have learned to trust the Chief Shepherd more fully, and will have become a little more like Him.

Love divine has seen and counted
Every tear it caused to fall,
And the storm which Love appointed
Was its choicest gift of all.
(Anonymous)

Notes from Spain

In April Lars and I went to Spain. The Pocket Testament League had asked me to speak to a student conference in Huesca. We got off to rather an inauspicious start. Had dinner with a Spanish family, thanked them profusely for the excellent meal, but learned too late that it is not polite to do this. When we tried to say goodbye, they explained that it is not their custom to part with guests at the door. They *all* got on the bus with us, rode a mile or two and took us for coffee before bidding us farewell.

Madrid brought back lovely memories of Quito—the ornate white buildings, balconies, flowers, blue skies, warm sunshine, spacious plazas. My Spanish was usable but decrepit, having been learned in Quito in 1952 and never used much since (jungle Indians had their own languages), so I spoke from the platform by

interpretation but enjoyed conversations in Spanish. Our hostess was missionary Debbie Laws from Iowa, one of those warm and candid people we felt as though we'd known forever. She cheerfully chauffeured us, moved out of her bedroom for us, fed us and thought most lovingly of everything we needed.

Feeling very foreign and inaccessible one morning at the conference I had asked God to give access to speak *His* word to someone. A young woman asked for time to talk, said God was speaking to her in *hard* words I had spoken—"Muy dificil, pero fueron Sus palabras," she said. "Very difficult, but they were *His* words." So thank you, you who were praying with/for me.

Talked with a husband and wife, he very gentle and soft-spoken ("She gives me orders!"), she very strong, very angry, eyes flashing: ("He refuses to do anything in the house! I have a seven-hour-a-day job!!"). Would you put them in your prayers, please?

Teenage Resolutions: For Mom and Dad

Resolved: I will obey your instructions and do what I know you expect of me, even when it is not mentioned. I will not force you into repeated reminders, which I sometimes call nagging.

Resolved: I will not grumble or complain when I do my chores, but remember what a great thing it is to have a family and a home and clothes and food and running water and electric light and central heating in a world where millions of teenagers have none of these.

Resolved: When I think your demands are unfair, I will move to do them first, and after showing an obedient attitude, I will ask if we can talk. Then I will

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explain my side and try to understand yours.

Resolved: I will not stonewall you and give you the silent treatment, which I dislike when my friends do it to me. If I am depressed and want to be left alone, I will say, "I'm sorry, I don't feel like talking now. Can we talk later? I'm not mad, I just need to be alone."

Resolved: When I do something wrong and let you down, I will apologize sincerely with words you can hear. Something like: "Mom, I'm sorry I didn't pick up the pile of clothes."

Resolved: I will call you by affectionate family titles like "mommy and daddy" or "mom and dad." And I won't let other kids pressure me into calling you nothing, or calling you something disrespectful as though true affection were embarrassing or childish.

Resolved: I will say thank you again and again for the ordinary things you do for me. I will not take them for granted as though you are my slave.

Resolved: I will talk about my feelings. Both the positive ones (like happiness, pity, excitement, sympathy, etc.) and the negative ones (like anger, fear, grief, loneliness, discouragement, etc.). I will remember that unshared feelings lead to estrangement and coldness and even more loneliness and discouragement.

Resolved: I will laugh with the family, not at the family. I will especially laugh when my little brother or sister tells a simple joke with expectant excitement.

Resolved: I will give two compliments for every criticism. And every criticism will aim to help someone improve, not just belittle or cut down.

Resolved: I will enter into family devotions and treat Bible reading and prayer with respect, and do my part to help others in the family enjoy them. When I don't feel spiritually strong, I will pray about this as a personal need rather than pouring it on others like a glass of cold water. I will remember that confessed weakness knits hearts together.

Resolved: I will not return evil for evil or try to justify my meanness because somebody treated me meanly first.

Resolved: I will read my Bible and pray every day even if it is only a verse and a brief call for help. I know that teens cannot live by bread alone, but by every word that comes out of the mouth of God.

Resolved: I will come home at the time we agreed on. If something happens to stop me, I will call and explain and ask your guidance.

Resolved: I will greet our guests with courtesy and respect and try to make them glad they came.

Resolved: I will always tell the truth so that you can trust me and give me more and more freedom as I get older.

—John Piper, pastor,
Bethlehem Baptist Church, Minneapolis.
Used with permission.

Prayer

Give me, O Lord,
A steadfast heart,
which no unworthy affection
may drag downwards;
Give me
An unconquered heart,
which no tribulation
can wear out;
Give me
An upright heart,
which no unworthy purpose
may tempt aside.
Bestow on me also, O Lord my God,
understanding to know You,
diligence to seek You,
wisdom to find You,
and a faithfulness
that may finally embrace You,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

—Thomas Aquinas

Inner Darkness

The supreme test of our confidence in God lies, perhaps, in those moments of complete inner darkness in which we feel as though we are forsaken by God. Our heart feels blunt; our prayers for strength and inspiration sound hollow.... An impenetrable wall separates us from God.... An ardent belief in His love; a steadfast conviction that *He* is near to us even though *we* are, or imagine ourselves to be, far way from Him; an unbroken awareness that "He hath first loved us."... These must carry us across the chasms of darkness and lend us strength to blindly let ourselves fall into His arms."

—Dietrich Von Hildebrand,
Transformation in Christ

Correction

Information in the July/August newsletter was incorrect. Gifts for the Dohnavur Fellowship, Amy Carmichael's work in India, may be sent to the D.M. Stearns Missionary Fund, P.O. Box 1578, North Wales, PA 19454. IMPORTANT: Check to be made out to that fund, NOT to the Dohnavur Fellowship. Enclose a separate note designating the gift for Dohnavur.

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November 13 Spartanburg, SC; Westgate Family Physicians Training Center, Donald Dunlap, (803) 574-0070.

December 3-4 Asheboro, NC; First Baptist Church, (919) 629-9191.

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Thank God for His Saints

November 1 has for many centuries been observed by Christians as All Saints Day, which follows Hallowe'en (which means "the evening preceding All-hallows"). Hallows are saints. Isn't it awesome to remember that *we*, you and I, are called to be saints (see Rom 1:7, 1 Cor 1:2, etc.)? We can thank God for, and follow the example of those who have responded to His call by giving themselves without reservation for His disposal. They overcame the Adversary "by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony; they did not love their lives so much as to shrink from death" (Rv 12:11, NIV). To live holy lives in this world calls for "patient endurance and faithfulness on the part of the saints" (Rv 13:10, NIV). I feel sure that the direction our country is taking will surely call for more and more of that endurance and that faithfulness. Be encouraged by this hymn (and wouldn't it be a good one to teach your children?):

Beautiful in Its Time

One autumn day, when all the leaves had fallen and the trees were skeletons, I came upon a barberry bush, bare of leaves, but hung with thousands of tiny red footballs, trembling and shining in the sun. Its beauty, amid all the bare brown of its surroundings, almost stopped my heart. There came at once to mind the words, "He hath made everything beautiful in his time" (Eccl 3:11, KJV). The time was autumn, and the beauty was the kind that belongs to autumn. Ought we not to praise God for the beauty that belongs to *life's* autumn as well? It is not the beauty of spring or summer, but oh, it *is* beautiful—don't you think?

(And if the face that looks back at us from the mirror happens to be an old face, shouldn't it comfort us to accept the fact that now is the time—God's *appointed* "autumn"—for us to wear that particular sort of beauty?)

I Sing a Song of the Saints of God

GRAND ISLE
With vigor

JOHN HENRY HOPKINS, 1940



1 I sing a song of the saints of God Pa-tient and brave and true,
2 They loved their Lord so dear, so dear, And his love made them strong;
3 They lived not on-ly in a-ges past, There are hun-dreds of thou-sands still,



Who toiled and fought and lived and died For the Lord they loved and
And they fol-lowed the right, for Je-sus' sake, The whole of their good lives
The world is bright with the joy-ous saints Who love to do Je-sus'



knew. And one was a doc-tor, and one was a queen, And
long. And one was a sol-dier, and one was a priest, And
will. You can meet them in school, or in lanes, or at sea, In



one was a shep-herd-ess on the green: They were all of them
one was slain by a fierce wild beast: And there's not a-ny
church, or in trains, or in shops, or at tea, For the saints of . .



saints of God—and I mean, God help-ing, to be one too.
rea-son—no, not the least—Why I shouldn't be one too.
God are just folk like me, And I mean to be one too.

Words by Lesbia Scott. Used by permission of Morehouse Publishing.

Norwegian Journal

My husband Lars Gren (yes, I'm Mrs. Lars Gren—EE is only my pen name) grew up in Norway, but he had never seen the North Cape. Last May we saw it. Seven days on a bus from Oslo took a delightful group of Norwegians, the Voases from Mississippi, Lars and me up to the top of that elongated rock pile which is Norway, through Mojsa, beautiful farm country with lovely old houses kept in perfect repair, very green pastures with sheep and newborn lambs, along the River Glomma. Everything neat, trim, ordered, peaceful, somehow speaking of strength and stability.

Then deep ravines, rushing streams, high, barren, rock-topped and rounded mountains with patches of old snow, coverings of new snow. As we go north, barns are larger to house the animals with all their feed year round. Fir forests give way to stunted evergreens, then to birches with sun shining through their delicate new leaves. Suddenly, right close to the road, two *reindeer*, so much smaller than I had imagined, with velvet antlers. This, we are told, is the country of the Lapps, who are properly called Sami. They own the reindeer and follow their annual migrations to Finland and Sweden.

At the Arctic Circle on Day Three great sloping fields of snow, ten feet deep, black rocks, more mountains, lowering clouds and blue sky. Half-an-hour's drive takes us down to green forests, a rushing river, and a graveyard where several thousand Russian and Yugoslavian prisoners of World War II are buried—a lonely, quiet place. Sunshine. Birdsong.

Fjord after fjord, surrounded by spectacularly steep mountains. Seventeen tunnels, one 4 1/2 kilometers long. Cheerful little brooks tumble down toward the road, spindly birches grow not more than eight or ten feet tall. We see the midnight sun, red and low on the horizon at Tysfjorden. Strange to have no darkness in twenty-four hours—but there are four months of the year there where there is little but darkness. A magnificent moose strides speedily along in the snow, unperturbed by the bus stopping.

Near Alta we come upon herds of reindeer—rather thin and scruffy. The herds have gotten too large for the food supply, but the Lapps do not want to kill their prized status symbols. At last we reach the very top of Norway, the North Cape—vast moors, black shale-like rocks, snow, brown moss, heavy overcast, rain, sleet, snow. No chance of seeing the midnight sun. It is dark and cold. We stand in the Arctic wind on a tremendous promontory. The waves thunder on the rocks far below.

Next day, Day Seven, we are in Kirkenes, a town

which was completely leveled by the Nazis. In the cemetery we find many gravestones dated August or September, 1944. I think of God's promise, "All things... for good." *All*—to those who love Him. And I remember the sweepingly powerful name, "Blessed Controller of All Things" (1 Tm 6:15, J.B. Phillips).

We board the coastal steamer *Narvik* at ten, to begin our cruise down the west coast. A comfortable and immaculate little stateroom (things in Norway are almost without exception *immaculate*). When I wake in the morning I see from my bed sharper, more rugged mountains racing past the porthole, in place of the enormous flat-topped bluffs of the North Cape. In Hammerfest, the northernmost town in the world, we visit the churchyard. One stone holds the photograph of a teenage boy, "beloved son, shot by the Germans in 1944." Another poignant tribute: "You were a good mother." Reindeer droppings in the streets. Snow fences high above the town to prevent avalanches from burying it.

Buffet breakfasts and lunches include the always-wonderful homemade breads, and cheeses, meats, sea gull eggs (slightly grayish, large as duck eggs, delicious as hen eggs); for dinner, reindeer stroganoff, salmon steaks. A lady tells what they ate during the war: cabbage, fish, potatoes. Sometimes just fish. (Lars, who grew up in Norway during the Occupation, remembers his grandmother sending him to the store to buy the rationed one-half-cup of milk. He and his cousin Bjørg had a little business going—picking up cigarette butts, emptying the tobacco into a can, and selling it. When he took a drag on a cigarette once his grandfather took him out to the woodshed and laid on the birch branch. It cured him.)

We sail into a fjord so narrow we nearly touch both sides. Deep, clear, black water, turquoise close to the rock. A thin, delicate veil of water falls over the face of the nearly perpendicular cliff.

"Are we going east or west?" a man asks. "West," says his wife, "there's the sun." "The sun means *nothing* in this country," says he, "it just goes round and round."

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I would love to expatiate on each scene—the beautiful Lofoten with its islands, turquoise water, white beaches (the Gulf Stream keeps Norway's coast open year-round), rich green fields and pastures, flowers, racks of thousands of fish being dried; Drivdalen, the quiet valley where my friend Kristin Lavransdatter lived, fictional heroine of Sigrid Undset's Nobel prizewinning trilogy (READ it!). The distant tinkle of sheep bells, the fragrance of fir and hay, flowers newly planted on the graves of "The Green Howards," British soldiers killed in 1940, still remembered by the locals. And then our three days after the tour ended with Lars's beloved cousin Bjørg and her husband Sigurd, but you've had enough, haven't you? More than enough? Forgive me! It was our first real vacation in nearly sixteen years of marriage and we can't help wanting to share it.

A Child Is a Gift

Sarah Abigail is the most recent gift, heritage and blessing to enrich the Shepard household, born August 17th, bringing my daughter Valerie's family to five girls and three boys. "Every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights" (Jas. 1:17, NKJV). We thank Him with all our hearts.

Now Here's Lars

Since E. got on to this Norway thing let me bore you with a few items from the past. I was in Norway a total of ten years with Far and Mor (my grandparents). I was separated from my parents when the war broke out and it was '46 before I could rejoin my family. Wonderful is an inadequate word for Mor and Far. They were servants to all. Far is the only man I know who literally offered his other cheek to an angry man who hit him. He loved the Lord and was the watchman for the church next door for some forty years. Along with that job he worked at a sawmill and often took charge of deliveries with horse and wagon. I recall the day we had to put a horse down. How sad for Far, a lover of working horses. In the summer he would work on the log jam in the river or at times haying on a farm. I can see him swinging a scythe. What pleasure I had to be a part of his life. He would sit at home and read to Mor and me. At times he would play the piano and sing hymns. His voice was good. There was Bible reading, prayer, and church whenever the doors were opened. Well, he opened them. He

set the early course of my life. How much less painful my life would have been had I heeded his instructions. Some would say he was too stern but not so. Yes was yes and no was no and he lived the word. One was secure with Far.

Everyone loved Mor—black dress, white collar or the crisp apron. Always concerned with others. She and Far both had a sense of humor. How cozy to be around her. No church picnic or outing to an island could be undertaken without Mor. For who could make hot chocolate like her? Somehow we managed hot chocolate at times during the Occupation. She cleaned, cooked, re-patched patches and made the house a home for Far and me.

Other than the tobacco business, what are some memories? In disobedience to Far, going skiing for the first time and breaking my leg. Brought home on a sleigh by a woman who was a German sympathizer. Far never said I told you so. Then the time I was sitting on a railing, waiting for a friend, when I lost my balance, fell straight down the stairwell, three stories. My head came in contact with the cement floor causing a slight concussion. I walked home between Far and Mor, it was just around the corner from our house. Another time: blood streaming down my face from contact with a rock which had been thrown over a wall as my friend Bjarne and I were trying to get away from a town bully. Trying to get from the shoulders of my friend on to the roof next door and falling. Yes, it was the old head in the street again. My second job, selling papers on the street corner. Most memorable of all: the invasion, early air raids, evacuation of the town (until the capitulation), proud German troops marching in under banners with music corps, the goose step, the feared black uniforms of the Nazis. The German officers wanting to see the church facilities. Mor and I only showed them the wood cellar. It didn't suit their needs. Going to the country with Bjørg and asking farmers if they would give us an egg. We did pretty well. Mor's bread that I ate out from under the small piece of meat, to put it on the next piece of bread and so to eat all the meat in one bite after the bread. Leaflets dropped from Allied planes, announcing peace; the flags at war's end, prisoners coming out. The pitiful lot of German soldiers straggling to the pier boarding ships for the journey home which some had wanted long before. Seeing my first banana and wondering what the taste must be like. Looking back I would not exchange those years for anything. There were different experiences and blessings when I rejoined my family in the States but I am grateful to God that in His plan I had those years with Mor and Far. It set the course for my life. "Home" to me will always mean Norway.

Now I want to thank all who have so generously contributed to the newsletter this year. We do want to avoid the "heavy-type underlined distress calls for help." Your response to our renewal offer (a book you could have bought for less) and the contributions enabled us to send the letter to many for free and overseas to 68 countries. ALL BILLS ARE PAID. Once in the past I said if any are helped by giving end-of-year gifts for tax purposes, the newsletter will "volunteer" to be a recipient!

Suggestion for Christmas!

Last year the folks who manage my broadcast, *Gateway to Joy*, produced a flip calendar with quotations which they selected from my talks and writing, along with appropriate Scriptures. It's a perpetual calendar, selections for each day, but not limited to any one year. DO NOT ORDER FROM THE NEWSLETTER. Order from *Gateway to Joy*, Box 82500, Lincoln, NE, 68501 1-800-759-4JOY; \$7.95 (U.S.) or Box 10, Winnipeg, MB R3C 2G2, 1-800-663-2425; \$9.95 (Can.).

Keep in Touch

Are you moving? Getting married? Leaving school? Don't forget to send us your change of address. The post office DOES NOT FORWARD third class mail like the Newsletter. Please remove your address label below and send it with your new address to: The Elisabeth Elliot Newsletter, Post Office Box 7711, Ann Arbor, MI 48107-7711.

Travel Schedule November 1993–March 1994

November 5-7 Grosse Pointe, MI; Christ Church, (313) 885-4841.

November 11-12 Charleston, SC; College of Charleston, Ellenor Mahon, (803) 792-5640.

November 13 Spartanburg, SC; Westgate Family Physicians Training Center, Donald Dunlap, (803) 574-0070.

November 20 New York City; Hephzibah House, Fall Retreat, Ruby Hay, (212) 568-6123 or 787-6150.

December 3-4 Asheboro, NC; First Baptist Church, (919) 629-9191.

January 13-14 Taping for *Gateway to Joy*.

January 15 San Fernando Valley, CA; Patti Thompson, (818) 341-8484.

January 27 Brownsville, TX; Baptist Student Union, Mrs. Malcolm Brown, (210) 543-0317.

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February 6 South Hamilton, MA; Gordon Conwell Seminary, World Christian Fellowship, Elizabeth Evans, (508) 468-5030.

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The Elisabeth Elliot Newsletter

January/February 1994

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Maybe This Year...?

"I hardly know where to start," a recent letter begins. "My story is not one involving men. That's the problem. Male companionship seems not to be found, and, I fear, may never be found. They never ask me out twice. I'm always 'dumped.' The problem is *I want a relationship*. I have this overwhelming desire..."

Last evening in my living room someone said, "I fell deeply in love. He fell deeply in love, too—with someone else."

Another letter tells of the agonized yearning of one couple for a child. Since God has not removed the desire, they ask, may we not conclude that He wants us to employ whatever means we can (e.g. *in vitro* fertilization) in order to have a child?

God's not having taken away a perfectly normal human desire does not by any means indicate that we are free to pursue its fulfillment in any way we choose. A woman who had, after years of struggles, quickly lost sixty pounds told me that she had been expecting *God* to take away her appetite. When she realized He did not intend to do so (she had been asking for the removal of our God-given protection from starvation!), she stopped gratifying that appetite in the wrong ways.

Will the young woman find a mate? Will the couple have a child? Maybe 1994 will be the year of desire fulfilled. Perhaps, on the other hand, it will be the year of desire radically transformed, the year of finding, as we have perhaps not yet truly found, Christ to be the All-Sufficient One, Christ the "deep, sweet well of Love."

"Why won't God let someone into my life? I feel left out, abandoned. *When* will it be my turn?" The petulant letter goes on. "I feel deprived! Will He deny me the one small desire of my heart? Is it too big a treasure to ask? I sit in torture and dismay."

Life is likely to continue to hold many forms of torture and dismay for that unhappy person and for all who refuse to receive with thanksgiving instead of

complaint the place in life God has chosen for them. The torture is self-inflicted, for God has not rejected their prayers. He knows better than any of us do what furthers our salvation. Our true happiness is to be realized precisely *through* his refusals, which are always *mercies*. His choice is flawlessly contrived to give the deepest kind of joy as soon as it is embraced.

Joseph Eliot, in the seventeenth century, said, "I need everything God gives me, and want [or feel the lack of] nothing He denies me."

In Moses' review of God's leading of the children of Israel he said,

Remember how the Lord your God led you all the way in the desert these forty years, to humble you and to test you in order to know what was in your heart.... He humbled you, *causing* you to hunger and then fed you with manna which neither you nor your fathers had known, to *teach* you that man does not live on bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of the Lord.... Know then in your heart that as a man disciplines his son, so the Lord your God disciplines you.... For the Lord your God is bringing you into a good land—a land with streams and pools of water, with springs flowing in the valleys and hills; a land with wheat and barley, vines and fig trees, pomegranates, olive oil and honey; a land where bread will not be scarce and you will lack nothing. (Dt 8:2-3, 5, 7-9, NIV. Emphasis added.)

The cause of our discontent: we simply do not *believe* God. The wilderness experience leads to the Promised Land. It is the path God chose for us. His Word is established forever, and He tells us in a thousand ways that His will is our peace, His choices for us will lead to fulfillment and joy, the way of transgressors is hard. Do we suppose that *we* could find a better way than His?

One of George Eliot's characters says,

You are seeking your own will, my daughter. You are seeking some good other than the law you are bound to obey. But how will you find good? It is not a thing of choice; it is a river that flows from the foot of the Invisible Throne, and flows by the

path of obedience. I say again, man cannot choose his duties. You may choose to forsake your duties, and choose not to have the sorrow they bring. But you will go forth, and what will you find, my daughter? Sorrow without duty—bitter herbs, and no bread with them.

Instead of seeing His everlasting love, tenderly bending down to our humanness, longing over each one of us with a father's speechless longing, we sometimes think of Him as indifferent, inaccessible, or just plain unfair.

The worst pains we experience are not those of the suffering itself but of our stubborn resistance to it, our resolute insistence on our independence. To be "crucified with Christ" means what Oswald Chambers calls "breaking the husk" of that independence. "Has that break come?" he asks. "All the rest is pious fraud." And you and I know, in our heart of hearts, that that sword-thrust (so typical of Chambers!) is the straight truth.

If we reject *this* cross, we will not find it in this world again. *Here* is the opportunity offered. Be patient. Wait on the Lord for whatever He appoints, wait quietly, wait trustingly. He holds every minute of every hour of every day of every week of every month in 1994 in His hands. Thank Him in advance for what the future holds, for He is already *there*. "Lord, you have assigned me my portion and my cup" (NIV, Ps. 16:5). Shall we not gladly say, "I'll take it, Lord! YES! I'll trust you for everything. Bless the Lord, O my soul!"

His Grace Will Be Enough in 1994

The crosses of the present moment always bring their own special grace and consequent comfort with them; we see the hand of God in them when it is laid upon us. But the crosses of anxious foreboding are seen out of the dispensation of God; we see them without grace to bear them; we see them indeed through a faithless spirit which banishes grace. So, everything in them is bitter and unendurable; all seems dark and helpless. Let us throw self aside; no more self-interest, and then God's will, unfolding every moment in everything, will console us also every moment for all that He shall do around us, or within us, for our discipline.

—François de la Mothe Fénelon
(1651-1750)

The Splendor of God

I have just finished reading a biography (out of print) of Evelyn Underhill, who has been one of my great tutors in the spiritual life. Shortly before she died in 1941 she wrote, "We should think of the whole power and splendor of God as always pressing in on our small souls... but that power and splendor mostly reach us in homely inconspicuous ways; in the Sacraments, and in our prayers, joys, and sorrows and in all opportunities of loving service."

How easy it is to fail to recognize His "pressing in" on our small souls, calling us to self-abandonment and surrender. We would have no "problems" at all if we saw what God is up to. When Paul was in prison he never lost sight of the power and splendor of God, never forgot to write encouragement to his beloved churches, never stopped thanking and praising the Lord, reminding his correspondents in myriad ways that circumstances really don't matter at all. He did not see his imprisonment as a "problem," but as a means toward the furtherance of the gospel.

God help us to forget about how awful everything is and to thank Him for how wonderful are His power and splendor, how wonderful to be His child in 1994.

Prayer

"Defend and keep the soul of Thy little servant among so many perils of this corruptible life, and Thy Grace going with him, direct him by the way of peace to the country of everlasting clearness."

—Thomas à Kempis

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A Year Untried

A year untried before me lies,
What shall it bring of strange surprise?
Of joy or grief, I cannot tell,
but God my Father knoweth well.
I make it no concern of mine,
But leave it all with Love Divine.

Be sickness mine, or rugged health,
come penury to me or wealth;
Though lonesome I must pass along
or loving friends my way may throng;
Upon my Father's word I rest,
whatever shall be will be best.

No ill can come but He can cure,
His word doth all of good insure;
He'll see me through the journey's length,
for daily need give daily strength.
'Tis thus I fortify my heart,
And thus do fear and dread depart.

The sun may shed no light by day,
Nor stars at night illumine my way;
My soul shall still know no affright,
Since God is all my life and light.
Though all the earthly lamps grow dim,
He walks in light who walks with Him.

O year untried!—thou hast for me
Naught but my Father's eye can see,
Nor canst thou bring me loss or gain,
Or health or sickness, ease or pain,
But welcome messenger shall prove,
From Him whose Name to me is Love.

—R.M. Offord

For Prayer

- 1994 holds for us several overseas trips. We have the schedule only for the one to England (see Travel Schedule). Others are pending. Pray for divine guidance in all preparations. Things look so complicated from here, but, as Corrie ten Boom said, "God has no problems. Only plans."
- In January, Lord willing, we'll be with old (70s) missionary friends from Ecuador, Malcom and Mardelle Brown, who are still hard at work with

Spanish-speaking people on the Texas/Mexico border. They need your prayers. I look forward with joy to this trip—Mardelle was with me in my first attempt to reach an Auca woman, and came again when Valerie and I were living with the Aucas. She's a close friend, one of those "salt-of-the-earth" types you can't help loving. Pray for her and Malcom as they pour themselves out for those dear folks, pray for us as we join them briefly.

- Pray for continued grace and strength for that incredible woman, Phyllis Schlafly, who years ago (almost single-handedly, it seems) defeated the Equal Rights Amendment. She's still in there swinging—against abortion, government-controlled education, pornography, and everything Christians ought to deplore. She's for God, country, homeschooling, sexual purity, pro-life—in other words, she's visibly, unequivocally, perseveringly on the side of the angels. She's no "spring chicken" either—full of vitality. "Why do people get *tired*?" she said to me. "I'm not tired!" Pray for the grace of continuance—we need her!
- Please pray for more helpers to answer radio mail. Two wise servants of God, Alma Griffin, former missionary, and the Rev. Robert Peterson, a retired man who has volunteered his help for years, are coping valiantly and gladly; but the letters keep outdistancing them.

Natural Family Planning

There is a highly significant difference, I believe, between the various methods of contraception (mechanical, chemical, surgical, etc.) and what is called Natural Family Planning. The Bible tells us that children are a gift, a heritage, a blessing. Does this mean that a couple ought to produce as many children as are biologically possible? Is it legitimate to make use of a method God built into the reproductive system? Each couple whose united desire is to please the Lord should confront these hard questions in His presence, offering themselves in obedience to His answer.

NFP, the practice of achieving or avoiding pregnancies according to an informed awareness of a woman's fertility, is worth careful consideration. It's an *art*, not just another birth control technique; med-

Travel Schedule January–July 1994

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March 19 Akron, OH; Moody Seminar, Mrs. Jo' McCarthy, (312) 329-4000.

March 26 South Hamilton, MA; Gordon-Conwell Seminary, Robert Freeman, (508) 468-7111.

April 9 Grand Junction, CO; Redlands Community Church, Sharon Gross, (303) 245-9020 or 8071.

April 22-24 La Jolla, CA; Women's retreat, Cindy Travisano, (714) 581-5391 or 770-3147.

May 7 Syracuse, NY; Radio rally, Gordon Bell, (315) 469-5051.

May 14 Harrisburg, PA; Home Schoolers' Fair, Kim Huber, (717) 653-8892.

May 19-30 Ecuador, South America.

June 7 Peterboro, NH; Pregnancy Resource Center, Beth Cutaiar, (603) 924-8788.

June 24-26 NC, E's 50th high school reunion.

NFP continued from page 3

ically safe, healthy, highly effective, morally acceptable, and, through mutual agreement, self-restraint, and sacrifice, often greatly *strengthens* a marriage. I think it's worth thinking—and praying—about.

For information: The Couple to Couple League (a non-profit organization dedicated to providing NFP services throughout the world) P.O. Box 111184, Cincinnati, OH 45211, (513) 661-7612.

Keep in Touch

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March/April 1994

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Stillness

Full moon on a silver sea. Shadows throwing into sharp relief the luminous rocks. I sat in the antique rocking chair by the window, a cup of hot Postum in my hand, fascinated by the undulation of great swaths of foam on the ocean, almost fluorescent in the moonlight.

Stillness. Perfect stillness. It is a very great gift, not always available to those who would most appreciate it and would find joy in it, and often not appreciated by those who have it but are uncomfortable with it. External noise is inescapable in many places—traffic on land and in the air, sirens, horns, chain saws, loud voices and, perhaps worst of all, screaming rock music with thundering amplification which makes the very ground shudder.

I think it is possible to *learn* stillness—but only if it is seriously sought. God tells us, “Be still, and know that I am God” (Ps 46:10, NIV). “In quietness and confidence shall be your strength” (Is 30:15, KJV).

The stillness in which we find God is not superficial, a mere absence of fidgeting or talking. It is a deliberate and quiet attentiveness—receptive, alert, ready. I think of what Jim Elliot wrote in his journal: “Wherever you are, be *all there*. Live to the hilt every situation you believe to be the will of God”—not so difficult, perhaps, for a sports fan, eyes riveted on the game. For me, however, this quietness in the presence of God, this being “all there” for Him, though I treasure it and long for it, is not easy to maintain, even in the beautiful place where I live. I am easily distracted, more so, it seems, as soon as I try to focus on God Himself and nothing else. Why should this be? I think C.S. Lewis puts his finger right on it in *The Screwtape Letters*, which purports to be the correspondence between Screwtape, under-secretary to the devil, and his nephew, Wormwood, instruct-

ing him in the best ways to tempt the followers of the Enemy, God:

My dear Wormwood: Music and silence—how I detest them both! How thankful we should be that ever since our Father entered Hell—though longer ago than humans, reckoning in light years, could express, no square inch of infernal space and no moment of infernal time has been surrendered to either of those abominable forces, but all has been occupied by Noise—Noise, the grand dynamism, the audible expression of all that is exultant, ruthless, and virile—Noise which alone defends us from silly qualms, despairing scruples, and impossible desires. We will make the whole universe a noise in the end. We have already made great strides in this direction as regards the Earth. The melodies and silences of Heaven will be shouted down in the end. But I admit we are not yet loud enough, or anything like it. Research is in progress.

C.S. Lewis died in 1963. Research in noise-making has made considerable progress since then, don't you think? To learn stillness we must resist our ancient foe, whose craft and power are great, and who is armed with cruel hate. There is One far greater who is on our side. His voice brought stillness to fierce winds and wild waves, and He will surely help us if we put ourselves firmly and determinedly in His presence—“I'm here, Lord. I'm listening.” If no word seems to be forthcoming, remember “it is good to wait quietly for the salvation of the Lord,” and “when He gives quietness, who then can make trouble?” (Lam 3:26, NIV; Jb 34:29, KJV).

Silence is one form of worship. When the seventh seal was opened (in St. John's Revelation), there was silence in heaven for the space of half an hour. What would happen in our homes if we should try to prepare ourselves for those heavenly silences by having just one half-hour when there is no door slamming, no TV, no stereo or video, and a minimum of talk, in quiet voices? Wouldn't it also be a calming thing just to practice the stillness which is the absence of *motion*? My father used to have us try this every now and then. Why not

try a Quiet Day or even a Quiet Week without the usual noises (could anyone endure a TV-less week?). It might open vistas of the spiritual life hitherto closed, a depth of communion with the Lord impossible where there is nothing but noise. Does God seem absent? Yes, for most of us He sometimes does. Even at such a time may we not simply be still before Him, trusting that He reads the perplexity we cannot put into words?

Fear of Future

One of the greatest obstacles to waiting silently on God is fear. We fear silence itself—what might it reveal? We fear boredom. We fear intimacy, lest we find ourselves exposed. And we fear the future. Francois de la Mothe Fénelon has a word for us here:

The crosses which we make for ourselves by a restless anxiety as to the future, are not crosses which come from God. We show want of faith in Him by our false wisdom, wishing to forestall His arrangements, and struggling to supplement His Providence by our own providence. The future is not yet ours; perhaps it never will be. If it comes, it may come wholly different from what we have foreseen. Let us shut our eyes, then, to that which God hides from us, and keeps in reserve in the treasures of His deep counsels. Let us worship without seeing, let us be silent; let us abide in peace.

The Favor

A girl of eleven who wishes to remain nameless wrote this, based on John 3:16:

"Son!" The Father called His Son to His side.

"Yes, my Father," the Son answered. He knew what was coming.

"I want to ask a favor of you."

The Son didn't need any more hints. "This is it," He thought. And said out loud, "Yes?"

The Father could tell by His Son's face. He knew everything about "the favor."

"You know about it?"

"Well..." the Son answered.

"I want you to... to sacrifice Yourself... to come as a little baby boy, normally, from a woman's womb, and then grow up normally—and sacrifice Your life... for the whole world."

"I will do it—everything, anything You ask of Me," the Son said.

"You know what this means... no wife, no sons

and daughters, hardly any friends. You will be cheated, laughed at, looked down upon, hated, despised, tempted, and rejected in every way. But..."

"Yes, my Father, I know all that... but I will do it happily, willingly, and obey You right away."

"But just remember," the Father continued, "whenever any of that happens, You have more power than anyone and everything."

"I will remember."

The time came for the Son to go. "Son, besides remembering You have all that power, remember that I love You... more than ever... today, and always."

"I love You, too!" the Son answered. And He left.

Jesus was the Son in the story, who came to earth willingly, to save us from our sins. For the rest of the story—told better than anyone—read all four gospel books of the Bible.

Vinson: Afraid? Of What?

I was eight years old when one of my missionary heroines, Betty Scott Stam, was beheaded by Chinese Communists, along with her husband. Her biography contained a poem which made a very deep impression on me then, and an even deeper one years later, when my husband Jim Elliot was speared to death in Ecuador. Here is the story of how that poem came to be:

In 1931 a missionary named John W. Vinson was itinerating in North China when an army of bandits swooped down on the village where he was staying, looting, burning, and killing. They then took captive about 150 Chinese to hold for ransom. Their prize captive was John Vinson. When government troops pursued them the bandits offered Vinson his freedom if he would write a letter to the commanding officer, asking him to withdraw his troops.

"Will you also free these Chinese prisoners?" Vinson asked.

"Certainly not!" was the reply.

"Then I refuse to go free."

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That night the bandits tried to flee, taking Vinson with them. Many were killed, and many of the captives escaped, but because of a recent operation Vinson could not run. One of the prisoners, a little Chinese girl, later told of seeing a bandit point a gun at Vinson's head.

"I'm going to kill you," he said. "Aren't you afraid?"

"No, I am not afraid," was the calm reply. "If you kill me, I will go right to God."

Another missionary, E.H. Hamilton, also itinerating in bandit territory, heard the sad news. For a few moments he sat silently in his study, then, picking up his pen he wrote this poem in fifteen minutes:

Afraid? Of what?

To feel the spirit's glad release?

To pass from pain to perfect peace,
The strife and strain of life to cease?

Afraid—of that?

Afraid? Of what?

Afraid to see the Savior's face,

To hear His welcome, and to trace
The glory gleam from wounds of grace?

Afraid—of that?

Afraid? Of what?

A flash—a crash—a pierced heart,
Darkness—light—Oh, Heaven's art!

A wound of His a counterpart!

Afraid—Of that?

Afraid? Of what?

To enter into Heaven's rest,
And yet to serve the Master blest,
From service good to service best?

Afraid—of that?

Afraid? Of what?

To do by death what life could not:
Baptize with blood a stony plot,
Till souls shall blossom from the spot?

Afraid—of that?

The God-Potential in Children

"I have no greater joy than to hear that my children are walking in the truth" (3 Jn 4, NIV).

From time to time a missionary in Costa Rica named Aziel Jones writes to me. Last November he told of the dedication of the New Testament which he and his

family had translated into Cabecar. The church in that tribe had grown up around their little simple Bible studies, held in Indians' homes. People learned to read, to participate, and some believed.

So the Word gave birth to the church, so there was a church to receive the New Testament.... It was fun to watch people open the book and find what they wanted immediately—they were already on familiar territory. The Lord had done a lot more preparation of the soil than we realized, and the church was stronger and bigger. Yesterday I got my first direct expression of appreciation from a Cabecar: "Praise the Lord you came!" As you know, missionaries may wait a lifetime for that!...

Elisabeth, I want to say one thing about children: I wish couples could see the potential that children are, as they are molded for God. I insist, in our case, that it is grace—even if we did do a few things right. But I am appalled at the lack of vision for the "God-potential" in children. Here I want to point out what I'm experiencing to the hilt, and have heard very little about: the joy of having children with you in the ministry, the satisfaction of letting them take the reins of your ministry, and the deep awareness that you live on in them. It is the Christian answer to the futility of life. Finally, the joy of seeing five sons in the context of the New Testament dedication is worth all the efforts to mold them, all the money to train them, all the snide remarks when having them, all the years of discipling (teaching, training and punishing), all the prayer and fasting for them in their struggles, all the sacrifice of lifestyle that a large family involves, and all the complexities of coming and going, living cross-culturally—and seeing them talk and fit in better than you do. Well, Elisabeth, *this* end of things should determine one's vision for children, in having and training them. *We are truly blessed*, and everyone knows it. But we were truly blessed when *no one* knew it—*except us!* "Where there is no vision the people perish."

Prayer

O Lord, who art as the Shadow of a great Rock in a weary land, who beholdest Thy weak creatures, weary of labor, weary of pleasure, weary of hope deferred, weary of self; in Thine abundant compassion and unutterable tenderness, bring us, I pray Thee, unto Thy rest. Amen.

—Christina Rosetti

- Please pray for Rachel Saint, who has cancer. She and I worked for two years with the Aucas (Wao-rani) of eastern Ecuador. She has been there most of the time ever since 1958.
- Praise for an unforgettable weekend at America's Keswick in New Jersey last October, a place filled with memories of my childhood when our family used to go there, and of great men and women of God who deeply influenced my life, e.g. James Mallis of India, L.L. Legters of Mexico, Tommy Titcombe and Dr. Virginia Blakesley of Africa, not to mention my father, a frequent speaker there. I never imagined myself as a speaker forty-three years later. It's all of *grace*. I know I have nothing that has not been *given* and I thank the Giver.

Keep in Touch

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Travel Schedule March-July 1994

February 19-March 7 Tour in Ireland and England, auspices of Saltmine Trust, 0902-881080.

March 19 Akron, OH; Moody Seminar, Mrs. Jo' McCarthy, (312) 329-4000.

March 26 South Hamilton, MA, Gordon-Conwell Seminary, Robert Freeman, (508) 468-7111.

April 9 Grand Junction, CO; Redlands Community Church, Sharon Gross, (303) 245-9020 or 8071.

April 22-24 La Jolla, CA; Women's retreat, Cindy Travisano, (714) 581-5391 or 770-3147.

May 7 Syracuse, NY; Radio rally, Gordon Bell, (315) 469-5051.

May 14 Harrisburg, PA; Home Schoolers' Fair, Kim Huber, (717) 653-8892.

May 19-30 Ecuador, South America.

June 7 Peterboro, NH; Pregnancy Resource Center, Beth Cutaiar, (603) 924-8788.

June 24-26 NC, E's 50th high school reunion.

July 23 Tuxedo, NC; Camp Greystone.

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Lost and Found

Here is a little story about a simple answer to prayer. Lars was away. I had to take the car to the repairman's house. Li Zeng, our live-in student, followed me in his car to bring me home. Directions to the house had been ambiguous, and Gloucester, Massachusetts gets the prize for town-easiest-to-get-lost-in. I prayed that I might not get lost—Li had to get to class, the repairman had to leave at 7:15. I got lost, made a quick turn without checking to see that Li was still with me. He wasn't. "Lord, Li will be late for class, the man will leave in a few minutes—what shall I do?" It's a long story, but after a phone call I found the house, left the car, declined the man's kind offer to take me home because I wanted to find Li so he would not miss his class. How was I to find him? "Lord, help me." I stood at an intersection and prayed that he would come along—an absurd request in a place like Gloucester. He'd been on a one-way street which would take him far out around the shore drive, with no reason to happen upon the intersection where I stood. Within five minutes here he was! God teaches us to ask so that He may answer our prayers. This reminds us of the source of our blessings. The answer to my prayer *not* to get lost was No—in order that I might be *especially blessed in the way I was found*.

Remember how the Lord brought Israel out (of Egypt) in order to bring them in (to Canaan)? He got me lost that He might get me found! Let's never forget that some of His greatest mercies are His refusals. He says no in order that He may, in some way we cannot imagine, say yes. ALL His ways with us are merciful. His meaning is ALWAYS love.

After I had written the above, I received the following much more astonishing story from Brenda Foltz of Princeton, Minnesota. She went rock-climbing for the first time.

I started up the rock as fast as I could, determined to "set my face like a flint" toward the peak. After a time, I came to a difficult ledge, and my breathless scrambling came to an abrupt halt. Suddenly, the rope was pulled too taut and hit me square in the eye. "Oh

NO!" I thought wildly, "my contact lens is GONE!" From my precarious perch I looked everywhere on the rope and sharp granite rock for a tiny, transparent lens, which could easily be mistaken for a water droplet.

"Lord Jesus, help me find it!" I prayed and pleaded, knowing the hopelessness of my search with such limited mobility. I looked as long as I could maintain my hold, praying with a sinking heart. Finally I resumed my climb with one last glimmer of hope—maybe the contact was still in my eye, crumpled in the corner or up under my eyelid. When I reached the top, I had a friend check to see if she could find it in my eye. It wasn't there. Every hope was gone.

I was *disappointed*, and anxious about getting a new contact so far away from home. As we sat and rested, surveying the world from such a gloriously high perspective, the fragment of a verse popped into my head: "The eyes of God go to and fro through the whole earth."

God knows EXACTLY WHERE MY CONTACT IS this moment from His high vantage point, the amazing thought struck me. But I'LL never see it again, I concluded.

So, still glum, I headed down the path to the bottom where the others were preparing to climb. About half an hour later another girl set out where I had also begun my climb. She had *no inkling* of the missing contact. But there, at the steep bottom of the rock face, she let out an excited cry: "Hey you guys—did anyone lose a contact?"

I rushed over as she continued yelling, "There's an ANT carrying a contact down the mountain!"

Sure enough. Special delivery! I bent down, retrieved my contact from the hardworking ant, doused it with water and put it back in my eye, rejoicing. I was in awe, as if my Father had just given me, though so undeserving, a big hug, and said, "My precious daughter, I care about every detail of your life."

I wrote to tell my family. My dad drew a cartoon portraying an ant, lugging a big contact five times its size. The ant was saying to God, "Lord, I don't understand why You want me to drag this thing down! What use is it anyway? I don't even know what it is,

and I certainly can't eat it and it's so BIG and HEAVY. Oh well, if you say so, Lord, I'll try, but it seems like a useless piece of junk to me!"

I marvel at God's ways and how He chooses to reveal His mercy in ways *far beyond* our human comprehension.

THE LORD IS GRACIOUS AND COMPASSIONATE,
THE LORD IS GOOD TO ALL ...
THE LORD IS NEAR TO ALL WHO CALL UPON HIM ...
THE LORD HEARS ... !

Qualities Needed in Leaders

1. Patience, fixed purpose, grit.
2. Willingness to stand alone. There is nothing eternal in troubles of any kind. The note of Eternity sounds through one thing only: our attitude toward the events which God allows in our lives.
3. Readiness to lead the way up hard places.
4. Refusal to accept the word impossible where things of the Lord are concerned. (We need to walk softly here, sometimes what would seem to be most for His glory, such as John's release from Herod's prison, Paul's from Nero's, does not happen. "Blessed is he that is not offended in Me.")
5. Daring. Cool love never dares.
6. Be prepared to go on, no matter what happens, in peace.
7. Know His book so that you know where to go to find what you need for yourself and others.
8. Know how to win souls, how to meet them where they are, without hustling them, how to burn in love and longing for them.
9. Sense of humor (blessed be fun!), that which makes you ride your waves instead of being swamped by them; a knack of taking things by the smooth, not by the nobbledy handle.

—Amy Carmichael

Earthquake

At 4:31 am on January 17 I thought Lars was having a severe attack of nerves. The bed began to shake, then the room jerked and rocked. He woke. "What in the world's goin' on?" he said. "An earthquake, darling," said I. We were in a motel about fifty miles from the epicenter. Becky Martin from Chatsworth, where I had spoken two days before, wrote:

"We were *shaken*" (Ps 46:1-3) but so thankful to be *alive*! My husband is a hospital chaplain and was at the bedside of a dying man at Northridge Hospital—ground zero of the epicenter. We went to my mother's. As we looked at the devastation, she picked

up the pieces of a platter and said, "Elisabeth said to us on Saturday, when you pray 'give us this day our daily bread' but it doesn't mean just food. This earthquake must be what the Lord has put on our platter for today—let's thank Him for it."

Recommended Reading

Paul Brownback, *The Danger of Self-love*, Moody Press. Did Jesus teach us to learn to love ourselves? Is this the prerequisite to loving others? Many have been misled. Brownback's answers are clear and scriptural—the best I've seen.

Sexist Nonsense

Are you as tired as I am of that word *sexist*? You will be when you hear this one: The authors of a school reading book had taken care to balance 146 male characters with 146 female characters, lest anybody feel "put down." Somebody did anyway. Feminists charged that among *animal* characters males were too heavily represented.

Now are you ready for this one? *The Tale of Peter Rabbit* was condemned not only as *sexist* (because only the disobedient character is male) but *ageist* (the crotchety farmer is old), *racist* by omission (all of the bunnies are the same color), and *materialistic* (Peter is hunting for food).

(from Stephen Bates, *Battleground: The Religious Right, Its Opponents, and the Struggle for Our Schools*)

Duplicity

... months ago a doctor insisted that a certain woman must consent to a Caesarian section, or her child would either die in the womb or be seriously handicapped. For religious reasons, the woman and her husband refused. The child was born naturally, although somewhat underweight. A TV announcer stated that legal questions remained: Does society have a right to intervene in order to save the life of a helpless unborn child? May the parents refuse what may or may not be a lifesaving measure?

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The duplicity of the secular mind is astounding, isn't it? In the above-mentioned case intervention was demanded, religious convictions notwithstanding, lest the *child* die. In the case of abortion, it is the deliberate intention of both mother and doctor that death occur. There is no legal question of their "right" to intervene. We are asked to believe that what is being destroyed in that case is an inconvenience. It is *not a child*.

Mendacity

William J. Bennett wrote, "In America today, the only respectable form of bigotry is bigotry directed against religious people. This antipathy toward religion cannot be explained by the moral failures and financial excesses of a few leaders or charlatans, or by the censoriousness of some of their followers. No, the reason for the hatred of religion is that it forces modern man to confront matters he would prefer to ignore."

The religious editor of a national newsmagazine explained why the media hate Christians: "because people want to sleep with their girlfriends."

Christians, by their very presence, are a nuisance, as the conscience of every man, woman, and child made in the image of God is a nuisance, if we are bent on doing what we feel like doing

Dennis Prager, writing in the *Wall Street Journal*, January 21, 1994, gives us a lexicon which shows how certain words are used by major American newspapers, by the electronic news media (especially television), and by many individuals in public and private debate. A sampler:

Christian Right: contemptible people who always try to impose their values on other Americans.

Abortion: a form of birth control.

Women's Rights: supporting the right to destroy a human fetus for personal convenience.

Fetus: an unborn baby that is to be aborted.

Baby: an unborn baby that is not to be aborted.

(N.B. When a woman is pregnant and wants to give birth, no one asks her, no matter how early in the pregnancy, "So how's the fetus doing?" We only use the term "fetus" when we plan to destroy it. Otherwise we use "baby" from the first day of pregnancy.)

Woman, Inauthentic: a woman who does not hold liberal views.

(N.B. Gloria Steinem called Texas Senator Kay Bailey Hutchison a "female impersonator" [*USA Today*, June 11, 1993]. Ms Hutchison is a conservative Republican.)

Note From Lars

This note is a cross between an apology and heartfelt thanksgiving. The apology is for the many who, in response to their encouraging letters to Elisabeth, have received a postcard from me with handwriting that resembles chicken-scratch. The facts are: there are still just the two of us. This presents an impossible situation for Elisabeth to answer *all* the mail. She does, of course, get the difficult ones passed on to her from me. We don't know how else to do it since we do not want to have staff or letter-writers take our place. We want to maintain the personal touch, and hope you'll understand.

Praise to the Lord

In January we went to Brownsville, Texas, at the invitation of my old (in both senses) missionary friends from Ecuador, Malcom and Mardelle Brown. These two are in their seventies, still willing for their lives to be a thoroughfare for any who need them. Areas which most of us consider our own private property, such as money, home, rest, and time, the Browns think of as God's property first of all, to do with as *He* chooses. All sorts and conditions of needy folk down there on the Mexican border find their way into their hearts.

Dear Mardelle! Not yet married, she was the first outsider to visit Valerie and me in 1958 when we lived with the Aucas (those who killed my husband Jim Elliot). She made little sunsuits for Val, Quichua-style skirts and blouses for me, and had them dropped to us by parachute. She sent flashlight batteries, sandwiches, a birthday cake, anything her loving imagination knew we needed. And—while in Brownsville she dug into her closets and files and came up with all the letters I had scrawled to her in that house-without-walls (I sent them out via the bucket-drop from the airplane). What an experience it was to read those letters! The sights, sounds, smells of that tiny jungle clearing, events I had entirely forgotten which I discovered in these letters: e.g. that I had made arrangements in writing for Mardelle to

In heav'nly love abiding,
No change my heart shall fear,
And safe is such confiding,
For nothing changes here.
The storm may roar without me,
My heart may low be laid,
But God is round about me,
And can I be dismayed?

Anna L. Waring (born 1820)

care for Valerie in case the Aucas should decide I was too dangerous to have around, and that Mintaka and some other women had buried one of the five men, probably Ed McCully. Also, Nanikiwi was said to have dug up the bones of all the men and scattered them on the Curaray beach. One letter included a list for Mardelle to pray about: a Quichua language school I had promised to conduct, the completion of *Shadow of the Almighty*, a visit from my in-laws, the disposal of the house Jim built, etc. I learned why the Aucas called me "Gikari"—it means woodpecker, and they said I had a *red* head (I was a blonde back then). There was more, but so clearly, all through those sometimes fearful weeks and months and years, the ineluctable evidence of God's overshadowing, cherishing love and care for us in the midst of many perplexities and things hard for flesh-and-blood to bear with equanimity. PRAISE for His utterly reliable faithfulness. He *never* breaks a promise! And praise for a friend and pray-er like Mardelle!

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May 7 Syracuse, NY; WMHR Radio rally, Gordon Bell, (315) 469-5051.

May 14 Harrisburg, PA; Home School Convention, Kim Huber, (717) 653-8892.

May 15-19 Cruise, "Friends of Ecuador," (bookings closed).

May 19-31 Ecuador, South America.

June 7 Peterboro, NH; Pregnancy Resource Center, Beth Cutaiar, (603) 924-8788.

June 23-24 Hendersonville, NC; Covenant Presbyterian Church, (704) 693-8651.

June 24-26 NC, E's 50th high school reunion.

July 15-17 Cheyenne, WY; C & MA Family Camp, Harry Bolwyn, (307) 635-1014.

July 23 Tuxedo, NC; Camp Greystone.

September 10 Marblehead, MA; Baptist Women, Lila Foster, (617) 631-6569.

September 10 Middleboro, MA; Missions Banquet, Mr. Kohl, (617) 585-5242.

September 17 Lexington, MA; Grace Chapel.

September 22-28 Hungary and Transylvania.

September 29-October 2 Vienna, Austria.

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Waiting

I waited patiently for the Lord; he turned to me and heard my cry" (Ps 40:1, NIV).

The tests of our willingness to wait patiently for the Lord come almost daily for most of us, I suppose. Probably I am among the Lord's most *impatient* servants, so the lesson has to be reviewed again and again. A tough test came when my daughter's family (of ten) was searching for a house. Southern California is not a place where one would wish to conduct that search. It's a long story, but at last, all other possibilities having been exhausted, a house was found, an offer made. That night word came that two other offers, of unknown amounts, had also been made. Dark pictures filled my mind: the others would surely get the house, the Shepherds would be reduced to renting and we'd been told that rentals start at about \$2000 per month (imagine an owner willing to rent to a family with eight children!).

"Wait for the Lord, be strong and take heart and wait for the Lord" (Ps 27:14, NIV).

I lay awake in the wee hours ("when all life's molehills become mountains" as Amy Carmichael said), repeating Scripture about God's faithfulness, trusting, casting all cares, waiting. I had to keep offering up my worries and my impatience. At four I was up reading the story of Abraham and Isaac. Abraham called the place where he had offered up Isaac The Lord Will Provide. I took that as the Lord's word to me that morning.

Before nine o'clock Walt called to say "Offer accepted. Other offers, both *higher*, turned down." No explanation. It was the Lord's doing.

Waiting requires patience—a willingness calmly to accept:

what we have or have not,
where we are or where we wish we were,
whomever we live or work with.

To want what we don't have is impatience, for one thing, and it is to mistrust God. Is He not in complete control of all circumstances, events, and conditions? If some are beyond His control, He is not God.

A spirit of resistance cannot wait on God. I believe it is this spirit which is the reason for some of our greatest sufferings. Opposing the workings of the Lord in and

through our "problems" only exacerbates them. It is *here* and *now* that we must win our victories or suffer defeats. Spiritual victories are won in the quiet acceptance of ordinary events, which are God's "bright servants," standing all around us.

Restlessness and impatience change nothing except our peace and joy. Peace does not dwell in outward things, but in the heart prepared to wait trustfully and quietly on Him who has *all* things safely in His hands. "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives" (Jn 14:27, NEB). What sort of peace has He to give us? A peace which was constant in the midst of ceaseless work (with few visible results), frequent interruptions, impatient demands, few physical comforts; a peace which was not destroyed by the arguments, the faithlessness, and hatred of the people. Jesus had perfect confidence in His Father, whose will He had come to accomplish. Nothing touched Him without His Father's permission. Nothing touches me without my Father's permission. Can I not then wait patiently? He will show the way.

If I am willing to be still in my Master's hand, can I not then be still in everything? He's got the whole world *in His Hands!* Never mind whether things come from God Himself or from people—everything comes by His ordination and/or permission. If I mean to be obedient and submissive to the Lord because He *is* my Lord, I must not forget that whatever He allows to happen becomes, for *me*, His will at that moment. Perhaps it is someone else's sinful action, but if God allows it to affect me, He wills it for my learning. The need to *wait* is, for me, a form of chastening. God has to calm me down, make me shut up and look to Him for the outcome.

His message to me every day
Is wait, be still, trust, and obey

And this brings me to the matter of counselling. Upon our return from England I found a pile of mail, so many letters asking me what to do about things, for example: a wife's critical spirit, unemployment, a wife who has abandoned husband and children, a single mother doing a job she hates, an unfaithful husband, a woman (who tells me she is Spirit-filled) having an affair with her pastor, a farmer who'd like a wife, a mother-in-law who is nasty to her daughter-in-law, a stepson who is angry because "we don't spend enough

money on his children," a wife who snaps at her husband each time he tries to snuggle up, and a husband who "drinks like a fish, curses like a sailor, and says he loves God."

I wish I could write the same letter to everybody: Wait patiently for the Lord. He will turn to you and hear your cry. It is amazing how clear things become when we are *still* before Him, not complaining, not insisting on quick answers, only seeking to hear His word in the stillness, and to see things in His light. Few are willing to receive that sort of reply. "Too simplistic" is the objection. One listener to my radio program, *Gateway to Joy*, wrote, "I got so upset at what you were saying I ripped the earphones out and said, 'I'll do what I want to do!'" But there are those who can say, "This is the Lord; we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation" (Is 25:9, KJV). Here are two testimonies:

"I've lost my mother, my brother, my husband, and my baby. My song is *More Love to Thee, O Christ*."

"God picked up the scraps and pieces and made us whole—a whole woman, a whole man, a whole marriage."

Shame

When a young American received four blows with a cane in Singapore as part of his punishment for vandalism, there was a great uproar. "Cruel and unusual punishment!" In my opinion it wasn't cruel, and it ought not to be unusual. In fact, I've often thought that an excellent sentence for youthful first-offenders might be to reinstitute the stock — a frame of timber with holes in which the hands and/or feet of offenders were confined, usually in a public place. A mall might be a good place to arouse a healthy sense of shame.

Imagine the uproar if we did that! To inflict *shame* would be thought horribly shameful in America today. Think what it would do to a boy's self-image if his friends were to see him in such disgrace, but might not that "damage" be a stinging salve which would arouse his conscience as usual punishments seldom do?

An Olympic skater is charged with conspiring to cover up a plot to attack her rival to eliminate her from competition. When convicted, is she ashamed? Repentant? She tells us she "let us down," but wants us also to know that she let herself down. A radical of the 1960s who took part in bombings that injured twenty-one people has spent years in therapy, "learning to understand, to tolerate and forgive both others and myself." The lawyer representing a woman who emasculated her husband says the acquittal was "a giant step forward in the healing process. She really needs

healing." One who has been much in the news as a child molester, "wants to get on with his life and let the healing process begin." Lyle Menendez killed his father and told the court he had loved him very much. Of this case columnist Charles Krauthammer writes, "Their trial has elevated therapeutic expiation to truly comic proportions. The classic definition of chutzpa is a person who murders his parents and then demands mercy from the court on the grounds that he is an orphan."

Shame, as Christina Rossetti wrote, is "a shadow cast by sin.... Shame gives back what nothing else can give—a man to himself, —then sets him up on high."

Do the Next Thing

From an old English parsonage down by the sea
There came in the twilight a message for me;
Its quaint Saxon legend, deeply engraven,
Hath, as it seems to me, teaching from Heaven.
And on through the hours the quiet words ring,
Like a low inspiration: DO THE NEXT THING.

Many a questioning, many a fear,
Many a doubt, hath its quieting here.
Moment by moment let down from Heaven,
Time, opportunity, guidance, are given.
Fear not tomorrows, Child of the King,
Trust them with Jesus. DO THE NEXT THING.

Do it immediately; do it with prayer;
Do it reliantly, casting all care;
Do it with reverence, tracing His hand
Who placed it before thee with earnest command,
Stayed on Omnipotence, safe 'neath His wing,
Leave all resultings. DO THE NEXT THING.

Looking to Jesus, ever serener,
(Working or suffering) be thy demeanor.
In His dear presence, the rest of His calm,
The light of His countenance be thy psalm.
Strong in His faithfulness, praise and *sing!*
Then, as He beckons thee, DO THE NEXT THING.
(source unknown)

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An African Martyr's Testimony

I'm part of the fellowship of the unashamed, the die has been cast, I have stepped over the line, the decision has been made—I'm a disciple of Jesus Christ. I won't look back, let up, slow down, back away or be still.

My past is redeemed, my present makes sense, my future is secure. I'm finished and done with low living, sight-walking, smooth knees, colorless dreams, tamed visions, worldly talking, cheap giving, and dwarfed goals.

My face is set, my gait is fast, my goal is heaven, my road is narrow, my way is rough, my companions are few, my guide is reliable, my mission is clear. I won't give up, shut up, let up until I have stayed up, stored up, prayed up for the cause of Jesus Christ.

I must go till He comes, give till I drop, preach till everyone knows, work till He stops me, and when He comes for His one, He will have no trouble recognizing me because my banner will have been clear.

(If anyone can tell me exactly who wrote this, I will gratefully include the information in a future newsletter. Was it an African martyr?)

Two Luther Stories

One evening when Martin Luther saw a little bird perched on a tree, to roost there for the night, he said, "This little bird has had its supper, and now it is getting ready to go to sleep here, quite secure and content, never troubling itself what its food will be,

or where its lodging on the morrow. Like David, it 'abides under the shadow of the Almighty.' It sits on its little twig content, and lets God take care."

From *Daily Strength for Daily Needs*

When Luther finished his commentary on Romans 8:21 he looked down at his little dog and said, "Thou too shalt have a little golden tail!"

Don't you *love* that? Scripture tells us that *creation* (doesn't that include everything?) "waits in eager expectation for the sons of God to be revealed" (Rm 8:19, NIV). I expect my lovely little Scottish terrier MacDuff is waiting, too, with little pointy ears and tail erect, eagerly expecting that stupendous revelation.

Clutter

Someone asked me if I *collect* anything. Far from it. I am too old to be accumulating things. Simplify! is my motto. My grandchildren often ask me to help them get things sorted out, cleaned out, organized. Recently it was the toy closet. We found half of Jim's Christmas pageant costume, one roller skate, a wooden train, Colleen's butterfly net, two stuffed animals, two telephone books, an umbrella, Evangeline's birthday gift which had disappeared, quite a pile of plastic horses, one slipper, books, a toy gun, a walkie-talkie, a doll's hairbrush, one bed pillow, a tape recorder, somebody's treasured rock, and uncounted pencils, papers, and a hundred other things. I encouraged Colleen, seven, and Evangeline, five, to make three piles: PUT away, GIVE away, and THROW away. They actually enjoyed seeing the clutter reduced—and so did I.

Too Much Stuff

Words by Janet L. Janzen

An Ode to the Simple Lifestyle

Traditional Melody ("Three Blind Mice")

1. Too much stuff, Too much stuff, More than e - nough, More than e -
 2. Too much stuff, Too much stuff, More than e - nough, More than e -
 3. Too much stuff, Too much stuff, More than e - nough, More than e -

nough; It's out of the clo - sets and fill - ing our space, It's grow - ing and spill - ing all
 nough; The piles are star - ing us in the face, They mul - ti - ply at an a -
 nough; It is - n't eas - y to run the race With all of this stuff slow - ing

o - ver the place, We're trip - ping all o - ver a ter - ri - ble case of
 lar - ming pace, And soon we'll be bur - iced with - out a trace in
 down the pace. I think that I need some ad - di - tion - al grace for too much stuff.

* When sung as a round, parts enter here

One Way to Avoid a Spanking

A grandmother read my story, *The Savage My Kinsman*, to her little granddaughter, who then began carrying her doll around in a dishtowel slung over her shoulder, in imitation of the jungle Indian mothers' carrying their babies in a cloth. Grandma had read many stories one evening, but the child, not wanting to go to sleep, was heard talking. "I headed for the bedroom with fire in my eyes," the grandmother wrote me. "She was saying, 'Lord, if you want me to go to the Aucas, Lord, I'm willing.' I didn't dare 'lick' her then as I couldn't be sure if she was spoofing me or not!"

Recommended Reading

John McArthur: *The Vanishing Conscience*. "In speaking to Christians around the country," he writes, "I have seen a disheartening trend developing.... The church is growing less concerned with sin, and more obsessed with self-exoneration and self-esteem." What a relief to find a book that deals head-on with this evil, and affirms God's blood-bought remedy.

Keep in Touch

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Travel Schedule July - December 1994

July 11-13 Taping for *Gateway to Joy*.
July 15-17 Cheyenne, WY; C & MA Family Camp, Harry Bolwyn, (307) 635-1014.
July 23 Tuxedo, NC; Camp Greystone.
September 10 Marblehead, MA; Baptist Women, Lila Foster, (617) 631-6569.
September 10-11 Middleboro, MA; Missions banquet and Sunday School, Mr. Kohl, (617) 585-5242.
September 17 Lexington, MA; Grace Chapel, (617) 862-6499.
September 17 Waltham, MA; Charismatic Renewal Service, Dean Condon, (617) 891-3592.
September 22-28 Hungary and Transylvania.
September 29-October 2 Vienna, Austria.
October 3-9 Czechoslovakia and Poland.
October 13-15 Chattanooga, TN; Joyful Woman National Jubilee, Joy Martin, (800) 728-7318.
November 1-4 Holland, Evangelical Broadcasting Co.
November 5-6 Brussels, Belgium.
December 15-27 E. to California, L. to Norway (?).
December 17 Aliso Viejo, CA, Pacific Hills Church, (714) 362-7475.
December 29-30 Toronto, Ontario, Canada; Campus Crusade, Tony Wong, (613) 830-9693 or 1751.

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What Love Does

Everything is an affair of the spirit. If eating and drinking can be done "to the glory of God" (1 Cor 10:31, KJV) so can everything else. For those who long to follow Christ, "the performance of smaller duties, yes, even of the smallest, will do more to give us temporary repose... than the greatest joys that can come to us from any other quarter" (George MacDonald).

At a conference where I was speaking about the little sacrifices of love I suggested that if, for example, your husband drops his clothes on the floor and leaves them there, you might, instead of nagging (your views on the subject have been well-known to him for a long time!), simply pick them up. That sort of suggestion does not go over well these days—we're terrified of being "walked on," or becoming "co-dependent" or "enablers." One woman's questions following that talk were:

1. Why shouldn't my husband *change*, and quit dropping his clothes?
2. If he doesn't, how do I handle the resentment I feel?

The first answer was simple: of course he *should* change, but you can't make him! God knows you've tried. It's time to leave him to God. I was not talking to husbands!

The second question pierces to the heart of things.

I greatly value Question and Answer sessions, hoping to clarify the application to individual lives of the principles I try to set forth. But having been at this a good number of years, I am more and more aware of the difficulty of helping people to turn their eyes to *Jesus*. The world is, as Wordsworth put it, *too much with us*. Has a husband's careless habit anything to do with my relationship to Jesus? Yes, everything to do with it, since:

1. it has become perfectly clear that I cannot change him, and,

2. I resent it. Here the question pierces to the heart—my heart, my attitude toward the man, which reveals my attitude toward Jesus Himself, for what I do to one of His brothers, I do to Him—alas!

As I reminded my daughter Valerie (in the book I wrote as a wedding present to her, *Let Me be a Woman*), you marry a sinner. There simply isn't anything else to marry. So the husband sins against the wife and—let us wives not forget—he, too, married a sinner. If he sins in being thoughtless and my reaction is sinful, two wrongs don't make a right.

Most questions about relationships can be answered quite simply if we ask ourselves *this* question: What does *love* do?

Let me start with my love for God. Loving Him means the thankful acceptance of all things which *His* love has appointed. We learn to love Him as we learn to "frame our hearts to the burden," as Samuel Rutherford said. Clothes on the floor constitute, at worst, a small "burden." This, if not accepted as soon as we find that we are not in a position to change it, becomes an irritation which becomes resentment which becomes real anger and, eventually, along with all the irritations not accepted for the love of God, full-dressed hatred. "Whoever hates his brother is in the darkness and walks around in the darkness; he does not know where he is going, because the darkness has blinded him" (1 Jn 2:11, NIV). No wonder we lose our way. No wonder we are baffled. Darkness descends because we do not ask the Lord to teach us *love*.

Surely the questioner would protest that she does not hate her husband. But she certainly hates what he does, and marriages break up when "small" things accumulate and resentments build. Love is the intention of unity. Resentment is the destroyer of unity.

John S. Dwight (1813-93) said, "Rest is the fitting of self to its sphere." If in my "sphere" I find things out of place through someone else's fault, this is my opportunity to *fit* myself, to *give* a little, to do the small thing that should have been done by the other. Love is very patient, very kind, never rude, never selfish. And it's amazing what rest comes from the gentle fitting of self to its sphere.

Now as to the "handling" of resentment? Again, turn your eyes upon Jesus. Had He good reason to be resentful? Did people treat Him with respect, believe His words, trust His judgments, follow His leading, love and obey Him? Think on these powerful words:

If you suffer for doing good and you endure it, this is commendable before God. To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps. "He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth." When they hurled their insults at him, he did not retaliate; when he suffered, he made no threats. Instead, he entrusted himself to him who judges justly.... By his wounds you have been healed. (1 Pt 2:20-24, NIV)

Some things may legitimately be alleviated, others necessarily endured. May we be wise enough to know the difference.

"If I am soft to myself and slide comfortably into the vice of self-pity and self-sympathy; if I do not by the grace of God practice fortitude, then I know nothing of Calvary love" (Amy Carmichael, *IF*, p. 29).

But how trivial *our* complaints appear in the light of Christ!

Moses and Mothering

Moses heard the people of every family wailing, each at the entrance to his tent. The Lord became exceedingly angry, and Moses was troubled. He asked the Lord,

"Why have you brought this trouble on your servant? What have I done to displease you that you put the burden of all these people on me? Did I conceive all these people? Did I give them birth? Why do you tell me to carry them in my arms, as a nurse carries an infant, to the land you promised on oath to their forefathers? Where can I get meat for all these people? They keep wailing to me, 'Give us meat to eat!' I cannot carry all these people by myself; the burden is too heavy for me. If this is how you are going to treat me, put me to death right now." (Nm 11:10-15, NIV)

Had you thought about Moses having to *mother* the people of Israel? What a job he was given! Any mother realizes that the job is too big for anyone to do alone. Moses would rather die than bear such a burden by himself. But of course he did not have to do it alone. The Lord helped him.

Yet Moses suffered. While he was praying and fasting on the mountain, terrible things happened down in the camp. There was a riot. An idolatrous cult had

been formed around a golden calf which his own brother had made. In fury he smashed the stone tablets, ground the calf to a powder, and made the people drink it. Moses, the man responsible before God for this chosen tribe, has been called the most plagued of men. It was struggle from beginning to end. The people would promise obedience, and disobey. They started things and didn't finish. When they met difficulties, they pouted and said God didn't love them. They forgot His gracious signs and miracles of mercy. The pillar of cloud and fire, steady sign of the divine presence protecting and guiding them, they ignored. They had no idea of the greatness of their leader. They were blind, unmanageable, "stiff-necked," faithless, lazy. When even God said "Let me destroy them!" it was Moses who took their part and stood his ground. But the test became so great that his faith failed. He disobeyed in striking the rock when he was told only to speak to it, and for this he was barred from ever entering the Promised Land.

To me, one of the most remarkable proofs of his earnestness in carrying out the charge is his continued obedience, day by day, *after* he had been told he would never be allowed into Canaan. It was like Job's, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him" (Jb 13:15, KJV). Moses was saying, "Though He punish me, yet will I obey Him."

Isn't it wonderful that *Moses*, that most plagued of men, was one of the two who appeared on the mountain to Jesus, who was very soon to take up His own bitter cross for the sake of His people? May all who bear responsibility and/or authority find strength and encouragement in Moses' endurance and faithfulness.

Recommended Reading

Elizabeth Rice Handford: *Me? Obey Him!* Elizabeth and I were classmates and debate colleagues at Wheaton College. I knew the man she married. Could *she* submit to *him*? I wondered. This is a thin book, packed with God's truth about that incendiary word. I keep going back to it. Sword of the Lord Publishers, P.O. Box 1099, Murfreesboro TN 37133, \$1.25.

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When One is Missing

Xvxn though my typxwritxr is an old modxl, it works wxll xnough xxxcpt for onx of its kxys. I havx wishxd many timxs that it workxd pxrfxctly. It is trux that thxrx arx 45 kxys that function, but just onx kxy makxs all the diffxrxncx. So thx nxxt timx you think you arx only onx pxrson and that your xffort is not nxxdx, rxmxxbxxr my typxwritxr and say to yoursxlf, "I am a kxy pxrson. Thx Lord nxxds mx." (Anyone know the source? I don't.)

A Life's Work

Few women today are concerned about ironing sheets, but it is still possible to let many other things take precedence over the primary task. It is sobering to contemplate that day when we must answer to a holy God for the things done and not done. Hear the concerns of an unidentified writer of another era:

I am sadly concerned that thousands of mothers are so over-burdened that the actual demands of life from day to day consume all their time and strength. But of two evils, choose the lesser: which would you call the lesser—an unpolished stove or an untaught boy? Dirty windows, or a child whose confidence you have failed to gain? Cobwebs in the corner, or a son over whose soul a crust has formed, so strong that you despair of melting it with your hot tears and fervent prayers?

I have seen a woman who was absolutely ignorant of her children's habits of thought, who never felt that she could spare a half-hour to read or talk with them—I have seen this woman spend ten minutes in ironing a sheet, or forty minutes icing a cake for tea, because company was expected.

When the mother, a good orthodox Christian, shall appear before the Great White Throne to be judged for the "deeds done in the body," and to give her report of the Master's treasures placed in her care, there will be questions and answers like these:

"Where are the boys and girls I gave thee?"

"Lord, I was busy keeping my house clean and in order, and my children wandered away."

"Where wert thou while they sons and thy daughters were learning lessons of dishonesty, malice, and impurity?"

"Lord, I was polishing furniture and making beautiful rugs."

"What hast thou to show for thy life's work?"

"The tidiest house, Lord, and the best starching and ironing in all our neighborhood!"

Oh these children, these children! The restless eager boys and girls whom we love more than our

lives! Shall we devote our time and strength to that which perishes while the rich garden of our child's soul lies neglected, with foul weeds choking out all worthy and beautiful growths? Fleeting indeed, O mother, are the days of childhood, and speckless windows, snowy linen, the consciousness that everything about the house is faultlessly bright and clean will be poor comfort in that day wherein we shall discover that our poor boy's feet have chosen the path that shall take him out of the way to all eternity.

Tattle-Tales

On the phone the other day Valerie mentioned the difficult balance she must achieve when one child complains of another's treatment of him. Usually the treatment has been wrong, and needs correction, so that child must be dealt with. "But I don't want to feed self-pity in the child who has been offended," said Val. "I want to teach my children not to be *touchy*. It's so easy to make a huge *fuss* about things!"

Thank God for the wisdom He gives to parents who ask for it. I thank Him, too, for a lesson I'm sure Valerie had to learn during the first eight years of her life. I take no credit for it. She learned it from the Indians. They never made a fuss about anything—bad weather, stepping on thorns, failing to find meat to eat were taken calmly. To their self-control was added the ability to endure (see 2 Pt 1:6, JBP).

Comfort

Here's a poem sent to me in 1956 by Carol Conn, fellow missionary to the Quichuas, a few months after my husband Jim had died. It brought me much comfort then. May it bring comfort to someone who needs it today.

Dim Uncertainty?

Not in dim uncertainty I go.
What place for fear have they
whose past is filled
With witness of the power of
God Himself?
Nay, rather, as I tread
a path unknown,
I'll rest my soul on this
one thing I know,
That God who filled my past
with certain good
Is with me yet. This is
enough to know.

—Ida M. Jensen

Prayer

I offer up unto Thee my prayers and intercessions, for those especially who have in any matter hurt, grieved, or found fault with me, or who have done me any damage or displeasure.

For all those also whom, at any time, I may have vexed, troubled, burdened, and scandalized, by words or deeds, knowingly or in ignorance; that Thou wouldst grant us all equally pardon for our sins, and for our offences against each other.

Take away from our hearts, O Lord, all suspiciousness, indignation, wrath, and contention, and whatsoever may hurt charity, and lessen brotherly love.

Have mercy, O Lord, have mercy on those that crave Thy mercy, give grace unto them that stand in need thereof, and make us such as may be worthy to enjoy Thy grace, and go forward to life eternal. Amen.

—Thomas à Kempis

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The Lord: Hidden, Weak, Helpless

The coming of the Savior of the world was not announced with ticker tape and balloons. There was the blazing splendor of the Lord and the sudden appearance of a vast host of the armies of heaven with their stunning piece of news—but how many saw? How many heard? No one, it seems, in the little town of Bethlehem—only a group of humble shepherds out on the dewy hillside. They were not thrilled or excited by the heavenly display. They were terror-stricken.

Bethlehem was crowded that night. There was the hustle and bustle of travelers looking for lodging. In the inns, noise, frustration, drunkenness, argument. Hidden from all, in back of one of the inns, knelt a young woman in the agony of giving birth.

The Virgin Mary and her husband Joseph had welcomed with open arms, nine months before, what without faith they would have dreaded and avoided. Each day had brought its further testings. Imagine their receiving news, when her time was near, that a trek to far-off Bethlehem was demanded by law at such a time! Fancy Joseph's finding no room for her, now that she was in labor. Few comforts were theirs that night, but faith sustained them. There was nowhere to lean except the Everlasting Arms. They had God's word, specially delivered by the angel Gabriel. Weak things, lowly things, painful things, silent things—the instinct of their faith told them God was in all of these. They *knew*, because God had given them His word. Therefore they moved trustfully, quietly, through each moment, God being in charge, God being *in* that moment.

And so it may be for us when God's order is the reverse of what we expect. He is *in* each moment, *in* us, *with* us, as He was with the holy couple on their wearisome journey over the dusty roads and in the raw cattle shed. Should we expect to see *how* things

are working together for our good? No, not yet. We see not yet. We only *know*. Joseph and Mary, lacking faith, would surely have felt that things were working strongly against them.

Ah! The poverty, the humility of God reduced to lying on straw in a manger, crying and trembling and breaking Mary's noble heart. Ask the inhabitants of Bethlehem what they think; if that child had been born in a palace in princely surroundings they would worship him. But ask Mary, Joseph, the magi, the priests, and they will tell you that they see in this dire poverty something which makes God more glorious, more adorable. What is deprivation to the senses nourishes and strengthens faith. The less there is for the senses, the more there is for the soul.

—Jean-Pierre de Caussade

In the barren places of my life I can be assured that God is there as He is when life is fruitful, and that the time is coming (give me patience, Lord, to wait!) when He will fulfill His word: "I will put in the desert the cedar and the acacia, the myrtle and the olive. I will set pines in the wasteland, the fir and the cypress together, so that people may see and know, may consider and understand, that the hand of the Lord has done this" (Is 41:19-20, NIV).

Like little children on Christmas Eve, we *know* that lovely surprises are in the making. We can't see them. We have simply been told, and we believe. *Tomorrow we shall see.*

Do You Believe in Santa Claus?

My parents never allowed us to believe that Santa Claus really came in a sleigh with reindeer. The nonsense about dropping down people's chimneys would have meant nothing to us anyway since we had no fireplace. We hung our stockings on the bedposts and easily guessed that our parents were the ones who filled them, though we never managed to stay awake long enough to verify it.

My mother had always believed the tale of Santa Claus until she was eight years old, when a friend shattered her world by telling her it was all rubbish. She wept inconsolably, feeling she had lost a cherished friend. Her own children, she decided, would not have to suffer such disillusionment. She and my father determined to have no part in the deception parents cheerfully inculcate on children at Christmastime. They told us the simple truth—Santa Claus died more than a thousand years ago. He does not drive a sleigh full of presents from the North Pole and land on people's roofs. *The Night Before Christmas* was a poem we loved and memorized, though we knew it was "just pretend."

But there *was* a real Santa Claus. It is doubtful that he had a droll little mouth, or a belly that shook when he laughed like a bowlful of jelly. Nothing is known of his physical appearance, but of his godliness there is little doubt. Why not tell children the true story?

The name "Santa Claus" is derived from the way the Dutch settlers of New York pronounced Sant Niklass (St. Nicholas) a hundred and fifty years ago. He was born in the late third or early fourth century in Asia Minor of wealthy parents who had long prayed for a child. Early in his life they discerned in him great promise, and felt he should be a priest. Soon after his ordination his parents died, leaving him a great fortune. He began at once to give it all away, always contriving to remain anonymous.

He sometimes spent all night studying the Bible. He prayed and fasted and many believed that his prayers had brought them miracles. Twin brothers were said to have been raised from the dead. A nobleman who had sunk into poverty was in great distress, fearing that if he could not provide dowries for his three daughters, they could never marry. Nicholas learned of their plight and one night tossed a bag of gold through the window of their house. It fell at the feet of the eldest girl. Next night, another bag of gold—at the feet of the second sister, and on the third night, one for the youngest. On the first two nights he had slipped away without being discovered, but their father was waiting for him on the third night. He seized Nicholas' robe and, astonished to discover who it was, fell to his knees and asked, "Why do you seek to hide yourself?"

From this incident came the St. Nicholas symbol, three bags or balls of gold which pawnshops now display to show their readiness to help the poor.

Nicholas became the bishop of Myra, a seaport city. He died somewhere around A.D. 342-345 and several hundred years later was canonized (declared a saint) by the Eastern Orthodox Church. By the Middle Ages

more than four hundred churches in England were named for him. He became the patron saint of Russia, Greece, the kingdom of Naples, and of mariners, merchants, and children.

In Germany it was customary for families to exchange small presents on the Eve of St. Nicholas' Day. Coal or switches were put in the shoes of naughty children as they slept, and trinkets such as we might put in Christmas stockings were given to good little boys and girls. Red Santa Claus suits with white ermine trim derive from the bishop's robe. The traditional cap is similar to the bishop's mitre.

Which character is the more worthy of a child's emulation—the jolly man who supposedly fills stockings, or the holy man who loved God and gave away his fortune?

Thanksgiving

The Rettew family of Greer, South Carolina, has eighteen children. Two are their birth children, two-thirds of the adopted ones are handicapped, five are on formulas for life (a 14-year-old microcephalic boy who weighs 28 pounds is one of them), and seven are in diapers for life. In addition to these, the Rettews provide respite care for the children of parents who feel overwhelmed and need a break.

Having seen one of the Rettews' form letters which included a photo of the family, I (incredulous, of course) called Debbie and bombarded her with questions. Loads of laundry per day? Usually eight—more when more than the usual number wet their beds or are sick. Husband's job (he must be enormously wealthy, of course)? Bill is a structural engineer who was fired from his job when he spoke of Christ to his boss ("You need to go to Africa if you're a missionary—we don't need that around here"), so now Bill works alone, has a flexible schedule, helps with everything.

Why do you do this? I wanted to know. "Oh, Elisabeth—these children are a *rainbow* of blessings, all colors and sizes and shapes and problems. I'm praying for more children! I've chosen their names and can't wait to see who God will send to fit those

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names!" How many more do you think you can handle? "As many as the Lord sends. You know, there are so many children out there that others are not willing to take. We *love* to take them. But I know I couldn't do it without the Lord and Bill. We know that when we humanly try to take control, things just backfire, *big time!*" You don't lie awake nights wondering what you'll do if Bill dies? "No, because I *know* the Lord will take care of us."

Debbie does all the cooking—"It's a gift from God. I love to do it! We are *so thankful* for the privilege of having this wonderful family!"

Her joy came through the telephone, full and clear.

When I received written permission to use her testimony, Debbie added, "Things have been real busy. We took care of an eight-month-old little girl and her two-year-old brother. Neither had ever had a schedule or been told 'no.' After a few weeks their unwed teen mom was able to take them home with her new boyfriend, a tale in itself. We do enjoy going and giving our testimonies so that others might hear of Jesus' love.... We were able to witness to 350 motorcycle riders on our yard one Sunday afternoon—another tale!"

A typical day at the Rettew Home includes physical therapy (exercises and races); occupational therapy (learning to dress, eat, do puzzles, arts and crafts, setting the table); spiritual therapy (daily prayer and Bible stories, learning to be the very best that our Lord would want us to be); family outdoor activities (picnics, camping celebrations, vacations, yard work, caring for animals), "AND MOST OF ALL—lots of love, hugs, and kisses."

Special needs include blindness, deafness, tracheotomies, cerebral palsy, speech impediment, failure to thrive, and abused, battered and neglected children. "Let the Rettew Family hear from you if they can help in any way!" they say. They will be glad to hear and to help. Call (803) 877-9327.

A Favorite Carol

(Is there a lovelier one?)

Once in royal David's city
 Stood a lonely cattle shed
 Where a mother laid her baby
 In a manger for His bed.
 Mary was that mother mild,
 Jesus Christ her little child.

He came down to earth from heaven,
 Who is God and Lord of all,
 And His shelter was a stable,
 And His cradle was a stall;
 With the poor and mean and lowly,
 Lived on earth our Savior holy.

And, through all His wondrous childhood,
 He would honor and obey,
 Love, and watch the lowly maiden
 In whose gentle arms He lay;
 Christian children all must be
 Mild, obedient, good as He.

For He is our childhood's pattern;
 Day by day like us He grew;
 He was little, weak, and helpless,
 Tears and smiles like us He knew;
 and He feeleth for our sadness,
 And He shareth in our gladness.

And our eyes at last shall see Him
 Through His own redeeming love;
 For that child so dear and gentle
 Is our Lord in heaven above;
 And He leads His children on
 To the place where He is gone.

Not in that poor lowly stable,
 With the oxen standing by,
 We shall see Him; but in heaven,
 Set at God's right hand on high;
 When like stars His children crowned,
 All in white shall wait around.

—C.F. Alexander, 1848

Recommended Reading

All the Amy Carmichael books you can get your hands on. Christian Literature Crusade, Ft. Washington PA 19034 is the publisher, in case your bookstore doesn't have them (they *should!!*) There are a dozen or so in print, each worth its weight in gold. Try *His Thoughts Said*, *Mimosa*, *If*, or *Toward Jerusalem* (a book of poetry—beautiful).

Prayer

O Lord, give us such a mighty love for Thee as may sweeten all our obedience. Let us not serve Thee with the spirit of bondage as slaves, but with the cheerfulness and gladness of children, delighting ourselves in Thee and rejoicing in Thy work. Amen.

—Benjamin Jenks, 1646-1724

Keep in Touch

Are you moving? Getting married? Leaving school? Don't forget to send us your change of address. The post office DOES NOT FORWARD third class mail like the Newsletter. Please remove your address label below and send it with your new address to: The Elisabeth Elliot Newsletter, Post Office Box 7711, Ann Arbor, MI 48107-7711.

Travel Schedule

November 1994 - February 1995

November 1-4 Holland, Evangelical Broadcasting Co.

November 5-6 Brussels, Belgium.

December 15-27 E. to California, L. to Norway (?).

December 17 Aliso Viejo, CA; Pacific Hills Church, (714) 362-7475.

December 29-30 Toronto, Ontario, Canada; Campus Crusade, Michael Woodard, (613) 830-9693.

January 11-12 Naples, FL; Mrs. Edie Rudolph, 719 Willowhead Dr., (813) 262-5826.

January 13 Clearwater FL; Actions Sixties TV, (813) 535-5622.

January 13-14 Tampa, FL; Idlewild Baptist Church, (813) 238-3131.

January 28 Atlanta, GA; Mt. Paran Church of God, (404) 261-0720.

February 2-3 Chicago, IL; Moody Bible Institute, (312) 329-4000.

February 4 Ava, IL; radio station WXAN.

February 9-10 Denver, CO; Christian Ministries Convention, Dennis Williams, (303) 761-8060.

February 14 Nashville, TN; National Religious Broadcasters Convention, David Keith, (703) 330-7000.

February 23 Phoenix, AZ (invitation only).

February 24-25 Mesa, AZ; Church of the Redeemer, Pam Davis, (602) 833-7500.

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The Elisabeth Elliot Newsletter

January/February 1995

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Ecuador Journey

It had been thirty-one years since my missionary work in Ecuador had ended, and I so wanted my husband Lars to get a glimpse of that beautiful country and the tribal people with whom I had worked. Last May my hope was realized. Gene Jordan, whom I had known when he was a baby, flew Lars and me in the Mission Aviation plane to the eastern jungle. Once again the glory of the high Andes, though partly swathed in cloud (and *pollution*—something new), the velvet mountainsides and green valleys, the great canyon of the roaring Pastaza River, sweet memories of the vast privileges I'd had, overwhelmed me. We landed in Toñampade, a settlement on the Curaray River where a number of Aucas (now known as Waorani) live. It was pouring rain, but dozens of Indians, soaked and muddy, waited at the airstrip to greet us. Dayuma was the only one I recognized. My Auca is much rustier than my Quichua, so I was glad for the help of an Auca woman married to a Quichua, who speaks both languages. She led the way to the river. It took a bit of persuading to get Lars to take off shoes and socks and roll up his trousers. I don't believe he'd ever done that in his life, but neither had he slogged through *that* kind of mud before. Of course he had things like snakes and fire ants and scorpions in mind.

Our guide pointed out where "Palm Beach" used to be, where my husband Jim and four others were killed in 1956. Because the course of jungle rivers changes so drastically, the bodies of the men were long since washed downriver, but shortly before we made our visit the Indians had found parts of Nate Saint's plane, uncovered after all these years by those capricious currents. I had found a piece of it in 1959 when two of the men who had done the spearing took Valerie and me to the beach. They told me at that time that the graves were gone. A bronze plaque, placed years later by visitors from the U.S. on what was supposed to be Palm Beach, has been washed away. A replacement now stands far from the river.

Everything was different, totally different from what it had been in Tiwaenu, many hours' travel from there and inaccessible by plane, where Valerie and I had

lived. There are Christians in Toñampade. The New Testament has been translated and there is a church building, also electricity, a spigot with running water, short wave radios, houses with walls, floors, and aluminum roofs. With the introduction of paper, plastic, cans and bottles, the people have learned to litter. Population has exploded. Oil companies have built school buildings. Aucas are working for the companies, learning Spanish, organizing themselves, protesting to the government for property rights, and a delegation was sent to Washington D.C. a few months ago, hoping to speak to the president (not available).

The next day we were *driven* to Shandia. Yes, what used to be our airstrip is now a road. We made a stop in Pano en route, where a church service was in progress. I was asked to give "a little word," and there were tears and testimonies of Jim's influence. Venancio, the godly man who was the strongest of the Christians, our school teacher and first pastor of the Shandia church, now lives in Pano. He was not there that day, but I had a letter from him telling of his huge disappointment in not knowing we would be passing through. He was preaching in a nearby town that day. "My wife Ana and I could not stop crying. If only we had known! I always remember Shandia, and we have continued to work without ceasing for the Lord, encouraging the believers. But Satan has entered and has caused the fall of many, making divisions, a very sad thing.... In November I and my pupils went to lay a floral offering at the grave of the five brothers. I cried much, thinking to myself, Don Jaimie and Don Eduardo and Don Pedro taught me the Bible."

At last we reached Shandia, the Quichua station where Jim and Pete Fleming worked before either was married. Word had been sent that we were coming, and twenty or thirty people waited in pouring rain in front of the Jim Elliot School, using banana leaves for umbrellas. A loud, warm welcome, everyone talking at once, some doing the death wail (the custom when one sees someone he hasn't seen since a loved one died). Then to a nearby house where a man had a badly swollen foot, pierced by a palm thorn. We left our shoes there, waded down the trail toward the Atun Yacu (Big River) and through the forest to the house Jim built.

The Grifas, a large extended family, moved in when the last missionaries moved out. An earthquake has



The Shephard Family

Back row: Valerie, Walt Jr., Walter III 17.

Middle row: Elisabeth 15, and Sarah 1, who is about to burst into tears, Christiana 12.

Front row: Theo 2, Colleen 8, Evangeline 5, Jim 10.

Elisabeth's description of prayer time when homeschooling begins each morning: Everyone except Sarah, who has to be dragged, comes to the coffee table. Theo is told to kneel. "Did, Mom," he says. No, Theo, you are to *stay* kneeling. Now close your eyes. "Did!" says he. Evangeline and Colleen squirm, Jim and Christiana might argue or say, "Come on, let's pray!" and I say, "Everyone, *be quiet!*" Mama calmly begins. Another schoolday has started.

damaged our beautiful stone fireplace, so the Indians cook in a lean-to outdoors now. All the furniture except two beds is gone, screens torn, doors and drawers of kitchen built-ins gone, bathroom sink and toilet smashed, and everything filthy, but never mind — the Grifas were grateful for a good roof, wood walls and a cement floor. Lars wanted to know about everything — the room where I had written *Shadow of the Almighty*, the place where we dispensed worm medicine and injected penicillin, Valerie's bedroom, the shelf where the short-wave radio was when I got word that Jim was missing, the front door Jim went out for the last time (and when he slammed it, I had wondered if the thought crossed his mind that he might not be back). I had continued to live there from 1956 to 1963, except for two years with the Aucas. Could I *ever* have imagined I would come back with a *third* husband?

The jungle has grown up so that the park-like surroundings of our house, its pineapple, coffee, and cocoa plantations, its palm, banana, avocado, and grapefruit trees, and the sweeping view of the Atun Yacu, are all obliterated.

While everybody stood (there was nothing to sit on) in the living room I was treated to a long, impassioned speech by Shilvi, head of the clan, about all the things that had happened since I left, most of it very sorrowful and confusing — feuds among the clans, contention in church and school, deaths, changes of all

kinds. The words of a hymn came to mind, "Change and decay in all around I see — O Thou who changest not, abide with me."

Suddenly there was a terrible scream followed by a crash. A woman had collapsed. Three men dived to grab her, and held her down. I was told she has seizures when she's emotionally upset. It was a strange, almost surreal, scene—dark thunder clouds, the roar of the rain on the aluminum, the distress on the faces that surrounded me, hands touching me, earnest pleas for Lars and me to come back and stay, promises that everything would then be fixed. This was a strong tug at my heart. How I loved Shandia, that house, those dear people. Wouldn't it be lovely for Lars and me simply to pull up stakes and go there to stay?

When, in the early 1960s, it began to appear to me that the Shepherd was perhaps about to terminate what I had surely thought was a life's calling to Bible

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translation work I found it hard to accept. Was this a notion of the enemy to persuade me to look back when I had put hand to plough? Questions tormented me for a while. The lesson of trust and patient waiting on God is hard, at least for one who loves to plan ahead, make decisions and stick with them. But the Shepherd *does* know how to show His sheep those paths of righteousness, and is far more interested in our getting where He wants us to be than we are in getting there. He does not discuss things with us. He *leads* us, faithfully and plainly as we trust Him and simply do the next thing.

Just a Housewife

Hello, Mrs. Jones, I've just called to say
I'm sorry I cried when you phoned today.
No, I didn't get angry when your call came at four—
Just as eight cub scouts burst through the door;
It's just that I had such a really full day.
I'd baked eight pies for the PTA.
And washing and ironing and scrubbing the floor
Were chores I had finished not too long before.
The reason I cried and gave that big yelp
Was not 'cause you phoned just to ask for my help.
The comment that just about drove me berserk
Was, "I'm sure you'll have time
because you don't work."

Sign me a HAPPY HOMEMAKER

(from an anonymous newspaper clipping, given to me by my faithful typist, Shirley Welt, who seems to share my views on just about everything — bless her heart!)

Department of Amplification

In the July/August Newsletter I asked for confirmation of the source of "An African Martyr's Testimony." Such a variety of claims were sent to me that I am at a loss to choose one. Will the real author please stand up?

Recommended Reading

Mary Wilder Tileston: *Daily Strength for Daily Needs*, first published in 1884. Scripture, poetry, and meditations for every day. Published by Putnam, cloth, \$6.95. Kregel of Grand Rapids, Michigan produces a large print edition, \$10.99. I love this little book. Perhaps this excerpt, which I need to review frequently, will show you why:

I think I find most help in trying to look on all interruptions and hindrances to work that one has planned out for oneself as discipline, trials sent by God to help one against getting selfish over one's

work. Then one can feel that perhaps one's true work—one's work for God consists in doing some trifling haphazard thing that has been thrown into one's day. It is not waste of time, as one is tempted to think, it is the most important part of the work of the day—the part one can best offer to God. After such a hindrance, do not rush after the planned work; trust the time to finish it will be given sometime, and keep a quiet heart about it.

—Annie Keary, 1825-1879

Note from Lars

Has '94 slipped by? Afraid so. Recently a publisher said of a certain manuscript that they were trying to get a "handle" on it to "maximize the book's potential." At a loss as to what to do they tried to "massage the material into a series of vignettes."

I'm not known for clarity but do hope that the few things I want to pass on will be more understandable and not quite as serious.

It was a good year for the Newsletter. We had a lot of additions to the mailing list due to requests from Elisabeth's radio program *Gateway to Joy*. There was some thought that this would put a financial strain on the organization but not so. We appreciate your good response to renewal offers whether it be a book or tape series. So both of us say *tusen takk*, that's a thousand thanks in Norwegian. I would also add that Servant Publications does a wonderful job in putting the letter together for mailing.

As you know lots of folks' Christmas letters give a rundown of the previous year's ailments. Not to disappoint anyone I'll give you the good news about my glaucoma as some of you have asked. I can still see about the same as I did eight or nine years ago when I got the verdict. I've had four or five laser treatments — about seventy-seven holes popped into the mesh (whatever that is) of each eye. I'm surprised there's any mesh left. My doctor is great. He says just keep taking the medicine. Eight different drops a day plus a couple of pills. At times when I wake up at night, open my eyes, and see the ceiling I just say "Thank you, Lord, that I can still see." Not only that but drive, do my work, and meet a lot of you folks when we travel — much to thank God for.

That's it on the medical front for the two of us. The Lord has blessed us with good health and we're thankful. Of course for some reason I take a daily dose of cider vinegar and water, capsules of cod liver oil, vitamin C, and a couple of garlic pills. Whether or not it does any good, who knows?

In response to letters to us many of you have received a card from me. Elisabeth reads the mail, but it's now impossible for her to answer all of it. With

your help, the Newsletter is now being sent to 13,000 people, including 66 foreign countries. We do appreciate it, but the load increases and it's still just the two of us—we're not building an organization here in Magnolia.

If you want to stay on the mailing list, it would help at annual renewal time if you would return the *first* notice you receive, rather than waiting for the second. Makes bookkeeping easier for the staff at Servant. Some of you may have been inconvenienced last year when a new computer system was installed. We trust that all is well now.

Prayer

Please pray for the Shandia Indians, that God will restore fellowship among the believers. Pray for Venancio, the pastor mentioned above. The Aucas and Colorados whom we also visited need prayer, especially now that the world makes such inroads materially and spiritually.

Keep in Touch

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January 14 Pasadena, CA; Pasadena Community Church, (800) 759-4569.

January 15 Sarasota, FL; The Tabernacle, (813) 355-8858.

January 27 Dahlonge, GA; Baptist Student Union, (706) 864-6402.

January 28 Atlanta; Mt. Paran Church of God, (404) 261-0720.

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February 23 Phoenix (meeting by invitation only).

February 24-25 Mesa, AZ; Church of the Redeemer, Pam Davis, (602) 833-7500.

March 9 Springdale, AR; First Baptist Church, Dollie Havens, (501) 751-4523.

March 10-11 Houston, TX; First Baptist Church, Bonnie BeMent, (713) 520-5200.

March 18 Los Angeles; Africa Inland Mission banquet, Glenn Peterson, (914) 735-4014.

March 18 Pasadena, CA; First Church of the Nazarene Women's Seminar, Miss Ruth Dix, 8321 LaSierra Ave., Whittier, CA, 90603.

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A Quiet Heart

Jesus slept on a pillow in the midst of a raging storm. How could He? The terrified disciples, sure that the next wave would send them straight to the bottom, shook Him awake with rebuke. How could He be so careless of their fate?

He could because He slept in the calm assurance that His Father was in control. His was a quiet heart. We see Him move serenely through all the events of His life—when He was reviled, He did not revile in return. When He knew that He would suffer many things and be killed in Jerusalem, He never deviated from His course. He had set His face like flint. He sat at supper with one who would deny Him and another who would betray Him, yet He was able to eat with them, willing even to wash their feet. Jesus, in the unbroken intimacy of His Father's love, kept a quiet heart.

None of us possesses a heart so perfectly at rest, for none lives in such divine unity, but we can learn a little more each day of what Jesus knew—what one writer called the “negligence” of that trust which carries God with it. Who would think of using the word negligence in regard to our Lord Jesus? To be negligent is to omit to do what a reasonable man would do. Would Jesus omit that? Yes, often, when faith pierced beyond human reason.

This “negligent” trust—is it careless or inattentive? No, not in His case. Jesus, because His will was one with His Father's, could be free from care. He had the blessed assurance of knowing that His Father would do the caring, would be attentive to His Son's need. Was Jesus indolent? No, our Lord was never lazy, sluggish, or slothful, but He knew when to take action and when to leave things up to His Father. He taught us to work and watch but never to worry; to do gladly whatever we are given to do, and to leave all else with God.

Purity of heart, said Kierkegaard, is *to will one thing*. The Son willed only one thing: the will of His Father. That's what He came to earth to do. Nothing else. One whose aim is as pure as that can have a completely quiet heart, knowing what the psalmist knew: “Lord, you have assigned me my portion and my cup; you have made my lot secure” (Ps 16:5, NIV). I know

of no greater *simplifier* for all of life. Whatever happens is assigned. Does the intellect balk at that? Can we say that there are things which happen to us which do not belong to our lovingly assigned “portion” (“This belongs to it, that does not”)? Are some things, then, out of the control of the Almighty?

Every assignment is measured and controlled for my eternal good. As I accept the given portion other options are cancelled. Decisions become much easier, directions clearer, and hence my heart becomes inexpressibly quieter.

What do we really want in life? Sometimes I have the chance to ask this question of high school or college students. I am surprised at how few have a ready answer. Oh, they could come up with quite a long list of *things*, but is there *one* thing above all others that they desire? “*One* thing have I desired of the Lord,” said David, “this is what I seek: that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life...” (Ps 27:4, AV). To the rich young man who wanted eternal life Jesus said, “*One* thing you lack.... Go, sell everything” (Mk 10:21, NIV). In the parable of the sower Jesus tells us that the seed which is choked by thorns has fallen into a heart clogged with the worries of this life, the deceitfulness of riches, and the desire for *other things*. The apostle Paul said, “*One* thing I do: forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus” (Phil 3:13-14, NIV, emphasis added in all three references).

A quiet heart is content with what God gives. It is enough. All is grace. One morning my computer simply would not obey me. What a nuisance. I had my work laid out, my timing figured, my mind all set. My work was delayed, my timing thrown off, my thinking interrupted. Then I remembered. It was not for nothing. This was part of the Plan (not mine, His). “Lord, You have assigned me my portion and my cup.”

On that same day I found another reminder of the clue to a quieter heart:

I think I find most help in trying to look on all the interruptions and hindrances to work that one has planned out for oneself as discipline, trials sent by God to help against getting selfish over one's work. Then one can feel that perhaps one's true work—one's work for God—consists in doing some trifling

haphazard thing that has been thrown into one's day. It is not waste of time, as one is tempted to think, it is the most important part of the work of the day—the part one can best offer to God. After such a hindrance, do not rush after the planned work; trust that the time to finish it will be given sometime, and keep a quiet heart about it.

—Annie Keary, 1825-1879

Now if the interruption had been a human being instead of an infuriating mechanism it would not have been so hard to see it as the most important part of the work of the day. But *all* is under my Father's control—yes, recalcitrant computers, faulty transmissions, drawbridges which happen to be *up* when one is in a hurry. My portion. My cup. My lot is secure. My heart can be at peace. My Father is in charge. How simple!

My assignment entails my willing acceptance of my portion—in matters far beyond comparison with the trivialities just mentioned, such as the death of a precious baby, given to the parents for just one month (see the following story).

Response is what matters. Remember that our forefathers were all guided by the pillar of cloud, all passed through the sea, all ate and drank the same spiritual food and drink, but God was not pleased with most of them. Their response was all wrong. Bitter about the portions allotted they indulged in idolatry, gluttony, and sexual sin. And God killed them, by snakes and by a destroying angel.

The same almighty God apportioned their experiences. All events serve His will. Some responded in faith. Most did not.

"No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand under it" (1 Cor 10:13, NIV).

Think of that promise and keep a quiet heart! Our enemy delights in disquieting us. Our Savior and Helper delights in quieting us. "As a mother comforts her child, so will I comfort you" is His promise (Is 66:13, NIV). The choice is ours. It depends on our willingness to see everything in God, receive all from His hand, accept with gratitude just the portion and the cup He offers. Shall I charge Him with a mistake in His measurements or with misjudging the sphere in which I can best learn to trust Him? Has He misplaced me? Is He ignorant of things or people which, in my view, hinder my doing His will?

God came down and lived in this same world as a man. He showed us how to live in this world, subject to its vicissitudes and necessities, that we might be changed—not into an angel or a storybook princess,

not wafted into another world, but changed into saints in *this* world. The secret is *Christ* in *me*, not me in a different set of *circumstances*.

He whose heart is kind beyond all measure
Gives unto each day what He deems best,
Lovingly its part of pain and pleasure,
Mingling toil with peace and rest.

—Lina Sandell, Swedish

A Mother's Response

In the November/December issue was the story of the Rettew family of Greer, South Carolina—eighteen children, many severely handicapped. Another testimony, as full of thanksgiving as the Rettews', came from Diane Rieck of Lyndhurst, Ohio. She has three boys, had lost two babies, and found, by ultra-sound in her sixth pregnancy, that the child was a "trisomy," meaning that every cell in the baby's body has an extra chromosome, which is incompatible with life. Although most trisomies miscarry by the third month, those that survive usually die in the birth process or shortly afterwards. Little John Nicholas weighed 4 pounds 2 ounces, had severe cleft lip and palate, an extra finger on each hand, rocker-bottom feet, no eyes behind his lids, and a very severe heart defect.

Diane wrote in her journal, "God has given me the greatest gift possible. I never thought I would be able to hold my baby alive. No matter how much pain will follow, a part of my heart will always be filled with this joy.... No matter how much or how little time is left, I will always treasure this gift of holding baby John in my arms. Heavenly Father, you have truly blessed me in a way I'll never comprehend. And yet, I don't know how to respond to this gift except to say THANK YOU."

Baby John, one month old, died on All Saints' Day. "How perfect a beginning for him to join in the celebration and be the newest saint in Heaven!" wrote Diane, and added a list of six of the countless blessings she had received from beginning to end.

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Intimacy with God

A reader asked me to explain that kind of relationship and how one "gets there." These simple steps will make a beginning:

1. Give yourself without reservation to God, asking Him to do in, through, and with you *anything* He wants, at any cost.
2. Trust His power, wisdom, and love as He answers that prayer—and do not be surprised at the answers He chooses.
3. Obey.
4. Receive everything with thanksgiving.

Corrie's House

Years ago my daughter Valerie and I had the undreamed of privilege of having tea with that great soldier of the Cross, Corrie ten Boom. Then in her eighties, she happened to be spending that day in bed as the doctor had ordered. He said she could not continue to "tramp for the Lord" all over creation unless she took one day in seven for bedrest. So there she was, joyful and radiant as always, talking of the Lord's wonderful pattern for our lives. She leaped out of bed to show us the back side of a piece of embroidery—a meaningless jumble of colored threads. When she turned it over a golden crown on a purple field was revealed. That, she said, illustrates our lives. God is working on a beautiful pattern that appears but a meaningless tangle.

While I was speaking in the Netherlands last November our hosts took Lars and me to Haarlem to visit Corrie ten Boom's house. I had read many of her books and had seen the film, *The Hiding Place*, but was quite unprepared for the overwhelming poignancy of standing before that very hiding place in Corrie's tiny bedroom. Our tour guide was a lady who had become a Christian seven years ago through reading Corrie's books. She showed us the brick wall behind which as many as six people could find refuge, entering through a secret panel in the closet.

It was difficult to believe how many people had lived in that cramped little house with its steep, winding, narrow stairways, its minuscule bedrooms. How they found ration cards and fed them is one of the many miracles. How they practiced their escapes to the hiding place when the Gestapo demanded entrance—those heart-stopping seventy seconds as they raced up two stories above the living room; the occasion when six Jews stood for two and a half days in that dark hole (only one could lie down at a time) while the Gestapo remained in the house, trying to find them.

Why would the Ten Booms pay such a price for illegally sheltering the hated race during World War II? The love of Christ compelled them. Corrie's father, a clock

maker (his shop is still open, on the first floor), had always had a great love for the Jewish people, a love that was stronger than death. When their forbidden activities were reported to the Gestapo he and his two daughters were taken away to a concentration camp. He died enroute. Corrie and Betsy were taken on to the camp. Before Betsy died there she told her sister to carry the message of Jesus' love and forgiveness around the world. Corrie did not forget. Tens of thousands heard her tell of the horrors they had suffered, but always, always, she spoke of the presence of the Lord in the camp, of His tenderness, His love, His all-sufficient grace which enabled Betsy to pray for the guards who had beaten her, "Father, forgive them." When, years, later, Corrie met one of those responsible for Betsy's death she recoiled at the thought of having to shake his hand. Hatred welled up in her heart. She sent up an instant prayer for grace. "My hand shot out," she said, "and in that moment God gave me grace to forgive him."

Corrie's was a life utterly at the disposal of her Master, a life of love, trust, and obedience in circumstances indescribably hideous and frightening. Hers was a quiet and thankful heart. When Billy Graham asked Jeannette Clift George, who played Corrie's part in the film, what single characteristic stood out to her as she studied Corrie's life, Jeannette's immediate reply was JOY!

If such joy can be found in such circumstances, who of us could think it impossible in ours? The Old Testament prophet Habakkuk wrote:

Though the fig tree does not bud and there are no grapes on the vines,
though the olive crop fails and the fields produce no food,
though there are no sheep in the pen and no cattle in the stalls,
yet will I rejoice in the Lord, I will be joyful in God my Savior.

Habakkuk 3:17-18 (NIV)

Recommended Reading

George McDonald: *The Wind from the Stars*, edited by Gordon Reid (HarperCollins). Brief readings for each day of the year. I cannot thank God enough for the way in which MacDonald has deepened, heightened, and widened my vision. A sample from the book:

The one secret of life and development is not to devise and plan, but to fall in with the forces at work—to do every moment's duty aright—that being the part in the process allotted to us; and let come—not what will, for there is no such thing—but what the eternal Thought wills for each of us, has intended for each of us from the first.

Prayer

1. A new producer/director for my broadcast, *Gateway to Joy*. Praise God for Linda Meyers, who has been doing a thoroughly wonderful job. She expects her first baby in June and plans to be a stay-at-home mother. I am thrilled for her, but I'll miss her sorely.
2. Please pray for God's help as I attempt to make the book I am working on *cohere*. It's nothing but a jumble now, but God is not the author of confusion. "On him we have set our hope that he will continue to deliver us, as you help us by your prayers" (2 Cor 1:10-11).

My prayer for you: "May our Lord Jesus Christ himself and God our Father, who loved us and by his grace gave us eternal encouragement and good hope, encourage your hearts and strengthen you in every good deed and word" (2 Thes 2:16).

Keep in Touch

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Travel Schedule March-May 1995

- March 9** Springdale, Ark.; First Baptist Church, Dollie Havens, (501) 751-4523.
- March 10-11** Houston, Tex.; KHCB radio, First Baptist Church, Bonnie BeMent, (713) 520-5200.
- March 11** Houston, Tex.; Christ Evangelical Presbyterian Church, (713) 526-1188.
- March 17** Costa Mesa, Calif.; Calvary Chapel, Women's Bible Class, Kathleen Gilbert, (714) 979-4422.
- March 18** Pasadena, Calif.; First Church of the Nazarene Women's Seminar, (818) 285-0074 or (310) 696-9257.
- March 18** Fullerton, Calif.; First Evangelical Free Church, Africa Inland Mission Banquet, (818) 285-0074 or (310) 696-9257.
- March 20** Newport Beach, Calif.; Mariners' Church, Diana Kohler or Mary Hendricks, (714) 640-6010.
- March 20-21** Taping for *Gateway to Joy*.
- March 26** Hamilton, Mass.; Christ Church High School Group.
- March 31** Jury duty
- April 8** Fitchburg, Mass.; Church of the Harvest Women's Conference, Heidi Shultz, (508) 448-2556.
- April 16** Easter
- April 21** Wayne, N.J.; Wayne Manor, Africa Inland Mission Banquet, Dick Van Yperen, (201) 445-7584.
- April 22** Hawthorne, N.J.; Hawthorne Gospel Church, Linda Thomas, (201) 444-7679 or (201) 447-6262.
- May 8-9** Taping for *Gateway to Joy*.
- May 12** Brockton, Mass.; Foursquare Gospel Church, (508) 427-1744.
- May 17** Keswick, N.J.; Spring Women's Day, Judee Dickinson, (908) 350-1187.
- May 18** Schooley's Mountain, N.J.; Barbara Nugent, (908) 852-7305.

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The Elisabeth Elliot Newsletter

May/June 1995

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Not to Be Loved but to Love

The concept of self-love, propagated as though it were something we must all learn (it was a remarkably easy lesson for Adam and Eve) is a lethal virus infecting Christians' minds. The message of the cross is self-donation, abandonment for the love of God. The word of Mark 12:30 is "Love the *Lord* your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength" (NIV, emphasis added). The second commandment is "Love your neighbor as yourself" (Mk 12:31, NIV). The love to which Jesus refers is, I think, simply the normal attention we pay to our own needs. We look after ourselves, feed, clothe (and often pamper) ourselves, protect what we think of as our rights, and usually give ourselves as many "breaks" as we can. That comes naturally. What doesn't come naturally is to give our neighbor (who might be a sweet lady or a shrew) at least the breaks we allow ourselves.

"Please give up wanting to be loved," wrote J. Heinrich Arnold. "It is the opposite of Christianity. The prayer of St. Francis says, 'Grant that I may not so much seek to be loved as to love.' As long as you seek to be loved, you will never find peace. You will always find reasons for envy. But its real root is self-love." (From a little booklet, *Discipleship*, sent to me by the Hutterian Brethren of Farmington, Pennsylvania).

There is a strong warning in 2 Timothy 3:1-2 which ought to give us pause: "Mark this: There will be terrible times in the last days. People will be lovers of themselves" (NIV).

One evening as I was cooking supper, glancing now and then at the small TV that sits on the kitchen counter, my attention was arrested by a close-up of a very earnest young man who was saying, "I forgive them," a statement seldom heard on a national talk show, especially one whose host is a notorious cynic. A woman leaped to her feet in the audience shouting, "That's sick! If you forgive them you're just *condoning* what they did!" Camera switches back to that calm and earnest face. No reply. The host then, in his most sardonic tone, countered, "But isn't that what *Jesus* told His followers to do? Aren't we *supposed* to forgive our enemies?"

"Yes," said the earnest young man. His next words gave testimony to being a follower of Christ. That was

his reason for forgiveness. I became aware that I was looking at Reginald Denny, the trucker who was dragged from his cab in the Los Angeles riots and beaten. Next on screen was a woman who wanted the audience to know that she understood Mr. Denny's reason, for she, too, was a Christian. She was the *mother* of one of those who had beaten him.

"What my son did was wrong, and he deserves punishment," she said, "But in the courtroom Mr. Denny came toward me with hand outstretched. In two seconds we were in each other's arms."

A shocker for the mass media—a live picture of amazing grace. Self-preservation is the strongest instinct, yet the grace of forgiveness is stronger. Not merely an instinct but evidence of the power of Christ in a man's life, the power of Him who when He hung on the cross asked His Father's forgiveness for those who had put him there.

That same Savior and Lord speaks to us: "If a man will let himself be lost for My sake he will find his true self" (Mt 16:25, NEB).

Joy in Serving

I have written about our dear Mrs. Kershaw, a household helper who blessed our family. George MacDonald writes about another such one:

Grizzie afforded a wonderfully perfect instance of a relation which is one of the loveliest in humanity—absolute service without a shade of servility [mean or cringing submissiveness, obsequiousness]. She would have died for her master, but even to him she must speak her mind. Her own affairs were nothing to her, and those of her master as those of the universe, but she was vitally one of his family, as the toes belong to the head! In truth, she was of the family like a poor relation, with few privileges, and no end of duties; and she thought ten times more of her duties than her privileges. She would have fed and sometimes did feed with perfect satisfaction on the poorest scraps remaining from meals, but a doubt of the laird's preference of her porridge to that of any maker in broad Scotland, would have given her a sore heart. She would have wept bitter tears had the privilege of washing the laird's feet been taken from her. If reverence for the human is an

essential element of greatness, then at least greatness was possible to Grizzie....

Such as Grizzie will perhaps prove to be of those last foredoomed to be first. With the tenderness of a ministering angel and mother combined, her eyes waited upon her master.... And if she might be permitted to creep about the place after nightfall, she desired nothing better than the chance of serving him still, if but by rolling a stone out of his way. The angels might bear him in their hands—she could not aspire to that, but it would be much the same whether she got the stone out of the way of his foot, or they lifted his foot above the stone!

—from *Warlock O' Glenwarlock*, 1881

A Transformed Marriage

Those of you who pray for God's working through my speaking will be glad to know of one who had not only ears to hear, but a heart to obey. Here is a heart-warming testimony to the power of God and the rewards of obedience.

"Thank you for saving my marriage for good," she begins (although *she* knows and *I* know Who saved it).

It seemed to me that my marriage of thirty-three years was really ending. There was no communication. I prepared to finish off what had not only ruined my life but also ruined my two boys of thirty and twenty-seven.

"Please heal my marriage," I pleaded to God. Then one day I went to hear you speak. God told me through you, "Go and treat your husband as you would treat Jesus. Call him lord [see 1 Peter 3:6] and serve him." I did not have anything to lose so I decided to try. I went home. He was still sitting in his chair like a mummy, not even blinking, watching TV. I hate that scene, but I controlled myself and very respectfully asked if I could talk for a moment. He immediately to my surprise switched the TV off and listened.

What do you do next if it's Jesus you're talking to? You ask forgiveness, right? So I did. I told him how *un*-understanding I was, how stupid I was, how wrong I was my whole life, and asked him for his forgiveness, even though he had decided not to continue our marriage.

Another surprise: he said he loved me and had always loved me and wanted to leave because he felt he was a burden to me and our family. Since he is not working and had been smoking and often drunk previously (he does not drink anymore), he said he feels inadequate himself and it has nothing to do with me. Then I told him how important it is

for me to be with him, and to have him in the house for me and for the boys. Thus I understood how our communication was distorted because of our own distorted feelings about ourselves.

We are still the same people, but our home is based on God's teachings and whenever I am angry with him and want to put him down I remember: how would I treat him if he were Jesus? My whole approach changes. My words are so different. I speak with love and respect. Do you know what? It's more than one month, never happened before in thirty-three years, we *did not fight!* I do not have cramps in my stomach when he opens his mouth to speak! I dearly love him, accept him as he is, and gladly do what he asks me to do. I listen and respect his ideas even though they are 180 degrees different from mine. I also have the courage to speak my ideas, but try to say them in a way that will not offend him (hard work, but worth it).

Elisabeth, there is such a peace in my house that I never, never had. This house was built by Jesus and it will stand forever. I thank God for everything.

I do not try to hurt my husband, but I am not always successful. So I tell him I am sorry the same day, just as the Bible teaches. I also talk about my hurts with him, and we solve them the same day. Oh, how it works well! My only regret is that I did not know it sooner. God has promised to restore my past and I trust He will. I love God with all my heart, soul, mind, and strength. May God bless you and your ministry.

Three months after she had written this letter I called to ask permission to quote her. She granted it at once, and added, "Oh Elisabeth! I have *so much love* for my husband now! I hated him. Every time he went out the door I hoped he would be killed. Now we have a wonderful marriage."

After I had told this story in a meeting a radiant woman came to tell me she had almost the identical experience. Thirty-three years of marriage, and she had actually asked God to kill her husband. "But now—what a *difference!*"

"Love... does not pursue selfish advantage. It is not touchy. It does not keep account of evil or gloat over the wickedness of other people...."

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"Love knows no limit to its endurance, no end to its trust, no fading of its hope; it can outlast anything. It is, in fact, the one thing that still stands when all else has fallen" (From 1 Cor 13, J.B. Phillips).

Garage Sales

Hudson Taylor, founder of the China Inland Mission, disciplined himself to take inventory of everything he possessed which hadn't been used for a year. He discarded the worthless and gave away the useful. It sounds to me like a practice we should consider. Think how much simpler life would be!

Garage sales are a great way to unload everything you haven't used for a year or more. I'm all for people *having* sales, but I'm not much of a customer, though I did spend five dollars on an electric mixer and fifty for a recliner for my son-in-law. As I survey what's for sale I wonder what it tells us about American life.

Restlessness. Discontent. Ceaseless activity. Short attention span.

The skis and skates and surfboards have perhaps been outgrown by the children. That's understandable. But the Skidoos and scuba-diving stuff, all those cute and clever but unnecessary gadgets, the expensive exercise machines, the tables loaded with useless bric-a-brac—I suspect it was adults who thought they needed those.

A life lived without reflection can be very superficial and empty. That emptiness must be filled. Not knowing the One who alone can fill the *heart* man grabs repeatedly for some new stimulation, sensation, satisfaction to fill his time and slake his restlessness. His enjoyment is short-lived. What he got for Christmas or bought at a garage sale last year he soon tires of. It furnishes him with goods for his own garage sale. He is like the man who wrote, "I denied myself nothing my eyes desired; I refused my heart no pleasure.... Yet when I surveyed all that my hands had done and what I had toiled to achieve, everything was meaningless, a chasing after the wind" (Eccl. 2:10-11).

How much is enough? "Godliness with contentment is great gain" (1 Tm 6:6).

Valerie's Letter

My daughter, who has been homeschooling for more than ten years, has been asked for a letter describing her more recent experience. If you would like a copy, please send a self-addressed, stamped envelope directly to *her*, NOT TO THE NEWSLETTER. She is Mrs. W.D. Shepard Jr., 31801 Via Alegre, Trabuco Canyon, CA, 92679.

A Prayer for the Middle-Aged

The following prayer has been attributed to any number of ministers and religious writers, a member of British royalty, a sea captain, and a medieval nun. One newspaper account claims it was written by none of the above, but by Alta Becker of Dayton, Ohio, in 1956. She used it in her Lenten Lectures at the Dayton Women's Club and was asked each year for copies. The Duchess of Windsor used it in her New Year's resolutions with no credit cited. *The Reader's Digest* credited it to Thomas E. Dewey in 1952. Although there are several different versions, and the origin remains uncertain, I find the words well worth pondering:

Lord, Thou knowest better than I know myself, that I am growing older and will, some day, be OLD.

Keep me from getting loquacious, and particularly from the fatal habit of thinking I must say something on every subject and on every occasion.

Release me from craving to try to straighten out everyone's affairs.

Make me thoughtful, but not moody, helpful but not bossy. With my vast store of wisdom it seems a pity not to use it all. But Thou knowest, Lord, that I want a few friends at the end — at least enough for pallbearers, with a mourner or two. Do not let the editor head my obituary with the words, "Old Crab Dies at Last: Everybody Glad."

Keep my mind free from the recital of endless details. Give me wings to get to the point.

Seal my lips on my aches and pains. They are increasing and love of rehearsing them is becoming sweeter as the years go by. I dare not ask for grace enough to enjoy the tales of others' pains, but help me to endure them with patience.

I dare not ask for improved memory, but for a growing humility and a lessening cocksureness when my memory seems to clash with the memories of others.

Teach me the glorious lesson that occasionally I may be mistaken.

Keep me reasonably sweet; I do not want to be a Saint—some of them are so hard to live with. But a sour old woman is one of the crowning works of the devil.

Give me the ability to see good things in unexpected places and in unexpected people. Give me the grace to tell them so. Amen.

Recommended Reading

If you read Elizabeth Prentiss's *Stepping Heavenward*, you'll want this book too: *More Love to Thee, The Life and Letters of Elizabeth Prentiss*, an intimate look at the character of a wife, mother, and writer who loved God and earnestly sought to help others to love Him. The publishers are kindly offering this book postpaid to readers of my newsletter (if you tell them I sent you!) for \$16.95 (regularly \$18.95 plus shipping). You can purchase both books for \$25 postpaid. A lovely children's story, *The Little Preacher*, will be "thrown in" for another \$5, making a total of \$30.

Order directly from Calvary Press, Box 805, Amityville NY 11701. Phone: 516-789-8175.

Thank God

- that Mardelle Brown, veteran missionary in Ecuador, and my dear friend, the first to visit me when I lived with the Aucas, is now in Lincoln, Nebraska with her husband Malcom. Both are working, without salary, helping to answer the ever-increasing mail that comes in response to my radio program, *Gateway to Joy*.
- for His daily supply of help and strength to do the work He has given us to do, and more serenity and peace than we've ever known.

Pray

- for Lars's eyes. There has been some deterioration. Medicine has been increased.

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May 17 Keswick, N.J.; Spring Women's Day, Judee Dickinson, (908) 350-1187.

May 18 Schooley's Mountain, N.J.; Emmanuel Bible Church, Barbara Nugent, (908) 852-7305.

May 27 Hampstead, N.H.; Island Pond Baptist Church, Shirley Paz, (603) 329-8047.

June 3 Oklahoma City; Women's Conference, Max Barnett, (405) 321-2810.

June 30 Rumney, N.H.; Bible Conference, Andrew Accardy, (603) 786-9504.

July 9 Asbury Grove, Hamilton, Mass.; (508) 525-3653.

July 19-20 Denver, Colo.; Christian Booksellers Association.

August 21-28 Rio de Janeiro, Brazil; Southern Baptist Missionary Women's Retreat, Sharon Fairchild, Travessa Jaicos 18 Tijuca, 20521-280 Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

Keep in Touch

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The Consolation of Obedience

Early one Sunday morning in the mountains of North Carolina a group of conference speakers met as planned for prayer, but heard a shocking announcement. The son-in-law of that morning's speaker had been murdered in South America. There were many expressions of grief and sympathy, of course, and it was agreed almost unanimously that another speaker should be found for the worship service. "No," said the scheduled speaker quietly. He would want to carry out his responsibility. Objections, consternation, discussion followed.

"But I want to do it," said the man.

Surely it would not be right to expect him to do this, not after hearing such terrible news. All would wish to excuse him. All would understand. When the men had had their say, I ventured to suggest that perhaps there was one thing they did not understand—that in times of deepest suffering it is the faithful carrying out of ordinary duties that brings the greatest consolation. I had found it so, as have many others. The man delivered his message—a deepened and more powerful one.

Marj Saint's daily job was to maintain constant radio contact with her husband Nate, a jungle pilot. When he and four missionaries went into dangerous territory in Ecuador in 1956 Marj lost contact with her husband for the first time in all the years he had been flying. Through the suspense of four days we watched as she sat calmly, hour after anguished hour, by that shortwave radio, headphones on, notepad ready, maintaining contact with another jungle pilot, with an American air rescue party from Panama, with reporters from Quito and the U.S., and with the search party comprising Quichua Indians, missionaries, and Ecuadorian soldiers. She had a few other things to think about as well: her three children, us four wives and our children who were all staying in her house, not

to mention the people who poured in from all over, wanting to help. One missionary lady offered "a shoulder to cry on." Marj thanked her and said she hoped she would not need it. God was her mighty fortress and her routine work was real consolation. There was no turning away from her duties or from people simply because her own heart was sick and sore. She knew the truth of Romans 8:35-39 (NIV):

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?
Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine
or nakedness or danger or sword? As it is written:

"For your sake we face death all day long;
we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered."

No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

There is a great lesson tucked away in that mysterious book of Ezekiel. The word of the Lord came to the prophet, "Son of man, with one blow I am about to take away from you the delight of your eyes." Ezekiel was forbidden to indulge in any of the accepted forms of mourning. He obeyed. How could he? It is always possible to do what God directs us to do. Ezekiel wrote, "and in the evening my wife died. The next morning I did as I had been commanded" (Ez 24:15, 18, NIV).

I remember the consolation I had found in going about my work in Shandia when Jim died. There was twice as much to do as there had been when there were two of us. In my journal of November, 1973, about two months after the death of my second husband, Addison Leitch, I wrote:

"I find that routine is the best support for my soul. I can function with almost my customary efficiency and concentration, so long as I operate by habit—the sameness, ordinariness, and necessity are comforting. It is in the interruption of routine that I find myself beginning to disintegrate and turn inward. This is hazardous, and I have to take the reins firmly and say 'gid-dap!'"

It was the old watchword, DO THE NEXT THING. But how to know which, of all the pressing concerns,

is "the next thing"? As usual my friend George MacDonald has an answer:

"Your next duty is just to determine what your next duty is. Is there nothing you neglect? Is there nothing you know you ought not to do? You would know your duty if you thought in earnest about it, and were not ambitious of great things."

"Ah, then," responded she, "I suppose it is something very commonplace, which will make life more dreary than ever. That cannot help me."

"It will, if it be as dreary as reading the newspapers to an old deaf aunt. It will soon lead you to something more. Your duty will begin to comfort you at once, but will at length open the unknown fountain of life in your heart."

It is a principle of the spiritual life, discovered by many. Here is John Keble's version:

When sorrow all our heart would ask,
We need not shun our daily task,
And hide ourselves for calm;
The herbs we seek to heal our woe
Familiar by the pathway grow,
Our common air is balm.

Summertime in Strawberry Cove

"The lines have fallen unto me in pleasant places," wrote the psalmist, and my gratitude echoes his words. Strawberry Cove is a cul de sac with seven houses, just off Hesperus Avenue in the little town of Magnolia (too small to be on the map), in Massachusetts. Most of you older ones know Longfellow's poem, "The Wreck of the Hesperus," the story of the schooner Hesperus, that "sailed the wintry sea," and was wrecked on the rock named Norman's Woe, lying beyond my vision to the east as I sit at my desk.

I look down a grassy bank, humpy with the ceaseless industry of countless woodchucks over countless years. They dig a vast labyrinth of tunnels, piling huge mounds of earth on the bank. I enjoy watching them—obese furry brown creatures with blunt snouts, short tails, and short legs with powerful digging forepaws. They waddle or scurry or lazily sun themselves. They used to be my friends. I thought they were awfully cute until they began neatly nipping off *every single* petunia in our teensy garden. Some of the charm now seems to have perished.

At the bottom of the bank are great sheets of rock and a jumble of awesome red-brown boulders surrounding a lovely little tide pool, so crystal clear that I can see straight to its dark red and bright green floor.

Once I spotted an Atlantic salmon that had got himself marooned there when the tide ebbed.

Our house, which faces due south from Cape Ann, sits about sixty feet above a wide expanse of what I call ocean (it has waves and swells and seagulls and sea-going vessels of all sizes) but is more accurately named Massachusetts Bay. It glitters and flashes in the sunlight. A billion diamonds dance. The lobster buoys swing and dip on the swells, and on summer weekends we see the little red flags which mark the presence of scuba divers beneath. Early in the morning we hear the soft thub-thub of the lobster boats as they slip into the Cove. We watch the lobster men pull their "pots" (traps), remove the catch, and fling the rotten bait to the wheeling flocks of screaming gulls who always trail them.

The ocean tempers the climate in both winter and summer. It is ten degrees warmer in winter and cooler in summer than it was in Hamilton, where we used to live, twelve miles inland. So we seldom have more than a dozen or so really *hot* days. On one or two of these I may venture down to the rocks with my snorkel. It must be high tide and fairly calm, otherwise one is flung against wicked barnacles, making it hazardous either to get in or out of the water.

The water is bone-chilling, but oh, what exquisite mysteries I discover as I put my goggled face into the water! I am instantly in a different world, a magic one, a silent one, and I forget the ice water and gaze at the swaying forests of seaweed, the sunlit colors of starfish and rock, the shining silver of an occasional fish. It is not to be compared, of course, with the Great Barrier Reef where I once snorkeled. The cold North Atlantic is not a tropical paradise, but it holds more beauty than one can fully bear.

We have a picture window in the living room. Over it is a wooden motto, made for me by one of Amy Carmichael's "babies," an old lady who spent her days there in Dohnavur, India, beautifully lettering Scripture texts. This one has Psalm 95:5, "The sea is His and He made it," a simple and completely staggering statement.

God made it. He dried it up with a rebuke. He rolled

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it back. He spoke to it and the waves calmed. He stirs it up like a pot of ointment (Jb 41:31). He causes it to teem with creatures beyond number (Ps 104:25). He confounded Job with questions such as,

“Who shut up the sea behind doors when it burst forth from the womb, when I made the clouds its garment and wrapped it in thick darkness, when I fixed limits for it and set its doors and bars in place, when I said, ‘This far you may come and no farther; here is where your proud waves halt’?”

“Have you journeyed to the springs of the sea or walked in the recesses of the deep?” (Jb 38:8-11, 16, NIV)

Our Lord Jesus loved the sea. He sat by it and taught the people beside it. He once cooked breakfast on the shore. To me it is a daily gift, a joy, a ceaseless reminder of the majesty and beauty of my Heavenly Father.

And shall I write of those winter storms? Sometime, perhaps. *Those* are something else!

Elisabeth's Summer Soup

Put in blender:

1/2 can consomme	1 seeded, unpeeled
2 tbsp. sour cream	cucumber
8 oz. tomato sauce	1/2 cup water (more if
2 thin slices sweet onion	needed)
1 tsp. horseradish	Salt if needed.

Chill thoroughly. Makes 4 servings.

Not Mad at God

Jim O'Donnell was a very ambitious and successful businessman who described himself as self-centered and indifferent to spiritual things until he met Christ through a man who rode the same commuter train to Boston. Jim came across my broadcast, *Gateway to Joy*, and wrote me a letter. He and his wife Lizzie took us to dinner and we became instant friends.

With a desire to to be a *servant* Jim gave up his work in Boston and moved to Huntington, Indiana to teach in a small Christian college. Not many months later they learned that Lizzie has breast cancer, “dangerous, virulent, and advanced.” That was last January, and by the time this newsletter appears much will have taken place. But he gave me permission to quote from his letter, a very unusual one, I think:

How could something so serious strike so rapidly? And selfishly I ask, “Why sweet Lizzie?”... We believe strongly in the power of prayer. We are not mad at God. (It was God who has given me Lizzie for the past twenty-eight years.) Our faith has not been shaken, though this is a time of severe testing.... We must learn how to to be faithful people in this new assignment, one we certainly never would have asked for but one which can still serve to bless us, our Creator, and others.

Yes, there is fear; there is sadness; there is a whole new vocabulary we are coming to know, one we never would have wanted to know anything about. There are lots of tears. But there have been extraordinary blessings amid the darkness....

We don't believe this is an accident, and we don't believe this is not “of God.” We live in a fallen world, where all of us—and creation in general—fall short, because of sin, of what God intended for us; and illness and crime and cruelty are just reminders of that “fallenness.” We trust in God's sovereignty over this world and for our lives amid this sickness. God can heal. But we also trust that even serious illness can serve God's good and holy purposes to arouse love and care in others, to turn our trust from ourselves to Him, and maybe spur some to reflect on what truly is important in life.

His letter ends with eight wonderful verses about suffering in 2 Corinthians 1:3-11. Look them up, reflect on them.

A later note tells me Jim was kept from fear and despair by the thought of God's *assignments*. “He makes our assignments... a wonderful teaching planted in this growing soul.” Psalm 16:5 is an expression of this truth.

C.S. Lewis said that God whispers to us in our joys, speaks to us in our conscience, and *shouts* to us in our pain.

Note from Lars

Thank you for your prayers. The Lord is merciful. Doctor says “operation perfect.” Results: 80 percent now. Will have to wait to see what happens with 20 percent. Operation does not improve sight, only lessens pressure, may forestall further deterioration. So, with gratitude, I'll bumble along, bumping my head every now and then, and doing what the doctors tell me to do.

Prayer

- Please pray for the O'Donnells.
- Please pray for Paul and Karen Hill and their three little children. Paul, a former pastor, is on Death Row in a Florida state prison for killing an abortion doctor and his bodyguard. I have just received letters from Paul and Karen where they describe their wholehearted commitment to Christ. They are trusting Him for all that Paul's situation means for their family.

Recommended Reading

Glenda Revell: *Glenda's Story: Led by Grace*. The beautiful testimony of a girl who never thought of herself as a victim, although her father was unknown, her mother despised her, and her stepfather abused her. Her sufferings, she said, were commonplace, but the Savior who rescued her is extraordinary. He brought light out of darkness, joy out of sorrow, peace out of pain. Available from *Gateway to Joy*, 1-800-759-4569. Price: \$10.49, including postage.

Keep in Touch

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ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

Travel Schedule July - October 1995

July 9 Asbury Grove, Hamilton, Mass.; Elisabeth Meyer, (508) 468-1629.

July 20 Denver, Colo.; Christian Booksellers Association luncheon, 1-800-252-1950.

August 24-27 Serra Negra, Sao Paulo, Brazil; Southern Baptist Missionary women's retreat, Sharon Fairchild, Travessa Jaicos 18 Tijuca, 20521-280 Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, (021) 254-6174.

September 8-9 Wentzville, Mo.; First Baptist Church women's retreat, Nancee Dutchik, (314) 625-1898; church phone (314) 327-8696.

September 10-11 Highland Park, Mich.; Revival Tabernacle, (313) 869-0140.

September 22-23 North Kingston, R.I.; women's retreat, Bonnie Barnett, 401 Davisville Rd., North Kingston, RI, 02852.

October 6-16 Speaking tour in Norway.

October 21 Peoria, Ill.; Illinois Prison Ministry, (309) 673-6794.

October 22-24 Bloomington, Ind.; Evangelical Community Church, (812) 332-0502.

October 26-28 Seattle, Wash.; Ligonier Ministries' conference, Laura Grace Alexander (407) 333-4244.

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Whatever My Lot

Just after the Arab-Israeli war in 1967, I spent ten weeks in Jerusalem. One afternoon I was invited to have tea with Mrs. Bertha Spafford Vester, who had lived there all of her ninety-one years. A fascinating woman, she was the fifth daughter of Horatio Spafford, who wrote, "It Is Well with My Soul." The story of that beautiful hymn is familiar to many, but Mrs. Vester added details which were new to me.

The great Chicago fire of the 1870s caused Spafford, a wealthy businessman, to take stock of his life. Wanting to know Jesus better, he decided to sell everything and move to the land where He had walked. Shortly before the ship sailed, he was delayed by business, but took the family to New York. For some reason which he was unable to explain he had the purser change their cabin, moving them closer to the bow. He returned to Chicago to finish his business. Then came a telegram: SAVED ALONE. The ship had sunk. Mrs. Spafford had survived. Their four daughters had perished. Had they been in the cabin originally reserved amidships, all five would have drowned, for it was just there that the steamer had been struck by another vessel.

As we sipped tea and munched on Arab sweets, Mrs. Vester, who was not born until after the disaster, told me how her mother had described that terrible black night when she and her four little girls were flung into the cold sea. Frantically, she had tried to save them. Barely, she had been able to touch with her fingertips the hem of the little gown of one, but could not grasp it. She herself had been miraculously rescued as she floated unconscious on a piece of flotsam.

During Mr. Spafford's voyage to join his wife in France, the captain summoned him one day to the bridge. Pointing to his charts he explained that it was just here, where they were at that moment, that the other ship had gone down. Spafford wrote the

hymn which has comforted countless thousands (among them five widows at a memorial service in Ecuador in 1956).

When peace like a river attendeth my way,
When sorrows like sea-billows roll,
Whatever my lot, Thou hast taught me to say,
"It is well, it is well with my soul."

That word *lot* is not one we often use in quite that way. It means whatever happens, that which comes by the will of the powers that rule our destiny, a share, a portion, an assignment. When we draw lots, no human power controls which will be ours.

But Christians know that we are not at the mercy of chance. A loving hand, a great wisdom, and an omnipotent power rule our destiny. The government of all is on the mighty shoulders of Christ Himself, who sees all long before it happens. *All* is intended for our blessing. How different things look to us! Yet think of the faith of Horatio Spafford, suffering the loss of all his children, writing, "Whatever my lot, Thou hast taught me to say, 'It is well....'"

To love God is to love His will. That which He gives we receive. That which He takes we relinquish, "as glad to know ourselves in the hands of God as we should be sorry to be in our own," as Fenelon said. With what astonishment—of gladness or sadness—we receive some things! With what reluctance or delight we relinquish others! Yet we find that we can bear our own sufferings, while of others' sufferings we say, "That I could never bear!" Jim, whose wife has cancer, wrote to me, "The assignment is so hard, but always there are the gracious gifts—the winks of heaven—a friend stopping by, a plumber coming at the perfect moment. Coincidences? Not to one with the eyes of faith."

God shields us from most of the things we fear, but when He chooses not to shield us, He unflinchingly *allots* grace in the measure needed. It is for us to choose to receive or refuse it. Our joy or our misery will depend on that choice.

Quickener of Spirits

"Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body" (2 Corinthians 4:10-11, KJV).

Quickener of spirits, teach me what it means
To bear about the dying of my Lord.
On stony roads, far from the land of dreams,
Teach me to walk according to that word.

For love of thee, Lord of the thorn-crowned brow,
Myself I would surrender unto death.
Nail to Thy Cross all Thou dost disallow,
Breathe through my being, O Thou heavenly
Breath.

That I may shew Thy life, meet Thy desire,
Bend all my powers to Thine obedience,
Blow, winnowing Wind, burn, burn, O purging
Fire,
Shine forth, O Lord, in Thy Pre-eminence.

Amy Carmichael

Children of Dohnavur

The Dohnavur Fellowship, Amy Carmichael's wonderful work for children in South India, continues, begun by foreigners, led now only by Indians. The following charming bits are from their newsletter, *Dust of Gold*:

"Every year on the third Sunday in January, our special Thankoffering Service is held. It is the time when the children are given an opportunity to give something for the poor—sweets, toys, or cards. These are kept and given as Christmas presents to the hospital patients at the end of the year. The adults offer money, which is sent to twelve different missions. This year six-year-old Jeevaranie was asked what she was going to give for the poor. She replied that she wasn't going to give anything for the poor but she would give a blue plastic bowl to the Lord. When asked why she wanted to give Him a bowl, she said, 'I want to give Jesus a bowl because He has lots of fruit in heaven and He can keep His fruit in it.'

"Three-year-old Anburani was given some sweets to put in the offering basket. Her Accal [the Indian woman who mothers her] told her that if she wanted to eat the sweets she could, but if she wanted to give them to the Lord, she should do so joyfully and wholeheartedly. After the service she came back to say, 'I ate the sweets joyfully and wholeheartedly

and I put the wrappers joyfully and wholeheartedly in the offering basket. Jesus can use them for wrapping sweets.' Little Anburani is very fond of her food, and especially of her sweets!"

Not only do the Dohnavur people make a home for hundreds of children. There is also a hospital and village outreach in many forms. Two hundred fifty patients came to the annual Leprosy Feast last year. Twelve babies and small girls were entrusted to the Fellowship in that year, and the cottages are nearly full. A new one will have to be opened to accommodate the next children given.

No appeals for money are ever made, but those who are willing to *pray* for this work may subscribe to *Dust of Gold*, which is always beautifully done. I read it at once when it arrives, and then pray through the Praise and Prayer list for several days. Subscriptions are gratis—you are asked only to pray. Address: Mrs. J.R. Sessions, 3737 West Lake Dr., Augusta, GA 30907. Phone: (706)860-6470.

A Man's Advice to Wives

One of my radio listeners who tells me he has had many setbacks graciously offers some things we wives would do well to consider.

"Turn your husband in prayer over to the Lord Jesus, trust Him, love that man, spiritually and sexually. Yield to the Lord and the Holy Spirit.

"Let your kisses be warm and tender. Let your husband be who he is. A man tenderly received will be fulfilled by your prayer, by your physical response. And he will gradually turn to Jesus in you. You must be willing to look at the good in your man, and keep your eyes on Jesus.

"Maybe you desire a man who would pray with you as often as he would like to make love to you, but he's not quite there. He may be a good and tender man, and God knows your needs. Through our suffering we see Christ do a work in us, and in those around us.

"We must decrease so He can increase.

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"Speak the truth in love."

Surely any husband who should chance to read the above would say amen. And we wives? Would our first reaction be, "Lord, help me to learn"? Or would it be, "And what about us wives?" O God, to us may grace be given to receive correction.

A Woman Who Learned

"In the last years there have been many trials. For two weeks now he has neither touched nor spoken to me except when necessary, or to maintain a facade around our children. This is his way of coping with conflict, such as a disagreement between us. Sometimes his silence lasts for a month. I try to communicate. I write love notes. I tell him every day that I love him. I try to do things for him. No response.

"I used to respond by 'getting mad back at him,' but that only ruins my spiritual relationship with the Lord. I am slowly but surely realizing I must do two things:

"1. Rely totally on the Lord for the emotional support that as a woman I badly need, and

"2. Give him love, with no expectations, regardless of how he is treating me at the time—such a difficult lesson, but there are great rewards when I slowly stumble upon the realization that the Lord really *can* meet my needs! The Psalms have become especially precious to me: 'Wait on the Lord, be of good courage.' My daily prayer is, 'Lord, You know, You care, You understand, and You *love* me.' Lately I am able to add, 'And that is *enough*.'"

St. Francis de Sales, always so refreshingly down-to-earth, offers this wisdom which lifted me straight out of the doldrums one day:

"Accustom yourself to unreasonableness and injustice. Abide in peace in the presence of God, who sees all these evils more clearly than you do, and who permits them. Be content with doing with calmness the little which depends upon yourself, and let all else be to you as if it were not."

Jesus, when He was about to leave His disciples, said, "I have told you these things so that *in me* you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble, but take heart! I have overcome the world" (John 16:33, NIV, italics mine).

A Little Boy's Song

Theodore Flagg Shepard, known as Theo, is Number Seven of Valerie's eight. It took him longer than his

older brothers and sisters to learn to talk. Last Christmas I made a concerted effort to persuade him to put together three words. He could do two, but balked at three.

"Theo," said I, "say, 'I love Jim.'"

"Jim."

"No, Theo. 'I love Jim.'"

"I."

Sentences seemed to be beyond him, although his vocabulary astonished us sometimes. When his father suggested that Theo might want to try swimming without his water wings, he thought about that with knitted brows, then said, "Dad—*sink!*" But suddenly a month or so after Christmas he burst into fluent talk, and in April he sent me a tape on which he sang perfectly, "Jesus is all the world to me." When he came to "When I am sad, He makes me *glad*," his voice squeaked but the pitch was true. May the words of that song be the truth of his life—that Jesus will matter more to him than anything else.

The Long Leisure of Eternity

In Maud Monahan's *Life and Letters of Janet Erskine Stuart* she describes the long years of waiting on God, and how He took nine years, "with all the long leisure of Eternity," to bring her to a guide who would "lead her soul out into paths of confidence and joy."

That word helped me to see that some of what I would have called my own stalling and obtuseness may have been the Lord's own timing. He makes us *wait*. He keeps us on purpose in the dark. He makes us walk when we want to run, sit still when we want to walk, for He has things to do in our souls that we are not interested in.

There have been times, on the other hand, when He wanted me to run but I only walked: Let me remember, however, that the Shepherd Himself sometimes makes us lie down. Some of the "delays" are His own choice for us, so we must not always chide ourselves when the pace is not what we thought it should be. We must learn to move according to the timetable of the Timeless One, and be at peace.

"My times are in Thy hands" (Psalm 31:15). That is where I want them to be, Father. May I rest in the sure knowledge that my hours and days are safely kept.

Prayer

O God, who makest cheerfulness and companion of strength, but apt to take wings in time of sorrow, we humbly beseech Thee that if, in Thy sovereign wisdom, Thou sendest weakness, yet for Thy mercy's sake deny us not the comfort of patience. Lay not more upon us, O heavenly Father, than Thou wilt enable us to bear; and, since the fretfulness of our spirits is more hurtful than the heaviness of our burden, grant us that heavenly calmness which comes of owning Thy hand in all things, and patience in the trust that Thou doest all things well. Amen.

Rowland Williams, 1818-1870

Honeymoon Tape

Parts of this were made on my honeymoon with Jim Elliot in 1953. He tells a witch doctor story, we sing, jungle sounds are recorded, and Valerie speaks Auca at the age of three. Order from Lars Gren, 10 Strawberry Cove, Magnolia MA 01930. \$5 includes postage.

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September 14 South Hamilton, Mass.; Gordon-Conwell Seminary.

September 17 South Hamilton, Mass.; Christ Church adult class, (508) 468-4461.

September 22-23 North Kingston, R.I.; women's retreat, Bonnie Barnett, 401 Davisville Rd., North Kingston, RI 02852.

October 6-16 Speaking tour in Norway.

October 21 Peoria, Ill.; Illinois Prison Ministry, (309)673-6794.

October 22-24 Bloomington, Ind.; Evangelical Community Church, (812)332-0502.

October 26-28 Seattle, Wash.; Convention Center, Ligonier Ministries' conference, 1-800-435-4343.

November 2 Nyack, N.Y.; Nyack College, Karen Dewey, (914)358-1710.

November 3-4 Norfolk, Va.; Tabernacle Church, (804)423-8266.

November 6-7 Taping for *Gateway to Joy*.

November 12-13 Baton Rouge, La.; First Presbyterian Church, (504)387-3221.

November 14 Gulfport, Miss.; Broadwater Beach Hotel, women's luncheon, Dale Simpkins, (601) 864-4856, or Virginia Wagner, (601) 467-7872.

November 23 THANKSGIVING.

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To Offer Thanks Is to Learn Contentment

Radio mail brings me letters from childless women who long for children, and letters from women who are terribly upset to find themselves pregnant again. God is the Lord of life and gives His children what is good. It is not always easy to receive thankfully what He apportions.

One correspondent who had had four children in four and a half years, morning sickness every day, a husband who continued to pursue his boat-racing, bowling, fishing, hunting, and golfing, felt she could not cope. There was never enough money. "Had abortions been as readily available then as they are now, I am sure I would have considered it even though I knew it was wrong," she said. But she had a mother whose faithful prayers, emotional support, and practical help enabled her to get through those years.

"Let me tell you, thirty-one years later, how the Lord has blessed us, not because of anything special that we have done, but because He is faithful. Not once have we had the heartache of a wayward child. All are Christians with Christian spouses, all active in their churches. We recently celebrated Christmas together, including eleven grandchildren. I can't tell you the joy we have as a family. I want to encourage the dear young mothers to remember the Lord is in control. Sure, they will be very busy, but the years go by quickly and the rewards are tremendous. Put your trust in the Lord—He will bless you for it!"

One who is yet childless after many prayers for fertility writes that she found herself pulling away from the young married people at church. But reading of a young widow's hope that God still had a plan for *her*, this would-be mother began to thank God for all the blessings He had given instead of dwelling on what He had withheld. "I still desire to have a child, but am also allowing my heavenly Father to work His own desires through my life."

Another writes, "We discovered this past fall that our third child will arrive in June. We had not closed the door to more children but the timing of this one was definitely not in our plans. The news shocked and numbed me for a few days, but I now sense a new awareness of God's sovereignty in our lives—an overruling of our plans for His, and there is tremendous peace in that. When we announced our expectancy at a family get-together one would have thought we had just announced a *divorce*. It's upsetting to see how our society's anti-child, zero-population-growth propaganda has crept into the church.

"My wonderful husband's response to the outcome of the pregnancy test was, 'Well, we did what we could to prevent it but God just insists on blessing us!'"

Thanksgiving brings contentment.

Many people seem to be looking ceaselessly for amusement, for some alleviation from boredom. Dissatisfied and restless, they fritter away their lives, wishing to move from what or where they are to what or where they aren't.

"My people have committed two sins," says the Lord in Jeremiah 2:13. "They have forsaken me, the spring of living water, and have dug their own cisterns, cisterns that cannot hold water."

Discontent dries up the soul.

I hope you know more than one person to whom you could point and say, "*There is a truly contented person.*" Such a one will have learned the lesson of the psalmist, "I am not conceited, Lord, and I don't waste my time on impossible schemes. But I have learned to feel safe and satisfied, just like a young child on its mother's lap" (Psalm 131:1,2, Contemporary English Version). There will be in that man or woman a noticeable peace, "the kind of peace that only I can give," said Jesus. "It isn't like the peace that this world can give. So don't be worried or afraid" (John 14:27, CEV).

Christmastime brings for some, instead of the peace of Christ, temptations to covetousness and self-pity. To love God is to *love His will*. It is to wait quietly for life to be measured out by One who knows us through and through. It is to be content with His timing and His wise apportionment (do I feel that my portion is too much of something? too little of something else?).

It is to follow in the steps of the Master, as did Paul, who was able to say that he had learned contentment no matter what the circumstances. His circumstances when he wrote that? *Prison!* No easy lesson, but "great gain," which is the sum of godliness plus contentment (see 1 Timothy 6:6).

Jesus loved the will of His Father. He embraced the limitations, the necessities, the conditions, the very *chains* of His humanity as He walked and worked here on earth, fulfilling moment by moment His divine commission and the stern demands of His incarnation. Never was there a word or even a look of complaint.

E.B. Pusey (1800-1882) suggested rules for those who wish to gain contentment that surely reflect Jesus' own attitude:

1. Allow thyself to complain of nothing, not even the weather.
2. Never picture thyself to thyself under any circumstances in which thou art not.
3. Never compare thine own lot with that of another.
4. Never allow thyself to dwell on the wish that this or that had been, or were, otherwise than it was, or is. God Almighty loves thee better and more wisely than thou dost thyself.
5. Never dwell on the morrow. Remember that it is God's, not thine. The heaviest part of sorrow often is to look forward to it. "The Lord will provide."

The Nativity

Out of the dusk, a promise	{Is. 9:6}
Out of the dark, a star	{Mt. 2:2}
Out of the world, a maiden	{Lk. 1:38}
Out of the night afar	{Is. 9:2}
Resounds the angels' message	{Lk. 2:14}
Which shepherds heard them sing	{Lk. 2:8}
Out of the dawn, redemption	{Eph. 1:7}
Into the world, a King!	{Rev. 17:14}

source unknown—sent to me by
Aunt Anne Howard, Christmas 1951

Ponder, if you can, both the majesty of that King whose hands formed the universe, and the meekness that assented to come into the world a helpless infant, utterly dependent on His mother. She would hold those tiny hands as He learned to walk. Joseph would teach them to hold a carpenter's tools. Then, a strong man's hands, they would be laid tenderly on the heads of little children, used to knot a cord for whipping and to turn over tables in the temple. Those hands would heal the sick and the blind. One day they would be

grabbed by other human hands, slammed against a board and hammered through with iron nails which held them immobile.

"[He] made himself nothing....He humbled himself and became obedient to death—even death on a cross!" (Philippians 2:4, NIV).

What Does It Mean to Submit?

Jesus showed us the answer. Yet the question comes again and again. Women choke on it. Philippians 2:5-11 is the divine prescription:

Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made Himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to death—even death on a Cross! Therefore God exalted Him to the highest place and gave Him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth, and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father [NIV].

Here is my friend Judith Lake's response to the question of submission:

"I, being made in the image of God, —a believer, a woman, and a wife, having equal worth in God's sight and equal access to the Lord as my husband—choose not to grasp after a position of equal leadership with my husband which is not my God-given place. Rather, I choose by God's grace to make myself nothing, taking on the very nature of a servant which was the attitude of Jesus—desiring with all my heart to be humble like Him. I choose to be obedient to God's command to submit to my husband and die to myself. I understand that this decision will cause pain and suffering at times, but in those moments may I all the more identify with my Lord. When the cross is hard to bear, I pray for the will to give Him the burden of my heart

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and learn to rest in Him. I trust God and His Word and am confident that He knows what is best for me. One day He will exalt me in heaven as one of His own who obeyed His will. By His grace, I will receive my reward worshipping Him in His presence forever—confessing Jesus Christ as Lord to the glory of God the Father.”

Announcement

Yes, we have seen the studies, sepia strokes across yellowed parchment, the fine detail of hand and breast and the fall of cloth—Michelangelo, Caravaggio, Titian, El Greco, Rouault—each complex madonna positioned, sketched, enlarged, each likeness plotted at last on canvas, layered with pigment, like the final draft of a poem after thirty-nine roughs.

But Mary, virgin, had no sittings, no change to pose her piety, no novitiate for body or for heart. The moment was on her unaware: the Angel in the room, the impossible demand, the response without reflection. Only one word of curiosity, echoing Zechariah’s *How?* yet innocently voiced, without request for proof.

The teen head tilted in light, the hand trembling a little at the throat, the candid eyes, wide with acquiescence to shame and glory—
“Be it unto me as you have said.”

—Luci Shaw

(reprinted from *Polishing the Petoskey Stone*, © 1991, Luci Shaw, Harold Shaw Publishers, Wheaton, IL 60189.

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What Every Christian Ought to Know

(My father, Philip E. Howard Jr., was editor of *The Sunday School Times*, a weekly magazine for which he regularly wrote editorials. Here is one of them.)

- [Know] that your temptations and trials are not peculiar, for every other believer in the world is also tempted and tried;
- that the Lord Jesus understands, for He also was tempted as we are, though He never sinned;
- that all other believers of all the earlier centuries have been harassed by the world, the flesh and the Devil;

- that the Devil will flee if you resist him in the power of God, and that the best weapon against him is the Sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God;
- that God will not allow you to be tempted beyond your ability in Him, and that He will comfort you in unexpected ways and force even the Devil to give you breathing spells;
- that no organization, no man, woman, or child is perfect, and therefore it pays to make some allowances and be sympathetic;
- that only One is altogether lovely, therefore it is well to keep our eyes on Him;
- that the whole body of believers, which constitute the true Church, is the battleground of a tremendous spiritual struggle, but that the battle is not really ours but God’s, and that as we trust in Him and use the armor He has provided, we shall be victorious;
- that God has begun a work in your heart which He will complete, has provided grace sufficient for every need, and has promised unconditionally not to forsake you;
- that there are some questions you cannot answer, some problems you cannot solve, because you are still a human being with a finite mind and limited knowledge;
- that God may allow you to be in some perplexity for a time, in order that you may be humbled, forced to depend on God moment by moment, and learn by hard experience that you must get your wisdom from above;
- that the strife will not always last, and that ahead of you lie rewards for faithful service and the indescribable joys of eternal life in the presence of God;
- that if you doubt the truth of any of these statements, you will find scriptural support for them in the references given below.

1 Pet. 4:12, 13;	Lk. 4:13	Deut. 29:29
5:9	Jas. 3:2	1 Cor. 13:12
Heb. 4:15	Song of Sol. 5:16	Deut. 8:3
Jas. 4:7	Heb. 12:2	Jas. 1:5; 3:17
Mt. 4:1-11	Eph. 6:12-17	2 Tim. 4:8
Eph. 6:17	Phil. 1:6	Rev. 22:1-7, 12
1 Cor. 10:13	2 Cor. 12:9	
Mt. 4:11	Heb. 13:5	

Prayer (Gregorian, A.D. 590)

O GOD, the Protector of all that trust in Thee, without whom nothing is strong, nothing is holy, increase and multiply upon us Thy mercy; that, Thou being our Ruler and Guide, we may so pass through things temporal that we finally lose not the things eternal. Grant this, O heavenly Father, for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.



Life is too short:

To remember slights and insults,

To cherish grudges that rob me of happiness,

To waste time in doing things that are of no value,

To give my youth to the devil and my old age to God.

—anonymous



Radio Log

Gateway to Joy is now heard in forty-three states, five provinces of Canada, Guam, and Ecuador. We have sent a radio log along with the Newsletter a few times, but the cost is a bit steep now. If you'd like to know stations on which *Gateway to Joy* is broadcast, call 1-800-7594-JOY.

Keep in Touch

Are you moving? Getting married? Leaving school? *Don't forget to send us your change of address.* The post office DOES NOT FORWARD third class mail like the Newsletter. Please remove your address label below and send it with your new address to: The Elisabeth Elliot Newsletter, Post Office Box 7711, Ann Arbor, MI 48107-7711.

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Travel Schedule November 1995-January 1996

November 2 Nyack, N.Y.; Karen Dewey, (914)358-1710.

November 3-4 Norfolk, Va.; Tabernacle Church, (804)423-8266.

November 6-7 Taping for *Gateway to Joy*.

November 12-13 Baton Rouge, La.; First Presbyterian Church, (504)387-3221.

November 14 Gulfport, Miss.; Broadwater Beach Hotel, women's luncheon, Dale Simpkins, (601)864-4856, or Virginia Wagner, (601)467-7872.

November 20-21 South Hamilton, Mass.; Gordon-Conwell Seminary, Dr. Christy Wilson, Missions Class.

November 22 Jury duty

November 23 THANKSGIVING

December 2 Albany, N.Y.; Northeast Gospel Network, Brian Larson, (518)686-0975.

December 25 CHRISTMAS

January 3-11 Ecuador, South America.

January 19-20 Boston, Mass.; EANE Congress, Andrew Accardy, (617)229-1990.

February 2-4 Houston, Tex.; Texas Women's Retreat, (713) 780-4047.

February 22 Lake Forest, N.C.; Southeastern Baptist Seminary, Mrs. Dorothy Patterson, (919) 556-3101, ext. 344.

February 23-24 Lexington, S.C.; Lexington Presbyterian Church, (803) 359-9501.

February 25 Athens, Ga.; Prince Avenue Baptist Church, Mrs. Judy Carter, (706) 353-1985.

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The Story of a Courtship

In 1992 I received a letter from Robert, who wondered if God might be asking him to lay down his love for Amy in order to serve as a missionary. I wrote, "I am praying for you and Amy on this gray, rather wintry spring day in Massachusetts.... Go on doing the things you know God is calling you to do today, and in His time He will make crystal clear the decision about marriage."

Robert and Amy had offered their love for each other as Abraham had offered Isaac, laying him on the altar, trusting God to do with the sacrifice as He saw fit. At Christmas, 1994, they felt Him "breathing life into our relationship once again." Robert took Amy to hear a visiting speaker in a church. "I wanted to show her the letter that lady had written to me, and of course I wanted to bring Amy up to talk to her afterwards. I had no idea, however, what was about to happen."

He was exhausted that night and heard little of the talk on Simplicity. But God seemed to make every word "come alive" in Amy's heart.

"You gave short, sharp answers to difficult questions, but I was so thankful to hear you untangle the complications and point out the simplicity of the answer. Robert and I still talk about 'doing the next thing,' and 'getting up early begins the night before.'"

Robert's version of that evening:

"Here Amy and I are, waiting in line where people had their books for Elisabeth to autograph. We had no book and I had not brought the letter she wrote me, so I wasn't exactly sure what we were going to say to her.

"I spoke first. 'Mrs. Elliot, I wanted to thank you for your ministry and the books you have written because several years ago, you wrote me a letter about a girl I was seeing, and she is here tonight.'

"Mrs. Elliot smiled, 'Oh, really? Where is she?'

"Right here.' Amy came and knelt beside me.

"Are you married yet?' Elisabeth said, looking pleasantly at the two of us.

"Well, uh, not yet,' I replied, rather embarrassed, 'but I believe God will be faithful.'

"What are you waiting for?' Elisabeth looked at me.

"I had no answer.

"She repeated her question, 'Well, what are you waiting for?'

"I knew the time was right. Right there, on our knees before the premier counselor on Christian relationships [alas—EE can't measure up to *that* title!], the woman who had directly related her life experience to Amy and me, there in the presence of Elisabeth Elliot and God's sovereign smile, I asked Amy to marry me. It was wonderful. God is wonderful. Amy is wonderful, and that was just the confirmation I needed to marry her."

Weeks went by. One day I said to Lars, "I wonder what ever happened to that sweet couple we met in Arkansas—remember the man who proposed in the foyer of the church? I *do* hope they got married!"

It was only a day or two later that we received a letter from Amy, enclosing the above account from Robert. "He loves to tell this story," she wrote. "I want to thank you for prompting Robert to propose to me. I have never seen him so happy. He is still giddy at the thought of becoming my husband, and I cannot express to you how much I love him and want to be his helpmate. I will soon send you an invitation to our wedding. I hope it will bring a smile to your face as it has to ours."

It did. It also sent a huge surge of thanksgiving through my whole soul. Our God is the Wonderful Counsellor, able and more than able to bring a man and woman together in His time, in His often mysterious and astonishing ways.

Planning a Wedding?

A very attractive man we know was given an elegant thirtieth birthday party. The hostess, a strikingly beautiful girl, was also a friend of ours. We had been praying for these two, that God might bring them together if this would best glorify Him. Lars fell into conversation with Meirwyn and, I think,

dealt rather less than delicately with him because he did not seem to us to be moving as swiftly as he might to secure Nina's affections.

"Whattaya got—rocks in your head?" said Lars.

When the invitation to the wedding of Meirwyn Walters and Nina Lataif came we accepted with alacrity.

The groom, whose heritage is that of the great Welsh hymnwriters, wrote the following lovely wedding hymn, sung by all who attended the wedding, to G.W. Warren's tune "National Hymn," to which we often sing "God of Our Fathers." Meirwyn has given me permission to offer his hymn here.

Thou hast ordained that two shall turn to one.
With Adam's rib Creation's work was done.
In holy awe, we live a mystery,
Bound by love's chains, we are most truly free.

Husband and wife reflect a glorious sight,
Christ leading Church from darkness into light.
He vanquished sin; Earth's Prince would be denied.
Now with scarred hands, He beckons to His Bride.

Lend us Thy grace to live each day with love,
Tending with care this union from above.
While we have breath, grant us Thy name to praise,
Till on that day our mortal flesh Thou raise.

A Hard Decision, a Hard Discipline

Both Meirwyn and Robert had faced hard decisions, the latter involving marriage or singleness for the sake of the gospel. They waited. They prayed. God answered.

When Moses, that sorely tried man, was approached by the daughters of Zelophehad (in Numbers 27) I wonder if he was tempted to say to himself, "Now what do these women want?" It was a hard case. Their father had died (because of his own sins), he had left no son, and the women wanted property among his relatives in order that his name not disappear from the clan.

When faced with hard decisions, do what Moses did. "Moses brought their case before the Lord." What a difference it makes when one lays the difficulty immediately before God. God answers.

When there is perplexity there is always guid-

ance—not always at the moment we ask, but in good time, which is God's time. There is no need to fret and stew.

This was the last decision Moses had to make before God's revelation to him of his own and his brother Aaron's death. Did he breathe a sigh of relief that his responsibility was finished? Did he flinch at the realization that his life was over? There was no complaint, only the question as to who would take the leadership of the flock. (Sometimes we worry about decisions which are not ours to make.) Moses knew where to take that concern.

"May the Lord, the God of the spirits of all mankind, appoint a man over this community to go out and come in before them, one who will lead them out and bring them in, so the Lord's people will not be like sheep without a shepherd." In spite of all the trials those people had put him through, Moses never said, "I've *had* it." He continued to shepherd them, carrying them on his heart for God's very best.

Decision-making always puts our faith on trial. Is our life our own or does it belong to Another? Will the Lord show us the way? Will we follow where He leads? Are we meek enough to be instructed? We are told that Moses—a powerful leader, God's choice to deliver Israel—was the meekest of men. But he had had long years of training—in the care of sheep and goats!—the best training, no doubt, for dealing with a rebellious people.

Yet at the end of his life he faced perhaps the hardest discipline ever required of him. He was not to be allowed to enter the promised land because he had dishonored God before the people. When told to speak to the rock he had struck it in anger and impatience. For that he was barred from the fulfillment of his cherished dream to reach Canaan, to which he had long looked forward.

Moses was now redundant—a blow that crushes many a man—but he accepted this meekly and quietly. What a lesson for all of us.

When faced with a hard decision, go to God first of all. When assigned a hard discipline, accept it.

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"Do thy first duty," said Thomas Carlyle. "Thy second will become clear."

Prayer for the Hill Family

To my consternation I received several letters from Newsletter readers who supposed that my request for prayer for Paul Hill (the man who shot an abortion doctor) signified sympathy and perhaps support for his action. It meant neither. I receive many letters from prisoners, some on Death Row, who listen to *Gateway to Joy*. I pray for every one of them. Jesus prayed for those who crucified Him. Surely we would not take His prayer as a divine endorsement.

Some asked what to pray for Paul. I know very little of the needs of most of the people on my daily prayer list. I simply lift them up to God for His blessing and the working of His will in their lives. May we not also ask this for the Hill family?

The Sufferings of a Housewife

A young mother asked how on earth she is to learn to love the Lord, grow in grace, and be truly holy in the midst of general chaos—hard work, very limited means, little chance for fellowship, and her own children disobeying, screaming and fighting.

It is tempting to imagine that, given a different lot in life, circumstances other than those in which we find ourselves, we would make much greater strides in holiness. The truth is that the place where we *are* is God's schoolroom, not somewhere else. *Here* we may be conformed to the likeness of Christ.

It takes adversity of one kind or another. There is no other way. "It has been granted to you on behalf of Christ not only to believe on Him but also to suffer for Him" (Phil. 1:29). This dear woman had not thought of the word "suffering." To her it was just the awful "dailyness" of husband and children, the same dishes and clothes to be washed, the house to be cleaned a thousand times, the monotonous repetition of "Do this," "Don't do that," the sheer unmanageability of it all.

"God is asking you simply to be what you are," I told her—mother of a family—and to be just that with love, with her heart's acceptance, and without fretting. How comforting to know that the Lord who made us never forgets that we are *dust*! Our love will fail, our hearts will balk, we will fret. But our very powerlessness is the place where *His* power is manifested, His all-sufficient grace given.

The trivial round, the common task,
Will furnish all we ought to ask—
Room to deny ourselves, a road
To bring us daily nearer God.

John Keble, 1822

Hannah Whitall Smith said, "He does not need to transplant us into a different field.... He transforms the very things that were before our greatest hindrances, into the chiefest and most blessed means of our growth. No difficulties in your case can baffle Him.... Put yourself absolutely into His hands, and let Him have His own way with you."

Husband #2

You've heard things about Jim Elliot, Husband #1, and Lars Gren, #3, whose musings appear now and then in these pages. I thought you might enjoy a little taste of the mind of Addison Leitch, to whom I was married from New Year's Day, 1969 until he died of cancer in September 1973. (Lars is not only not threatened by reminiscences of #1 and #2, he *asks* for them!) Those who read *Christianity Today* may be interested to know that Add was the writer of two regular columns in that magazine: "Current Religious Life and Thought," and "Eutychus II." Here's a tidbit from the latter column that's right down my alley:

"I have had a long and running fight with the language of public relations experts. I know they are trying to be polite, but I keep seeing them sitting around a conference table grinding out the awful word they finally choose. This is not to say that I could think of better ones, but I must say that I am getting sick of 'motion sickness' for whatever it is that afflicts me in a plane, and 'turbulence' for what makes us go ups-a-daisy, and 'custom-coach' for what I know is cheaper seating, strictly second-class.

"Should the pressure system malfunction...?' Who dreamed up that word 'malfunction'? I do wish air hostesses would quit telling me they were glad to have me aboard, which in many cases they definitely were not. And closing off our trip with 'good-bye now'—that extra word 'now' bothers me for the next hour. One bright young thing said, 'Bye-bye, now,' and we had reached the end of the line."

Add would be tied in knots if he could hear them now: "Ladies and gentlemen, this is your captain speaking. *Hopefully* [which everybody now thinks means "we hope that," but it doesn't!] we'll be taking off *momentarily*," which is really bad news for the

passengers, since it means not *in* a moment but *for*!

I have many of Add's books, including Dorothy Sayers' *Unpopular Opinions*, in which she writes, "I have heard it twice over—from two independent producers of two separate plays—the exact same warning in almost identical words: 'Well, now, ladies and gentlemen, I think there's only one thing I have to say before we start reading through. Although this is a play about—er—angels and God and Christ and so on, you don't want to go extra slow, or put on a special tone of voice or anything. Just treat it as you would an ordinary play. Speak the lines quite naturally and play it straight.'"

I'm always delighted to come across Add's marginal notes in books. Below Sayers' essay he added, "To be religious: walk on tiptoe and speak in King James English."

Prayer

O Lord, whose way is perfect, help us, I pray Thee, always to trust in Thy goodness: that walking with Thee and following Thee in all simplicity, we may possess quiet and contented minds; and may cast all our care on Thee, for Thou carest for us.

Christina Rosetti

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January 14 Hamilton Mass., Christ Church, (508) 468-4461.

January 19, 20 Boston, Mass., EANE Congress, Andrew Accardy, (617)229-1990.

January 26, 27 Taping for *Gateway to Joy*.

February 2-4 Houston, Tex., Texas Women's Retreat, (713)780-1571 or -8563.

February 22 Wake Forest, N.C., Southeastern Baptist Seminary, Mrs. Dorothy Patterson, (919)556-3101, Ext. 344.

February 23, 24 Lexington, S.C., Lexington Presbyterian Church, (803)359-9501.

February 25 Athens, Ga., Prince Avenue Baptist Church, Mrs. Judy Carter, (706)353-1985.

March 9 Waterloo, Ia., KNWS Radio, Betty Brandhorst, (319)296-1975.

March 12 Simi Valley, Calif., Calvary Chapel, Pamela Lee, (805)527-0199.

March 14 Grass Valley, Calif., Calvary Chapel, Vicki Sullivan, (916)272-1308.

March 16 Marin County, Calif., Kathy Lewis, (415)479-5837.

March 23 Norwell, Mass., Calvary Chapel and Boston Women's Luncheon. Preregistration required. For information call Mary Marley, (617) 335-4672.

March 29, 30 Taping for *Gateway to Joy*.

April 7 EASTER

April 13 Montreal, Que., Associated Gospel Churches, Russell Fisher, (514)769-2693.

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Why Did Jesus Die?

His popularity with the multitudes aroused jealousy in the teachers of the law. There was much muttering. "He is baptizing and everyone is going to him." Some said He was a good man. No, said others, He is leading people astray. How come He speaks with such wisdom when He has never studied? Could this possibly be the Christ? Surely He is not from God—He has a demon. He is mad. He speaks blasphemously.

A meeting of the Sanhedrin was called.

"What are we accomplishing?" they asked. "Here is this man performing many miraculous signs. If we let him go on like this, everyone will believe in him, and then the Romans will come and take away both our place¹ and our nation."

The crowd that had seen Lazarus walk out of the tomb had spread far and wide the word about a miracle worker. This was the last straw. "See," said the Pharisees, "this is getting us nowhere. Look how the whole world has gone after him!"

This man Jesus was not to be tolerated.

That much is not surprising. We understand politics, which certainly had a part in His death. But politics was not the real and inescapable cause. There was something far deeper, unimaginably deeper, which we may spend our lives seeking to fathom. It is revealed in Jesus' words to His disciples at the Last Supper: "This is my body given for you."

For us. For us who so desperately need redemption Jesus gave his body. No one could have taken His life from Him. He laid it down of His own volition, to redeem us, for we had sinned. In the person of Adam we had made a declaration of independence—to "do our own thing"—and thus had fallen away from God, "in the terrible, literal sense of the word, towards the negative nothingness of sin, destruction, death, senselessness and the abyss. God's mysterious grace could not leave man in such forlornness; it desired to help him home—in a manner of such sacred magnanimity and power,

¹ temple

that once revealed to us, it is impossible to conceive of any other: in the manner of *love*" (abridged, from Romano Guardini, *The Lord*).

He wanted to help us home! Why? There are at least sixteen specific expressions of that divine compassion. I list them in the order in which they are found in Scripture:

1. that we might not perish, but have eternal life
2. to justify us
3. to establish His lordship
4. that we might cease to live for ourselves
5. to rescue us out of this present age of wickedness
6. in order that we might attain the status of sons
7. that we might live in company with Him
8. to save sinners
9. to win freedom for all
10. to make us a pure people, marked out for His own
11. that we might cease to live for sin
12. to bring us to God
13. to do away with sin
14. to undo the devil's work
15. to bring us life
16. as the remedy for the defilement of sin

Ezra the prophet, writing four centuries before Christ, knew nothing, of course, of the Cross, but prayed, "Our God, you have punished us less than our sins have deserved. Here we are before you in our guilt, though because of it not one of us can stand in your presence." Nor can we. We have a far greater revelation, in the New Testament, of the enormity of our sin, and we know about the Cross. What shall we do about it?

Matthew and Mark tell us that the two criminals who hung on crosses beside Jesus heaped insults on Him at first. One of them said, "Aren't you the Christ? Save yourself and us!" But the other, with new insight, recognizing the justice of his own punishment and the innocence of Jesus, asked to be remembered in the kingdom. "Today," Jesus said, "you will be with me in paradise."

How shall we respond to this inconceivable sacrifice of love?

In 1949, when Jim Elliot was a senior in college, he wrote,

I set My love upon thee, child,
I knew thee far away.
I wept to see thee wandering wild,
I yearned till thou didst pray.

One of a rebel, hateful band,
Strong in thy lust for sin,
A furtive, fitful, fiery soul—
I loved, I called thee in.
I stripped thee of thy grimy pride,
Laid bare thy secret want—
Poor vagabond of empty ways!
I sent My Spirit to haunt.

Now, desert son, the choice is thine;
My love thou canst forget
And go to roaming wasteland paths.
Wilt, willful, wander yet?

Jesus asks us to take up the cross—to take it up *daily*. What does this mean? Surely it is the quiet acceptance of disappointments; the willing performance of some hard task we'd prefer to avoid, or of some small duty which is distasteful to us. It is forgiveness to that one who has deeply wronged us and has not apologized (the Lord tells us to forgive those who *trespass*, not only those who apologize!). The cross is offered to us every day in some form, at times comparatively trivial, at other times real suffering, but it is always something which slashes straight across our human nature, for the cross was an instrument of torture. Paul knew far more about crosses than most of us will ever know. In addition to the floggings, imprisonments, and shipwrecks, he mentioned, "When we are cursed, we bless; when we are persecuted, we endure it; when we are slandered, we answer kindly. Up to this moment we have become the scum of the earth."

It was he who said, "I have been crucified with Christ....The life I live in the body I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me" (Gal. 2:20).

At this season we are not only reminded of Him who took up gladly a real cross of real wood and real nails, "a worm, and not a man"—we are also bidden to sing of the Resurrection:

He closed the yawning gates of hell,
The bars from Heaven's high portals fell;
Let hymns of praise His triumph tell!
Alleluia!

Lord! by the stripes which wounded Thee,
From death's dread sting Thy servants free
That we may live and sing to Thee,
Alleluia!

Latin, 1675

A Plea to Old Folks

I often wonder how many old Christians are paying serious attention to the injunctions of Titus 2:1-5. There seem to be few, although many are blessed with God-given wisdom and time and strength. You've read about our beloved Mrs. Kershaw, a poor, totally deaf, hunchbacked widow in her seventies who came to our home every day to do whatever needed to be done—an angel of cheerfulness, humility, and love. Are there still some like her around? I am sure there are. Now hear this:

Jim and Shelley Hendry, parents of four children (including triplets), are asking if there is an older lady out there who is fed up with "senior citizen" activities which are wholly unrelated to the cause of Christ, and would like to come to their home. Shelley says, "The days are so full and the joyful work of these children could keep several women *happily* busy. We have room and could bring joy to her life. We would *love* to provide a home for a widow or elderly couple with no little ones to love. And—to be honest—we do need lots of help here with our home, and we *welcome* advice and criticism. If they are not very well, perhaps they could read to the children, pray for us, and help in small ways. We would gladly take care of them." Address: The Happy Hendry Home, P.O. Box 1151, Clarksville, VA 23927; phone (804)372-5565.

Effects of Feminism

When the feminist movement began rapidly gaining ground in the early seventies, I was alarmed, and said so. I dreaded to think of its effects on society, in the church, the home, and on the deepest

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level of the personality. "Oh well, that's Elisabeth Elliot," said some, "she's an alarmist."

Two letters reveal some of the effects:

"Oh, how I wish I had heard your biblical counsel years ago. I was so deceived by what the world was saying: Have a career. Use birth control. I feel that I have contributed to my husband's lack of leadership. I took on the responsibility of providing for the family. I was going to have the perfectly spaced family, but in trying to do that almost ruined our chances for more children. My husband would like more children, but at my age that may be more difficult."

This, from a man: "It appears to me that Christian women say they are not affiliated with the feminist movement, but take no stand against it, while quietly enjoying the preferential dealings it provides....One thing it does do to a man such as myself—it stops me still, kindling inner befuddlement. Prayerfully, I have to wonder now: Shall I hold the door open? Or shall I say, 'O.K., ma'am—there's the door. You want it opened? Go open it.' Sadly, women aren't as much fun to be around anymore."

A timid suggestion from E.E.—Can we not be *women*, true women for the glory of God? Should we not be asking Him to help us to be humbly and thankfully *feminine* (a word feminists seem to leave out of their vocabulary)?

A Baby or Disposable Tissue?

I was surprised and glad to find a feminist author, Naomi Wolff, with the courage to make the following observation in *The New Republic*:

"Pictures [of violent fetal death] are not polemical in themselves: they are biological facts. We know this.... So what will it be: *Wanted* fetuses are charming, complex little beings whose profile on the sonogram looks just like Daddy, but *unwanted* ones are mere 'uterine material'? How can we charge that it is vile and repulsive for pro-lifers to brandish vile and repulsive images if the images are real?"

Prayer

"O Thou Hope of all holy and humble men of heart, and the Savior of them that trust in Thee in time of trouble, give us not over as captives, in spiritual chains; but recover us, that we may awake to

do Thy will. Lord, Thou knowest all our desire, and our secret sighing is not hidden from Thee. Into Thy hands I commend my soul and my prayer: give what Thou seest fit, and fit us for what Thou givest. Give us wisdom to abound, or patience to suffer need; and where the Master placed us, there to be content. Let all our work be done well before we come to die; and let us be gathered into Thine arms, as the harvesters gather a shock in full season. Let our death be happy; and our happiness beyond the power of death. Amen."

Rowland Williams, 1818-1870

When you pray the above for yourself, would you also pray it for Lars and me? We are thankful for the immense privileges we are given, for God's utter faithfulness in giving us strength and excellent health, in guiding our decisions and keeping us in His own peace.

Thank Him, please, for the great privilege our grandson Walter Shepard III, nearly nineteen, has had in being in Peru for six months with his great-uncle Bert Elliot, Jim's older brother, who has been a missionary there for over forty-five years. Both Bert and his wife Colleen have battled cancer, but continue cheerfully and faithfully in the work God has given them, though way past "retirement" age. I know of no godlier couple under whose influence I would rather see my beloved grandchildren. Walter wants prayer for the Lord's guidance in choosing further training and pursuit of His call.

Letter from Peru

Walter writes of a trip to a village where Uncle Bert did dental work. "I had great fun looking at and picking around in and digging into the gums with *needles* to give shots to the most gruesome dental-disaster-mouths you can imagine.... Got very motivated to floss very well. After a huge luncheon of chicken, rice, and pintos we drove homeward. It being a big old diesel truck and Uncle near to sleep, I asked if I could drive. So I did for a while, and having gone down the road a piece behind a slow jalopy of a bus, the doctor told me to go on and pass. It seemed like an all right sort of thing to do, so I took her outta gear and was shifting down, when I was suddenly left sitting with my left hand on the wheel and my right hand freely waving and swinging the gear shift lever around the cab. I thought, 'What fun! But really, people shouldn't

have long heavy pieces of metal free in a truck, someone might get hurt!' and then, 'Oh, how disconcerting—the stick has come loose!' Like a good missionary, I jerry-rigged it with bailing wire and a nut and bolt of opposing dimensions, and we got home. I assessed the situation: the truck was a good F-350, but the transmission seemed kinda funny.... Uncle Bert says, 'Let's take it to our welder.' I was unsure of this because the rest of the truck had just about the wildest welding you've ever seen, and upon pointing this out, I get, 'Well, our welder, he's half-blind' (making me sure now that he's not anybody else's welder), but I got to do a little directing in the process, so it's pretty O.K."

That's what in our family we would have called G.M.T.—good missionary training!

A Useful Resource

Karen Khamis: *The Best Christian Children's Books, 1942-1992*, a bibliography of books for preschool through high school. Ephemeron Press, Box 1037, RR 10, Oswego, NY 13126. Price: \$6.00 (New York state residents, add 4% sales tax). Shipping and handling: Add \$1.50 for first book, \$.50 for each additional book.

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Travel Schedule March–May 1996

March 9 Waterloo, Ia., KNWS Radio, Betty Brandhorst, (319)296-1975.

March 12 Simi Valley, Calif., Calvary Chapel, Pamela Lee, (805)527-0199.

March 14 Grass Valley, Calif., Calvary Chapel, Vicki Sullivan, (916)272-1308.

March 16 Marin County, Calif., Kathy Lewis, (415)479-5837.

March 23 Norwell, Mass., Calvary Chapel and Boston Women's Luncheon. Preregistration required: Mary Marley, (617)335-4672.

March 30 Kansas City, Mo., radio rally KLTC, John Hayden, (816) 331-8700 or (800) 466-KLTC

April 7 EASTER

April 13 Montreal, Quebec, Associated Gospel Churches, Russell Fisher, (514)769-2693.

April 19-21 Lake Louise, Alberta, Baptist Women's Association, Mrs. Natalie MacDonald, (403)556-2428.

April 24 Vancouver, British Columbia, St. John's Anglican Church, Pastor William Lovell, (604)731-4966.

May 3 Birmingham, Ala., Samford University Auxiliary Luncheon, Marla Cortis, (205)969-0350.

(**May 3, 4** Marietta, Ga., First United Methodist Church, cancelled by the church.)

May 11 Haverhill, Mass., Crisis Pregnancy Center, Charles Barton, (508)373-5700.

May 16 Rutland, Vt., banquet for Rutland Area Christian School, Nancy Zins, (802)459-2140.

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Praying and Acting

There are many matters for prayer about which you and I can do nothing *except* pray. Those are the things we must leave entirely to God. There are other things which we ought always to lay before the Lord in prayer, *and* do something about. Some people are confused about this, wondering if to do something is a failure of faith or even a deliberate refusal to trust God.

Nehemiah, for example, while rebuilding the wall of Jerusalem, both prayed *and* posted a guard day and night to meet the threats of Sanballat and his crowd (Nehemiah 4:9). This was not in the least inimical to his confidence in God. To post a guard was no guarantee that Sanballat's plot would not succeed, but it was a reasonable human measure taken against it. Only God could control the final outcome, so to God Nehemiah went.

Hezekiah, at the point of death, wailed his lament to the Lord (Isaiah 38), turned his face to the wall and prayed, asking the Lord not for healing but only that he be remembered (2 Kings 20). The prophet Isaiah told him to apply a poultice of figs—a simple home remedy easily available. Was prayer not enough? Was it the poultice that healed him?

Prayer and action. Faith and obedience.

Paul prayed for the believers—earnest, eloquent, detailed prayers which he included in his epistles. But he did not leave it at that. He worked with all the strength God gave him to help them to sanctity. And then? Some grew saintly and others didn't.

Suppose we have prayed our hearts out over a matter, done all that was in our power to do, and then find that all was done in vain. Does our faith falter? Do we say prayer doesn't work? Has our obedience been futile?

What of the great prayer Jesus taught us to pray? It is for *His* kingdom and *His* will, yet we ought not to ask it unless we ourselves are prepared to cooperate. But how pitifully tiny our efforts seem, how ineffective, how absurd.

"We pray for peace in the world and yet we all know that wars and rumors of wars will go on until the end (our Lord Himself told us so)... We pray for the sick. What, exactly, (someone might urge) do we have in mind? That they will get well? Now? Do we suppose the hospitals will empty out because we have prayed?... To press such questions is to reduce the mystery of prayer to frivolity" (Thomas Howard, *If Your Mind Wanders at Mass*, Franciscan University Press).

And yet we are taught to ask and taught to obey. Prayer and obedience.

A prayerful heart and an obedient heart will learn, very slowly and not without sorrow, to stake everything on God Himself. Is there evidence that His kingdom is on its way, that His will is being done on earth as it is in heaven? The day's news would not encourage us to think so. Let's remember Jesus' answer to the Pharisees who asked when the kingdom would come: "The kingdom of God does not come with your careful observation, nor will people say, 'Here it is,' or 'There it is,' because the kingdom of God is within you" (Luke 17:20).

Pray for the coming of the kingdom. Don't pray for it if you're not prepared to do something about it. To each of us is given a measured responsibility. Thy will and Thy kingdom, Lord, for Your Glory. My glad surrender to that holy will, my loving obedience, my prayers, my faith, my action, my daily taking up of the Cross—so may I say with Mary, "I am the Lord's servant; may it be to me as you have said."

It's Been Forty Years

On January 8, 1996, Lars and I, along with daughter Valerie, her husband Walt and their eighteen-year-old son Walter III, were on the Curaray River in the eastern rain forest of Ecuador—with the *Aucas*. The Indians now go by their own name for themselves, Waorani.

Our host was Steve Saint, son of missionary pilot Nate who was one of five men (my husband Jim was another) slain on that same river on January 8, 1956.

Steve and his lovely wife Ginny had, in the space of six months, built a small village which includes their spacious three-bedroom house and a number of palm-thatched Indian houses clustered around.

The Saints' house, open at all hours of the day and night for Waorani visitors, has a living room furnished with hammocks where we sat for hours and hours, talking, laughing, singing, reminiscing.

"Gikari!" they shouted, using my tribal name, "you are OLD!"

"Yes," said I, "*pikyamu imupa!* I am certainly old—and so are you!" Great guffaws, vigorous nodding assent: "*Munitu arobainga pikyamunipa!*"

"And this is Mangari [pointing to Valerie]? Your child? She too is old! Which one is her husband? And this one here—he is her firstborn child? How many does she have?"

Then began the counting on fingers (their language has only two basic words for numbers, so fingers are necessary), endless repetitions of information for each newcomer who arrived to gaze at the old foreigners. Two of the men who had had part in the spearing of the missionaries came—Minkayi, who years ago had given me his blowgun and dart case, and Kimo, who in 1967 had gone with Rachel Saint to a worldwide evangelical congress in Berlin where he gave his testimony.

(To be continued in the July/August Newsletter.)

Letter to a Twelve-Year-Old (1967)

It is a great thing to me that you felt free to write and tell me about holding hands with Ronnie. The fact that it was exciting to you, and you wanted to tell me about it, makes me know that it is significant in your life, and I am glad that you share with me things that mean something to you. You were not quite sure, you said, that I would "approve." I can't remember what I have said to you on the subject, but I have tried to help you understand who you are and the value of your person—soul and body.

Holding hands is a way of showing friendship, but a little warmer friendship than "ordinary," perhaps. To touch a boy, at your age, is, as you say, "exciting." This is because you are becoming a woman, and physical contact with a man usually is, for a woman, exciting to a degree. This is the way God arranged things, and I think it was a pretty marvelous idea of His—one I would never have had the courage to go through with if I had been the

Creator, because it is also terribly dangerous! It is dangerous because it is a power—the sexual instinct is like the power of electricity. It has its proper uses, and they are very valuable and helpful indeed, but if not carefully controlled it can be deadly. So this is where *maturity* comes in. You are not yet mature, but you are learning every day, and one of the things you have recently learned is that you have a response to the opposite sex, and it's fun. I'm glad for that. It is not a bad thing at all. But because you are a person—a human being, made in the image of *God*, whom *God loves*—and not an animal, you are worth something, and you ought never to give away things that have great value without first thinking very carefully what they are worth, and making sure that you want to make this kind of gift.

Now, holding hands is not quite the same as "giving yourself away," of course, but it is giving a part of yourself. Any expression of friendship is a gift. And the more you give, the higher the price you pay, and the more certain you must be of what it is you are doing.

Unfortunately many young people have no idea whatsoever of themselves as persons, much less of *God's* idea of them or of His love and care. These are things you know very well, and have been taught since you were very small. Many young people have no conception of giving themselves. They are concerned with what they can *get*. "What will I get out of this? Will this satisfy *me*? Where can I have a good time?" You know the sort of thing.

In your relationships with boys from now on until you get married, I earnestly hope and pray that you will remember who it is that you belong to first of all—to the Lord, of course. He made you, He bought you, He loves you more than anyone ever will. Your body is a precious thing—the expression of who you are, the only place in which your personality is manifest and in which you can serve the Lord.

Perhaps one day the Lord will *give* you in marriage to a man who loves you, to be his until death parts you, and on that day you will be thankful if

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you have saved yourself for him. You know, I think, that I never held hands with any boy until I fell in love with your father. No boy ever kissed me. Not until your father asked me to marry him did he kiss me. Everyone thought I was crazy. Your daddy did not think so when he learned that he was the first. He was terribly glad, although he *had* thought I was a little stuffy to make him wait until we were engaged to kiss me!

It is a funny thing, but it is a fact, that boys are more interested in a girl who keeps a little distance. There is something about *unavailability* which enhances one's desire—like Eve and the apple, you know. The one fruit which God said she could not taste, she had to have. It's human nature. So, don't be too "easy to get." Don't be cheap. Word gets around pretty fast among the boys about which girls *will* and which ones *won't*. But never think for a second that the girls who *will* are the ones the boys like best, or respect, or would want for a wife. It isn't so. You have plenty of time, don't forget. You are only twelve, and you won't get married for eight years or more. Life gets suddenly terribly thrilling and exciting and interesting and scary, and you want to get on the toboggan and roar off with the rest of them. Don't do it. Sit down. Think. Pray. Ponder who and what you are. Take account of the things that really matter, and what you want of life. Save yourself for your husband, for the Lord. Be simple and natural and unselfish and free and friendly, by all means. But let the boys know you are *different*. This will sometimes take a lot of discipline and courage and maybe even sacrifice. Are you willing for that?

Do me the favor of reading Romans 12:1,2 in Phillips' translation: "With eyes wide open to the mercies of God, I beg you, my brothers, as an act of intelligent worship, to give him your bodies, as a living sacrifice, consecrated to him and acceptable by him. Don't let the world around you squeeze you into its own mold, but let God remold your minds from within, so that you may prove in practice that the plan of God for you is good, meets all his demands and moves toward the goal of true maturity." Now sit down and write me what you think about what I've said! You know that I say it because I love you and have great hopes for you and believe in you and am more thankful to God than you can possibly imagine for His having given you to me. With a heartfelt love, your Mama.

A Grumpy Three-Year-Old

A teenager named Sarah wrote, "Yesterday I was babysitting a three-year-old, Noah, who had just woken up from his nap. He woke up grumpy, which I understood, but he just wouldn't snap out of it. After trying very hard for twenty minutes to get him dressed, I remembered hearing some lady on the radio saying that when she was fussy as a child, her mother would put her by herself until she could 'find a happy face.' I took Noah to his room and sat him down and told him to stay there until he could find one. I told him very simply, so he would understand, and then went out of the room. When I came back, he had found a happy face. (If only I'd have thought of that to begin with!)"

Temptation

Romano Guardini speaks of the petition "Lead us not into temptation" as "a humble recognition of the truth and an appeal to God's mercy.

"But there is still another layer of meaning. Can God permit temptation to become so severe that we must really fall? If we deny that He can, and that, in view of His divinity, He may, we are making God innocuous.

"It is certain that no hour ever stands isolated. It is always woven into the whole fabric of life. Today's temptation grows from our doings of yesterday and before that, back and back through all the years past. What I have done or neglected to do throughout time is still there. It has become incorporated in my living being as weakness or strength, protection or threat. It has penetrated into the realities surrounding me, the things and the people, the circumstances and the associations. And the present hour, with its temptations, is the concentration of all that has happened. Thus it may well be that the failure, the levity, the disobedience, the sloth, the passion of many past hours find their retribution and punishment in a temptation which it is beyond my strength to resist.

"It would be dangerous to think that could not be. The petition of the Lord's Prayer knows that it can be, and that God is being but just when He permits it. But it calls upon that quality in God which is greater than His justice, namely, His mercy.

"Therefore it is a plea for God's patience.... God of patience! Let us not fall from Thy calm and unerring hands!" (*The Lord's Prayer*, Pantheon Books, 1958).

Prayer

Lord Jesus, Thou knowest the snares and pitfalls that are concealed in the way I am to take today. Thou knowest the lures that most readily attract my eyes, my senses of every sort, my desires that are fully exposed only to Thee. Go before me this day, I pray Thee, and keep me from the devil's entanglements, into which, unguided by Thee, I would so easily fall. And may the tricks designed for my undoing be only new occasion for gratitude to Thee for Thy sure leadership in the triumph of Thy grace, Amen.

from *The Many-Sided David*, by
my grandfather, Philip E. Howard

Book Search

Does anyone know a lovely little children's story book which contains a lullaby, "Hush, my baby, do not cry—five brave knights go riding by"? We had it when we were little, we lost it, and none of us can remember the title, alas.

Also, any copies of InterVarsity's *Hymns*, published 1947 to 1962? I would love to buy them (not the one published later).

Keep in Touch

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May 2 Birmingham, Ala., Beeson Divinity School, (205)870-2632.

May 3 Birmingham, Ala., Samford University Auxiliary Luncheon, Marla Corts, (205)969-0350.

May 4 Tallahassee, Fla., Christian Counseling Center, (904)893-6706.

May 11 Haverhill, Mass., Crisis Pregnancy Center, Charles Barton, (508)373-5700.

May 16 Rutland, Vt., banquet for Rutland Area Christian School, Nancy Zins, (802)459-2140.

May 17, 18 Schroon Lake, N.Y., Word of Life women's conference, Don Lough, (518)532-7111.

May 20 Liberty Corner, N.J., Women's Spiritual Life Day, Sister Rita Krohn, (908)647-1777.

May 31 Taping for *Gateway to Joy*.

June 1 Taping for *Gateway to Joy*.

June 3-5 Asheville, N.C., The Cove, Scott Holmquist, (704)298-2092.

June 8-15 family reunion in Franconia, N.H. (not open to the public!)

June 28, 29 Jacksonville, Ore., Applegate Christian Fellowship, Judith Slaughter, (503)899-8732.

July 13 Anaheim, Calif., Christian Home Educators, (310)864-CHEA.

July 14 La Mirada, Calif., Grenada Heights Friends Church, (310)943-7255 or 698-3038.

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On Asking Questions

One often hears people say, "The first question I'm going to ask God when I get to heaven is..." During His final discourse with the disciples before He went to the cross they were asking Him many questions. Jesus said to them, "Now is your time of grief, but I will see you again and you will rejoice, and no one will take away your joy. In that day you will no longer ask me anything" (John 16:22, 23, NIV). The King James Version says, "You will ask me no question." May not the sight of Jesus Himself in His glory make all our questions redundant, if not simply foolish? I'm sure I will be speechless.

The Parable of the Sower teaches us that often there is not a willing reception of the Word of God. The seed falls on the footpath (e.g., the well-worn, accepted notions of the world) and Satan takes away what has been sown. Some falls on rocks, and has no staying power (when there is trouble we easily give up). Some falls among thistles (the worries of this world, the false glamour of riches, ambitions that choke out the life). And some, Jesus said, falls on good soil. His word is heard, welcomed, and produces fruit.

Any speaker who takes questions from the floor soon learns that there are not many new ones. When I examine my own heart and find that I am tempted to say to the Lord, "Yes, but—" or "What about—?" or "How can I possibly—?" I find that He has questions for me:

Are you willing to understand?

to rearrange your life?

to be healed?

to lose your life for My sake?

Do you want solutions or holiness?

answers or orders?

the light of Christ or your own logic?

And the still small voice says, *You must become like a little child.*

What does this mean? I must ask myself: do I treat the truth of God as though it were something to be tinkered with or something to be submitted to? Do I ask, "What will this *do*—to my friend or to my plans or to

myself?" God tells me I must leave such questions to Him, and do at once the thing He requires. My parents usually treated delayed obedience as disobedience. He who hesitated risked a spanking! How much more quickly we would find the answer we worry about if we just set about doing the thing the Lord tells us to do. Obedience opens our eyes. Do it, with childlike faith, no matter what the cost, for "whoever cares for his own safety is lost; but if a man will let himself be lost for my sake, he will find his true self" (Matthew 16:25, NEB).

Some of our questions, Romano Guardini says, are "afflictions of the heart that have assumed intellectual proportions." Evelyn Underhill puts it this way: "It is only disguised pride that makes us fret over what we can't understand."

God will see to it that we understand as much truth as we are willing to obey. "He who belongs to God hears what God says," Jesus told the Jews who were arguing with Him. "The reason you do not hear is that you do not belong to God" (John 8:47, NIV). In other words, one's commitment to God—a total self-abandonment—is prerequisite to hearing. When we wonder *how* God will do a thing this may spring from spiritual lust: I must have an explanation! We demand an answer when we ought to pray for a deeper confidence in Him who is the Answer. A simple heart, full of love for God, will soon learn what to do. Questions will be quieted. "The fruit of righteousness will be peace; the effect of righteousness will be quietness and confidence forever. My people will live in peaceful dwelling places, in secure homes, in undisturbed places of rest" (Isaiah 32:17, NIV).

Dear old George MacDonald always has a gentle understanding of our humanness and God's merciful lovingkindness. He writes, "Questions imply answers. If God has put the question in my heart, then He must hold the answer in His. I will seek them from Him. I will wait, but not until I have knocked. I will be patient, but not until I have asked. I will seek until I find. He has something for me. My prayer shall go up unto the God of my life" (*Unspoken Sermons*, First series, "The Higher Faith").

Jungle Journey

Last January, as the May/June Newsletter reported, we marked the fortieth anniversary of the massacre of five missionaries in Ecuador by visiting the Auca Indians. But the events that led up to our arrival on the Curaray River most wonderfully illustrated the guidance of a faithful Shepherd:

1. We left home in a roaring blizzard, sure that Boston's airport would be closed, and/or our flight to Miami cancelled but...
2. the Lord took us safely over hazardous highways.
3. Nearly all flights *were* cancelled except ours.
4. Although we were on standby, we got on board.
5. We met Valerie and Walt in Miami as scheduled and flew together to Quito, where...
6. their son Walter, who had been in Peru for three months with his great-uncle Bert (Jim Elliot's missionary brother), met us at the airport.

I won't go on with the numbers—it was simply one step after another as the Lord opened the way. "When He putteth forth His sheep, He goeth before." And so He did. We learned that the road to the eastern jungle was closed because of landslides. Nothing new about that, but what to do? There's another road, we learned—one that used to be a mule trail in "my" day. Could we get a bus, a banana truck, or what? Who should turn up at the guest house where we were staying but Steve Saint, son of slain missionary pilot Nate. He asked our plans. We confessed they were not very clear. "We're going to the jungle tomorrow," said he. "Why don't we go together?" We did. In a borrowed van we traveled up to the high grass country of the Andes, through Pifo and Papallacta ("Potato Town"), down through Baeza to jungle country and what used to be the very small town of Tena. Venancio, with whom I had been corresponding for six months in order to arrange to see him and the other Quichuas I know, lives near Tena. I fully expected to find him easily. What was my dismay then to find that Tena is now a metropolis.

We stopped at a small restaurant. A young man came up to the van. "Buenos dias," said he. "Buenos dias," said I. "Runa shimira rimacchu angui?" said I, which meant, "Are you a speaker of Quichua?" (my Quichua is not quite so rusty as my Spanish). An astonished smile spread over his face. "Ari!" Yes! And did he happen to know Venancio? Yes. Could he lead us to his house? Of course. Venancio's dear wife Ana fell into my arms with tears of joy, then the stunning announcement that Venancio had gone that morning to the hospital in Quito—"a ball in his neck." Alas. It sounded serious. "But he will be back this evening." We did not

believe her—a five-hour bus trip each way, a visit to the doctor, etc.? No, he couldn't possibly make it.

Next question: where could five "gringos" spend the night? Eduardo, our young guide, knew the perfect place—at his father-in-law's. Clemente Chimbo was just a boy when I left Ecuador in 1963, but now he broadcasts the gospel in Quichua on the jungle network, and has established a little "resort"—four palm-thatched huts on the beautiful Pano River. Never had I anticipated anything nearly so luxurious, not in the jungle. A hammock, perhaps, somewhere—but beds? mattresses? sheets? blankets? pillows? *mosquito nets*? They had everything, including a pet monkey and parrot to entertain us, a little girl who raced up a tree and brought down what they called grapes, and a sort of "sitting room"—a thatched roof on poles with no walls, but benches, hammocks, and a fire. We made ourselves at home.

Clemente's wife Juanita began to cry as soon as she saw Valerie. She remembered her! They were eight years old when they last saw each other. I had forgotten her, but she remembered the dolls they played with, the little playhouse which collapsed because of termites, the fun they had in the river. On and on she went, laughing and crying, hugging her friend.

But now—what would we like for supper? What did they have? Everything, they said, could be had in Tena. Everything? Well, vegetables then, please. And off they went, returning with two enormous sacks full. Juanita and her daughter-in-law soon called us to the "dining room," we ate our fill, and then sat around the fire, listening to Clemente's stories until—incredibly—Venancio suddenly appeared. He had left for Quito at 1:00 A.M. and was back. He had been the school teacher and Jim Elliot's right-hand man in Shandia, the Quichua station where we lived. Never did a man grieve more than Venancio did when, a few days after January 8, 1956, I returned to Shandia with the news that Jim and Ed and Pete, all of whom had worked there, and Nate, who served the station with his little plane, had been killed by the Aucas (now called *Waorani*). He had immediately taken up the "mantle," as it were, and become the shepherd of the flock of fifty newly baptized Quichua believers. I have never known a humbler, more

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faithful, godly man. In recent years he has been working with the Waorani also, learning their language, assisting the missionaries as he is able.

That night it rained as it can only rain in the rain forest—a tremendous battering of our thatched roofs, surely as loud as rain on palm leaves could ever be. But no—the volume gets turned up louder. And louder yet, when the Lord “tips over the water jars of the heavens” (Job 38:37). Will that flimsy thatch give way? It doesn’t. Indians know how to thatch roofs that last for years. But my, didn’t it rain, and wasn’t I delighted that we were being treated to “the works”! Getting to the out-house and down to the river to shave and wash and brush teeth—what fun for all!

We boarded a bus that morning for the fifteen-minute ride (a three-hour walk, as I remembered it) to Shandia. The bus was packed, and as one woman moved to give Valerie a seat she suddenly cried, “I know you! We used to play together! Remember the playhouse that collapsed one night?” Thirty-three years had passed, yet they knew each other. We got off the bus at the end of what used to be our airstrip, now a road, and walked to the Atun Yacu (Big River), along the cliff, and through the forest to the house Jim built, where we were welcomed by the Grifa family who live there. Of course Val showed Walt and Walter through the house—her schoolroom, the guest room, her bedroom and mine, where I had written *Shadow of the Almighty* at the desk Jim had built in the corner. Then upstairs, where I taught Quichua girls to read, write, and sew. The Grifas fixed us a lunch of manioc, boiled eggs, and chicha, a drink made from manioc. While we were sitting there, up the trail came an Indian followed by a tall, blond young man wearing a very fancy motorcycle suit. He came in, spoke to Walt and Lars in English with a foreign accent, then came toward me with hand outstretched.

“I know you,” he said. “I’ve read your books in German.”

I gasped. He had been studying Spanish in Quito for some time, but was determined to make a trip to Shandia to see the house Jim built, for his testimony had made a profound impact on this man’s life. So he had ridden his motorcycle for five hours. Unbelievable that, in the short time we were there, this dedicated “fan” of Jim’s should arrive and find Jim’s wife and daughter in that house! Have we not a faithful—and amazing—Shepherd?

We had another night in our little huts, flagged a pickup truck next morning and went to church in Tena with Venancio and Ana, and were then picked up by a Mission Aviation pilot and flown to the home of Steve and Ginny Saint (as told in the May/June Newsletter)

on the Curaray, downriver from where the five men were killed in 1956. What a reunion with my Auca friends—many who are now Christians, Ipa, who was a great help to me when I was first learning their language, and many others.

Walt, Walter, and Lars were eager for a jungle trek. I bowed out. Five hours on a jungle trail? Mud? Ravines? Rainstorms? and lots of *et ceteras*? I’d been there, *done* that! Steve flew them to another airstrip and, accompanied by an Indian and Steve’s son Jess, they slogged five hours through the forest, most of the time in a state-of-the-art downpour. Lovely. The full treatment, the works, again, and nary a syllable of complaint from one of them.

Ginny served us, in addition to more familiar things, wild turkey, wild pig, and woolly monkey which one of the hunters brought. In the evening a great crowd filled all the hammocks in the house—school children and their teacher, proud parents who couldn’t read but were thrilled that their children could. They recited and sang for us, and some of the old men and women sang their ancient traditional three-note songs (I remembered one of them and sang along). Then we *kuwuri* (foreigners) were commanded to perform as well. We obliged, with old gospel songs (in English, of course) and even some childhood songs with motions—“Climb, climb up Sunshine Mountain,” etc. No one wanted to leave. It was far past bedtime for us old folks, but who could leave such a joyful company? Who could bear to miss hearing Kimo and Minkayi, two of the men who had had part in the massacre, pray, thanking God for sending Jesus to teach them how to live, asking Him to help them to love Him more?

Consciousness from Lars

In response to a letter a woman sent me a card saying “your letter flowed out of a stream of consciousness.” It was news to me. As I sit trying to put a few things together and get nothing I wonder about the reality of her statement. Reminds me of a time when I told Elisabeth: “I tell you everything that’s on my mind.” Her reply was, “Well, that doesn’t amount to much.” “You’re right about that.” Let’s see if my mind is at least in drive.

A huge thank you should have been included in the Jan/Feb issue for again making my work on the Newsletter easy. Many do not know that should the Newsletter run in the red, *I’m* the one who would have to write the triple-underline, exclamation point, triple-P.S. letters of appeal. Your generosity has kept me from trying this and we are grateful. Thank you too for your response to the *Keep a Quiet Heart* book offer.

Biggest change of '95 at home was my getting a push button phone. Don't enjoy it. Now all I get are options and recorded voices. Would like to go back to "number please." Biggest addition—MAIL. We can't keep up with it. We do appreciate your many kind and encouraging words to E. Also prayers for my glaucoma. It does seem my eyes are holding and able to continue as though I was normal.

As some of you know, I try to answer part of the mail on postcards. It's not much, but it's the best I can do. Elisabeth, of course, reads it all, and, as I said, is very thankful for the response.

Well, for the rest of '96 and into whatever years the Lord allows Elisabeth to continue writing the Newsletter, and my every now and then adding to it, we trust that computers, voiceless phones, and any other modern convenience will work smoothly and cause you kind folks fewer problems.

Norway is a beautiful country in May if the sun shines. According to Elisabeth, it does, of course, rain most of the time, and is not too warm. I disagree. In May of '93 we did have a tour in northern Norway from Oslo by bus to Kirkenes and then south by steamer through the fjords. That time the sun did shine—even throughout the night. I'm toying with the idea of having another similar tour in May of '97. Might there be a few who would be interested in coming along? Elisabeth would join us just for the boat part. Besides the weather perhaps being a drawback, Norway is an expensive country. The tour price (unless we get group rates) is \$3000 for the eleven days, not including airfare from the U.S. Accommodations and meals are first class by land or sea. If interested, *don't write to the Newsletter*. Write to me: Lars Gren, 10 Strawberry Cove, Magnolia, MA 01930.

The Elisabeth Elliot Newsletter

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Post Office Box 7711
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48107-7711

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Travel Schedule July - September 1996

July 7 Asbury Grove, S. Hamilton, Mass.

July 13 Anaheim, Calif., Christian Home Educators, (310)864-CHEA.

July 14 La Mirada, Calif., Granada Heights Friends Church, Mina Taylor, 15120 Carretera Dr., Whittier, CA 90605.

July 15, 16 Anaheim, Calif., Christian Booksellers Convention.

August 25-31 N. Ireland, Bangor Worldwide Missionary Convention, Mr. Raymond Pitt, (011)353-247-460868.

September 1 N. Ireland.

September 2-7 speaking in England.

September 25-30 Toalmas, Hungary.

Keep in Touch

Are you moving? Getting married? Leaving school? *Don't forget to send us your change of address.* The post office DOES NOT FORWARD third class mail like the Newsletter. *Please remove your address label below and send it with your new address to: The Elisabeth Elliot Newsletter, Post Office Box 7711, Ann Arbor, MI 48107-7711.*

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The Elisabeth Elliot Newsletter

September/October 1996

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Faith for the Unexplained

"We know that to those who love God, who are called according to his plan, everything that happens fits into a pattern for good" (Romans 8:28, PHILLIPS). Most of us have heard that verse quoted when we were in the throes of something which did not seem as though it could possibly fit into any such pattern. If the evidence for this astounding statement were perfectly obvious to us right then and there, we should accept the truth without question. There would be no room for doubt. Everything would be explainable, so there would be no room for faith either! We would simply accept the written Word unthinkingly, as a matter of course, without the exercise of intelligence or the discipline of faith, for faith goes to work where there are no explanations.

"I am telling you this now," said Jesus, "so that your faith in *Me* might not be shaken" (John 16:1, PHILLIPS). He knew from His own life experience here on earth that everything else is shakable. He was, of course, perfect God, but He was also perfect *man*, having both the nature of God and the nature of man. As man He prayed, He submitted, He obeyed, and He "*learned* obedience by the things He had *suffered*" (Hebrews 5:8).

This is a great mystery and it requires a costly faith. It is a necessary part of our probation that we should be puzzled and even scandalized. "Things that cause people to sin are bound to come, but woe to that person through whom they come" (Luke 17:1, NIV). Here we are face-to-face with that mystery which theologians describe as Will and Necessity—the will of God and the necessity of evil.

Is there a more nettling and problematic passage in the Bible than Acts 2:23—unless it is Acts 4:27 and 28? Whenever we ask, "But how can God allow (this or that)?" our mouths are stopped by this unfathomable paradox.

Ronald Knox writes, "Take the mystery of grace and free will. How, you ask, can one and the same action, at one and the same time, be God's action and mine? It's impossible. But no, you see... free will is a mystery that defies all explanation and when you think you have come across an explanation you find

that, after all, you have left the facts out of the account."

When we are stalling over some difficult decision, or hesitating to make an affirmation, *faith* comes in to strengthen and encourage us, but faith's object is dim to our human eyes. In the face of obscurities Jesus is saying, "Trust Me." Grace then is given which confirms our will and helps us toward a faith which can rest with the unexplained.

Another Letter from Peru

In the March/April Newsletter you read of my grandson Walter Shepard III's adventures with his great-uncle, Bert Elliot, in Peru. Toward the end of his time there he visited a cousin, Steve Hawthorne, missionary doctor in Bolivia. On his way back to his uncle's, he was "robbed blind, accosted by two pairs of wretches two times. A few items snatched, the notable one being my passport. Next afternoon my personal effects were liberated from the rightful owner. Not a few irreplaceable stuffs [e.g., photographs, journal covering the whole six months in South America] are gone, man, solid *gone!* What I did *not* lose: plane ticket, camera, shoes and jacket on my back, money (not one centavo lost), Santa Biblia. These, you will agree with me, are good not to lose and I am most grateful to our Father for what He allowed me to *keep*, perhaps most notably would be life on this earth....

"Still I have the same support and fortitude as lots of men abiding in much awful-er wildernesses. This was Job's support: he was not overcome with rage and despair when he received news that the Sabaeans had carried off his cattle and slain his servants and that the remainder of both were consumed with fire; that the Chaldeans had robbed him of his camels, and that his seven sons were crushed to death by the falling of the house. He resolved all these misfortunate horrors into the agency of God, His power and sovereignty, and even thanked Him for doing what He would with His own (Job 1:21). If another should slander me in word, injure me in deed, I shall not be prone to anger when, with David, I consider that the Lord hath bidden him (2 Samuel 16:10)....

"This is all part of growing up and—more vital—learning to pray without hesitation nor reserve, that His will may be done in us, on us, and by us, and that in all His dealing with us He may 'consult His own glory alone.' Am very, very humbled by all this and I hope a good blow has been struck at my pride. Of course, it is all by our Lord's grace and mercy holding me up from falling into the most lowdown, filthy, thievingest, throwaway, dirt-ragged stealer ways of a worthless jerk who takes what ain't his by rotten means.

"Physically I'm turning out fine, there don't seem to be any mental anguish or other uncalled-for personal problems, although having no underwear is troublesome. Bruises and soreness starting to go away. Have had some mean dreams, but I'm so tired I forget and it goes away. Earthly possessions, no matter what, are too foolish to lose any time/energy/religion over.... All this turmoil in me over some little bereavement! Yet it eats on me. Hard part is, at first glance, this is an absurd, unreal, and without-meaning chance occurrence giving me grief with no reason or justification, but there is a purpose. This is real, and God has a very sure plan for it all. My truly insignificant (this I forget quick) possessions weren't ever mine truly, but given me to use but a little while. Now it's all given to someone else.

"P.S. Police hard to love."

Later we learned that Walter, eyeball-to-eyeball with the mob in the marketplace, was yelling (in Spanish): "Help! I'm being robbed! Call the police!" No one raised a finger. A tough series of lessons for an eighteen-year-old. We thank the Lord for giving him eternal perspective.

Why Memorize?

Our parents saw to it, by having daily family prayers, that we learned the Scriptures and the great hymns of the faith. I don't remember ever being sat down to memorize—the process was quite painless. Few families arrange to do this regularly, but perhaps time could be found now and then for memorization. I think poetry and hymns are especially easy to memorize, and the repeated reading of selected Scripture passages will cause the words to stick in a child's mind. My mother read the twenty-third psalm every evening for a week to my brother Jim when he was about three years old. By Saturday night he had it by heart. A child's power of memorization is nothing short of astounding.

But why memorize? A.N. Gilbey, in his book *We Believe*, gives a clear answer: "The whole point of teaching by heart is to leave a child in sure possession of something absolutely true, on which he can medi-

tate to his dying day. Give him something vague and amorphous and he has nothing to ponder."

Come, Lord

O Lord, when I am tempted to betray
Your love, your faithfulness, your pain;
To spurn the heart, the hands which one dark day
Were broken to destroy sin's reign;
When all resolve is weak, and grows desire
In this my feeble heart of clay
Like leaping tongues of all consuming fire,
And love for you seems far away;
Then come, Lord, in the blackness of the night,
And come in strength when foes would give me
fight,
Yes, come, and fill my soul, I pray.
Come whisper to my heart your words of peace,
Come, let me grasp your piercèd hands
Which from my sin, my bondage, spell release,
My all, your sacrifice demands!

—Eugene Howard

The Simple Life

The Dohnavur Fellowship, the work Amy Carmichael started in South India, is always on my heart. I want to do all I can to remind you that it still goes on. Neither I nor anyone else is authorized to solicit funds for the DF, but I am allowed to give you glimpses now and then of the sort of place it is. Margaret Holland wrote in *Dust of Gold*, the DF prayer letter, of how they continue to cling to "the simple life" because it usually costs less, and "we have a duty to our friends who give, often sacrificially, to be good stewards of all that we have. Many things available to us now are not wrong in themselves but are not necessities, and we have always wanted the Family to grow up free from the deception of materialism and able to find their joy and satisfaction in life from all the good things the Lord has given us so freely, both in the spiritual realm and in the natural world around us. Many of our sisters have gone out to jobs or marriage in a rural environment where, for economic and social reasons, life has remained simple and

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conservative. For them it is essential that they should know how to grind their own flour by hand, cook over a wood fire, and be used to hard physical work.

"Gradually, as people have begun to enjoy better incomes and an improved standard of living as a result, the world around is changing and so is the answer to the question, 'What is the simple life?' Some changes have been adopted of necessity, e.g., the changeover to gas from firewood for cooking purposes, although the old stoves are still used for some things. Shortage, the poor quality of firewood, and ever-increasing prices were major factors, together with an awareness of the damage to the environment as wood-cutters made ever-deeper inroads into the foothill forests to cut green wood.... Other areas of improvement: installation of an electric wet-grinder for the preparation of rice-flour for breakfast food. This was done formerly in the evening in the kitchens using granite pestles and mortars sunk into the kitchen floor.

"It was quite an innovation when about six transistor radios were introduced about twenty years ago and circulated 'round the compounds in turn so that people could listen to the news!... Not all have very good discretion when it comes to choice of programmes, but there is a limit to the extent to which rules and regulations can be laid down governing every aspect of life. Developing a sense of personal responsibility would seem to be the profitable way....

"For many years a holiday highlight was the wildlife and documentary reel-films loaned out by the various High Commissions. A few years ago these were replaced by videos and so it seemed the time had come to buy a TV and a video recorder, and also to take advantage of the same kind of BBC programmes obtainable by satellite; hence the satellite dish located in the field between the kindergarten and the clock tower!

"While our hospital retains its simplicity, it is nevertheless the 'Place of Heavenly Healing,' where prayer and medicine are practised together. However, our three dental surgeries are equipped with the most modern equipment which compares favourably with any well-equipped practice in the West." She goes on to mention telephones, a FAX machine, and—to help with the editing and mailing of *Dust of Gold*—a computer is being considered.

"Some of you, whilst reading the above, may be amused to think that we should even bother to write about such things, when they have been taken for granted as part of everyday life in the West for so long. But perhaps that is what most underlines what tremendous changes are taking place in rural India, which is struggling to catch up not just with the West, but with modern India itself.

"What is the simple life? Obviously, it is made up of different things for different people. Perhaps one way of looking at it might be to say that anything which works for the common good in a community may have a rightful place without increasing 'clutter' and materialism. The danger comes when, in our personal lives, we feel we need to possess everything that is available just because it's there, or for prestige or self-indulgence. To make do with less, or the lesser, will mean, for most of us, that we have more to share with others whose basic spiritual and material needs are unmet. We cannot generalize; but each one of us does have the responsibility both personally and corporately to be faithful stewards of what God has entrusted to us, and to live in the spirit of the Scripture verse, 'Do not love the world or anything in the world.' We have Someone far more worthy of our love—the Giver of every good and perfect gift."

If you wish to know prayer needs, you may receive *Dust of Gold* from Mrs. Lark Sessions, 3737 W. Lake Dr., Augusta, GA 30907. No charge—prayer alone is requested.

Recommended Reading

Oswald Chambers: Abandoned to God, by David McCasland (Thomas Nelson Publishers). Biographies are wonderfully faith-strengthening. This one is a gem, revealing the man, his perplexities, his steadfast conviction that the Lord would work all things for the very best. We see the dilemmas, we see the outcome—the whole panorama from birth to death which reveals the utter trustworthiness of God. Yes, it's in print, and I could hardly put it down.

A Woman More Precious than Jewels, by Bonnie Trude. An excellent Bible study course delineating the biblical position of a woman's place in the home. It's thorough, it's gentle, and the price is right—\$6.00 ppd. (Minnesota residents add sales tax). Order from 100 Broadway, Wrenshall, MN 55797. Phone (218)384-4506. Make checks payable to "Jewels Book."

A Puritan Prayer

Thou art good when Thou givest, when Thou takest away, when the sun shines upon me, when night gathers over me, Thou hast loved me before the foundation of the world, and in love didst redeem my soul; Thou didst love me still, in spite of my hard heart, ingratitude, distrust. Thy goodness has been with me during another year leading me through a twisted wilderness,

in retreat helping me to advance, when beaten back making sure headway. Thy goodness will be with me in the year ahead, I hoist sail and draw up anchor, with Thee as the blessed pilot of my future as of my past. I bless Thee that Thou hast veiled my eyes to the waters ahead. If Thou hast appointed storms of tribulation, Thou wilt be with me in them; if I have to pass through tempests of persecution and desolation, I shall not drown; if I am to die, I shall see Thy face the sooner; if a painful end is to be my lot, grant me grace that my faith fail not; if I am to be cast aside from the service I love, I can make no stipulation: only glorify Thyself in me whether in comfort or trial, as a chosen vessel meet always for Thy use.

—From *The Valley of Vision*:
A Collection of Puritan Prayers and Devotions,
edited by Arthur Bennett

Mailing List

Would you like to get off? It's easy. Just don't return the card you receive which asks you if you want to stay on. If you're wondering why your name was *removed* from the list, it's simple—you didn't return the card.

Keep in Touch

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Travel Schedule September 1996 - January 1997

September 1 N. Ireland.

September 2-7 speaking in England.

September 25-30 Toalmas, Hungary.

October 1-6 Hungary.

October 26 Lincoln, Neb., Berean Church missionary conference and radio rally, Linda Meyers, 1-800-759-6655.

October 27-29 Taping for *Gateway to Joy*.

November 9 Indianapolis, Ind., Hearts at Home Conference, East 91st St. Christian Church, Cindy Mossburg, (317)776-1451.

November 16 Park Cities Presbyterian Church, Dallas, Tex., 8:30 A.M., radio rally, Linda Meyers, 1-800-759-6655.

November 23 Rhode Island, Rev. John Gibson, (401)885-8490.

November 28 THANKSGIVING.

December 25 CHRISTMAS.

December 28 Urbana Student Missionary Convention.

January 2 Spartanburg, S.C., Ladies' First Thursday, First Baptist Church, Ruth Neely, (803) 585-0834.

January 31 Pasadena, Calif., Lake Ave. Church,

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The Elisabeth Elliot Newsletter

November/December 1996

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Joy to the World

Thanksgiving and Christmas (now called "Turkey Day" and "Sparkletime" by some, alas!) are holidays that are supposed to be happy. When there is no one to thank and the Christ of Christmas is unknown, there may be a measure of happiness—if the dinner is as delectable as hoped, and the relatives manage to treat each other fairly civilly. But how many stories we hear of bleak and miserable family get-togethers—"Never again!"

A holiday is a holy day, meant to be *hallowed*—meant also to hallow the rest of life. Alexander Schmemmann says that to the man of the past, "a feast was not merely a 'break' in an otherwise meaningless and hard life of work, but a *justification* of that work, its fruit, its—so to speak—transformation into joy, and therefore into freedom. A feast was thus always deeply and organically related to time, to the natural cycles of times, to the whole framework of man's life in the world. And, whether we want it or not, whether we like it or not, Christianity *accepted* and made its own this fundamentally human phenomenon of feast, as it accepted and made its own the whole man and all his needs. But, as in everything else, Christians accepted the feast not only by giving it a new meaning, by transforming its 'content,' but by taking it, along with the whole of 'natural' man, through death and resurrection...."

Schmemmann points out a strange paradox here: Christianity is, on one hand, the *end* of all natural joy, "because by revealing the perfect man it revealed the abyss of man's alienation from God.... Since the Gospel was preached in this world, all attempts to go back to a pure 'pagan joy,' all 'renaissances,' all 'healthy optimisms' were bound to fail. 'There is but one sadness,' said Leon Bloy, 'that of not being a saint.' And it is this sadness that permeates mysteriously the whole life of the world, its frantic and pathetic hunger and thirst for perfection, which kills all joy.... Christianity was the revelation and the gift of joy, and thus, the gift of genuine *feast*" (*For the Life of the World*, pp. 54-55).

Have we Christians accepted the "whole ethos of our joyless and business-minded culture," relegating joy to

the category of "fun," "relaxation," or a time for "winding down"? Do we know much of true joy, or does the word frighten us? Do we look at it with suspicion in the world which Wordsworth said is "too much with us," a world of "getting and spending," where "we lay waste our powers"? Life is punctuated here and there with a little happiness. We give ourselves permission to have fun and then wonder if we had any. We try to relax and tomorrow's business constricts our hearts. Gerard Manley Hopkins asks, "Why are we so haggard at the heart, so care-coiled, so fagged, so fashed, so coggled, so cumbered?"

Feast means *joy*. Joy is the keynote of the Christian life. It is not something that happens. It is a *gift*, given to us in the coming of Christ. A few humble shepherds, doing their routine sheep-watching duty in the fields near Bethlehem one night, were astounded when an angel appeared. There was no question about it—it was an angel all right, and the glory of the Lord encompassed them. They were terrified. But the angel brought good news of great joy, meant not only for them but for all people throughout the world. (Had you thought that Mary and Joseph did not hear the angels' song? DeSales suggests that they only heard the child weep, "and saw, by the little light borrowed from some wretched lamp, the eyes of this divine child all filled with tears, and faint under the rigor of the cold.")

It did not take Mary long to hurry to the home of her cousin Elisabeth (yes, the King James Version has an s in that name!), who was herself miraculously pregnant in her old age. Perhaps it was while Mary talked with the older woman that she was enabled to grasp a new aspect of the solemn mystery she bore in her womb. This child was her Savior! (Luke 1:47). She His mother, and He her Redeemer, and she was filled with joy, and sang about it in the beautiful Magnificat, "My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit doth rejoice in God my Savior."

God gives to us a heavenly gift called joy, radically different in quality from any natural joy. John the Baptist, knowing that Jesus was now to be the greater, and he the lesser, was full of joy at hearing the Bridegroom's voice. When Jesus was about to leave His disciples, He gave

them His own joy, in order that their joy might be complete. The apostle Paul, chained in prison, wrote to the Philippians the Epistle of Joy. When the apostle Peter was writing to exiles ("strangers in the world"), he reminded them that although they had had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials, these had come so that their faith might be proved genuine and might "result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed. Though you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy, for you are receiving the goal of your faith, the salvation of your souls" (1 Pet. 1:7-9).

And throughout the millennia Christians who have known deep suffering have found at the same time the gift of joy. Suffering and joy are not mutually exclusive. Little Fanny Crosby, blinded at six weeks because of a doctor's mistake, wrote when she was only nine,

"O what a happy soul am I, although I cannot see!
I am resolved that in this world contented I will be.
How many blessings I enjoy that other people don't!
To weep and sigh because I'm blind, I cannot and I won't."

The joy of the Lord was her strength, as it was for Corrie ten Boom, who had survived the indescribable horrors of concentration camp. She personified joy as she "tramped for the Lord" around the world, telling her story.

Love and obedience are the secrets of true joy. "Joy," wrote C.S. Lewis, "is the serious business of heaven." I love that, and I am sure it must be true, for heaven is peopled with those who want no other business but to love God and to manifest that love, perfectly and continuously, by a glad obedience. Jesus said, "If you obey my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have obeyed my Father's commands and remain in his love. I have told you this so that *my joy* may be in you and that your joy may be complete" (John 15:10-11).

Thanksgiving and Christmas then, for us who love God, are not mere "time out" from work days. They are a celebration of the gift of work itself, days on which we celebrate work by declaring our freedom. In a manner of speaking we announce that on this one day we may rest from our work and, without pressure or guilt, we may be glad. A holiday is a holy day—meant for rejoicing in God.

Joy to the world—the Lord is come! May we, at this Christmas time, prepare room in our hearts to receive our

King. Perhaps we will want to pray the words of Jeremy Taylor, "Lord, do Thou turn me all into love, and all my love into obedience, and may my obedience be without interruption." Love equals joy which equals peace.

The Mother of the Lord

The threefold terror of love; a fallen flare
Through the hollow of an ear;
Wings beating about the room;
The terror of all terrors that I bore
The Heavens in my womb.

Had I not found content among the shows
Every common woman knows,
Chimney corner, garden walk,
Or rocky cistern where we tread the clothes
And gather all the talk?

What is this flesh I purchased with my pains,
This fallen star my milk sustains,
This love that makes my heart's blood stop
Or strikes a sudden chill into my bones
And bids my hair stand up?

William Butler Yeats

Each of Us Is Necessary

"God has created me to do Him some definite service; He has committed some work to me which He has not committed to another. I have my mission—I may never know it in this life but I shall be told it in the next. Somehow I am necessary for His purpose, as necessary in my place as an Archangel in his—if indeed I fail, He can raise another, as He could make the stones children of Abraham. Yet I have a part in this great work: I am a link in a chain, a bond of connection between persons. He has not created me for naught. I shall do good, I shall do His work, I shall be an angel of peace, a preacher of truth in my own place, while not intending it, if I do but keep His commandments and serve Him in my calling.

"Therefore I will trust Him. Whatever, wherever I am,

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I can never be thrown away. If I am in sickness, my sickness may serve Him; in perplexity, my perplexity may serve Him; if I am in sorrow, my sorrow may serve Him. My perplexity or sickness or sorrow may be necessary causes of some great end, which is quite beyond us. He does nothing in vain; He may prolong my life, He may shorten it; He knows what He is about. He may take away my friends, He may throw me among strangers, He may make me feel desolate, make my spirits sing, hide the future from me—still He knows what He is about" (John Henry Newman).

"The Lord is good to those whose hope is in him, to the one who seeks him; it is good to wait quietly for the salvation of the Lord. It is good for a man to bear the yoke while he is young. Let him sit alone in silence, for the Lord has laid it on him. Let him bury his face in the dust—there may yet be hope. Let him offer his cheek to one who would strike him, and let him be filled with disgrace. For men are not cast off by the Lord forever. Though he brings grief, he will show compassion, so great is his unfailing love. For he does not willingly bring affliction or grief to the children of men" (Lam. 3:25-33).

Prayer

"Lord, I know not what I ought to ask of Thee; Thou only knowest what I need: Thou lovest me better than I know how to love myself. O Father! give to Thy child that which he himself knows not how to ask. I dare not ask either for crosses or consolations; I simply present myself before Thee, I open my heart to Thee. Behold my needs which I know not myself; see and do according to Thy tender mercy. Smite or heal; depress me or raise me up; I adore all Thy purposes without knowing them; I am silent; I offer myself in sacrifice; I yield myself to Thee; I would have no other desire than to accomplish Thy will. Teach me to pray. Pray Thyself in me. Amen."

François de la Mothe Fénelon

(from Mary Wilder Tileston: *Great Souls at Prayer*)

Shorten Those Meetings!

It was in Maine that an outspoken person of the old school prayed, "O Lord, have compassion on our bewildered representatives and senators. They have been sitting and sitting and have hatched nothing. O Lord, let

them arise from their nests and go home, and all the praise shall be Thine." We might greatly shorten committee meetings and such if we would only swallow this simple solution. (It might also help if we remembered that not everything needs to be said *by everybody*.)

Quest for Love

This is my new book, a collection of what might be called "cautionary tales" which illustrate some of the pitfalls to be avoided in seeking a mate, and some wonderful ways in which God brings the right man and the right woman together *without dating*. I felt compelled to write this because of the confusions and disasters detailed in mail I received from men and women who had read *Passion and Purity*. They begged me for help. Is dating necessary? Is there perhaps another way? I offer no single formula for approaching marriage. The recurrence of certain themes, methods and timeless principles is noteworthy, for example the help of a third party in bringing together two people who are humble enough to listen.

I hope my readers will not be limited to singles who are searching. It would be a lovely thing if older people would do what was done in my mother's day. She met my father at a dinner party for young people, given by an older lady who made a habit of this. My father courted my mother in the safety of her parlor at home. If they went out, it was with a chaperone or a group, never the two alone. Where are the spiritual fathers and mothers with the courage to offer their homes, their time, their prayers? to be broken bread and poured-out wine for the life of these young seekers? Fear not the label "match-maker." Just be there for those who have ears to hear. "Do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand" (Isaiah 41:10).

"Let us be Christ's men from head to foot, and give no chances to the flesh to have its fling" (Rom. 13:14, PHILLIPS).

The publisher is Revell. The book may be ordered for \$11.00 including postage, from Lars Gren, 10 Strawberry Cove, Magnolia, MA 01930 (*not from the Newsletter*).

Prayer and Praise

Because this newsletter is being written in July, it's difficult to know just what to ask you to pray about by the time you receive it. You can always ask the Lord to give Lars and me wisdom in accepting or declining speaking invitations—very hard choices. "The wisdom that comes from heaven is first of all pure; then peace-loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere" (Jas. 3:17). Ask that I may never be merely a *talker* or a *writer*, but a true-hearted DOER of the Word. "Pray that I may proclaim [the mystery of Christ] clearly, as I should" (Col. 4:4).

Praise God for the countless miles of safe travel He has given. We had a close call in June. Caught in turbulence from the plane that had taken off just before ours, we were jerked around a bit—nothing alarming, but we learned from a former pilot who was sitting nearby that had we been in a smaller plane we would have gone nose-down.

Thank God too for testimonies from some who attended our meetings and actually decided to act on something learned. We are very grateful for Brad Waller who helps here at home, Pat Cresoe who copies and labels tapes for Lars, her daughter Alice who drives us to and from the airport, and Mary Marques who types my dictated letters. Please pray for each of them. We would not know how to do without them.

Keep in Touch

Are you moving? Getting married? Leaving school? *Don't forget to send us your change of address.* The post office DOES NOT FORWARD third class mail like the Newsletter. *Please remove your address label below and send it with your new address to: The Elisabeth Elliot Newsletter, Post Office Box 7711, Ann Arbor, MI 48107-7711.*

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ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

Travel Schedule November 1996-February 1997

November 2 Boston, Mass., Ruggles Street Baptist Church.

November 9 Indianapolis, Ind., Hearts at Home Conference, East 91st St. Christian Church, Cindy Mossburg, (317)776-1451.

November 16 Park Cities Presbyterian Church, Dallas, Tex., 8:30 A.M., radio rally, 1-800-759-4569.

November 23 Rhode Island, Rev. John Gibson, (401)885-8490.

November 28 THANKSGIVING.

December 25 CHRISTMAS.

December 28 Urbana Student Missionary Convention.

January 2 Spartanburg, S.C., Ladies' First Thursday, First Baptist Church, Ruth Neely, (803)585-0834.

January 31 Pasadena, Calif., Lake Avenue Church, David Koser, (818)795-7221.

February 1 Redlands, Calif., Moody Women's Day, Jo' McCarthy, (312)329-4402.

February 21, 22 Dubuque, Ia., Women's Bible Studies of Dubuque, Ann Riley, 1733 Eden Lane, Dubuque, IA 52001.

February 28 Hampton, Va., Liberty Baptist Church, Sharon Haughton, (804)826-2110.

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Shoes of Iron

Just before his death Moses blessed the twelve tribes of Israel. To Asher he said, "Thy shoes shall be iron and brass; and as thy days, so shall thy strength be" (Deuteronomy 33:25, KJV). How deeply the Lord set that promise into my heart on New Year's Day, 1973. My husband, Addison Leitch, was to report on January 2 to the radiologist at Massachusetts General Hospital in Boston. His worst fear had come upon him. His first wife had died of cancer, his father had died of prostate cancer. Add had been diagnosed in October not only with cancer of the prostate but also with an unrelated but virulent cancer of the lip. As we came from the doctor's office on that day in 1972, he quoted Gray's Elegy: "The curfew tolls the knell of parting day."

New Year's Day is a good time to fix one's eyes on the only One who knows what the year is to hold. What is going to happen? What shall we do? Thomas à Kempis' *Imitation of Christ* has a lovely story about a monk who was anxious about his salvation. Christ spoke to him from the Cross: "If you knew that all was well, what would you today *do*, or *stop doing*? When you have found the answer, do it, or stop doing it." One must always get back to the practical and definite.

There is something marvelously sustaining about the knowledge that Thomas à Kempis and Samuel Rutherford and Amy Carmichael and Moses and the people of Israel and Mary and Joseph and countless hosts of others have suffered and feared and trusted and been carried through in the same Everlasting Arms that hold us. And so, on that New Year's Day as I was imagining what that year might hold, I took that promise of "shoes of iron."

We shall be given shoes of iron. We shall find the unendurable endurable, the impossible possible. The natural processes of change and decay may be unexpectedly retarded to enable us to travel where

no roads are visible, no replenishing available. The Lord is the one who travels every mile of the wilderness way as our leader, cheering us, supporting and supplying and fortifying us. Not all God's children, I suppose, have iron shoes—only the ones who need them! Lord, Thou knowest what we need.

I prayed then for four things: healing for Add, peace of heart for both of us, grace to help in time of need, and a fixed trust in God. The answer to the first was No. To the second it was, far more than I had had faith to expect, Yes. Grace and trust were always given according to my willingness to receive. There were many times "when my heart was grieved," as the psalmist wrote (Psalm 73). "I was senseless and ignorant; I was a brute beast before you. Yet I am always with you; you hold me by my right hand. You guide me with your counsel, and afterward you will take me into glory. Whom have I in heaven but you? And earth has nothing I desire besides you. My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever."

My goal is God Himself—not joy, nor peace
Nor even blessing, but Himself, my God.
'Tis His to lead me there, not mine, but His—
"At any cost, dear Lord, by any road!"

So faith bounds forward to its goal in God
And love can trust her Lord to lead her there;
Upheld by Him, my soul is following hard,
Till God hath *full fulfilled* my deepest prayer.

No matter if the way be sometimes dark,
No matter though the cost be oft-times great,
He knoweth how I best shall reach the mark—
The way that leads to Him must needs be strait.

One thing I know, I cannot say Him nay;
One thing I do, I press towards my Lord:
My God my glory here from day to day,
And in the glory there my Great Reward.

(Source unknown)

To reread a journal that one wrote decades ago is a surprisingly faith-strengthening experience. There, amid all the exigencies and vicissitudes of life, one can trace the unbroken thread of the utter faithfulness of God—the measure of grace to help in time of need, the unexpected kindness and help of many whom one hardly knew, the physical strength needed to do what needed to be done, the spiritual renewal that came with the Father's continual pouring out of those mercies which He promised "endure forever," great mercies, and also some so small, so heartbreakingly sweet—my brother Tom coming often to sit with Add or to talk with me; Betty Lee sending me a bottle of bubble bath ("You must be tired—have a long, leisurely soak"); my dear friend Van calling to say, "It'll be all right, Bet. It'll be O.K." (a contemporary version of Julian of Norwich: *All shall be well, and all shall be well, and all manner of thing shall be well*). C.S. Lewis speaks of being *happy* when his wife Joy was desperately ill and he himself *screaming* with the pain of osteoporosis—evidence that a brooding Providence is keeping all things under His control, as Gerard Manley Hopkins wrote in "The Golden Echo": "far with a fonder care kept than we could have kept it."

If some reader today looks into 1997 with deep forebodings, let him remember the God of Elisha. The king of Aram sent horses and chariots and a strong force to Dothan to capture him. Elisha's servant saw the king's chariots and horses surrounding the city and wailed, "Oh, my lord, what shall we do?"

"Don't be afraid," the prophet answered. "Those who are with us are more than those who are with them." Then he prayed, asking God to open the eyes of the servant. "He looked and saw the hills full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha" (2 Kings 6:17).

Ours is the same God. There is in Him no variability or even a shadow caused by turning. If it's iron shoes we need, they will be provided. If it's a touch, a word, a gift from a friend, it will be given. If God sees that the mountain should be filled with horses and chariots, He'll fill it. Ask Him to open your eyes to His lovingkindness and tender mercies. Ask Him to help you to trust Him for tomorrow.

What's Good for Us

"The Lord shall give that which is good" is the promise of Psalm 85:12. We can believe that sometimes—but...!

How loving I could be if there were fewer sore-heads around.

How joyful I could be if I were (married, unmarried, richer, younger, healthier, or...?).

How peaceful I could be if life did not hold such uncertainties.

How patient I could be if things worked according to my time schedule.

How kind I could be if people noticed and appreciated my kindness.

How good I could be if my neighbors were more considerate.

How faithful I could be if my faith were not so severely tried.

How gentle I could be if So-and-So were a bit gentler.

How remarkably self-controlled I could be if only God would deign to control the things which upset me and the folks who cross me.

Prayer

"Almighty God, give to Thy servant a meek and gentle spirit, that may be slow to anger, and easy to mercy and forgiveness. Give me a wise and constant heart, that I may never be moved to an intemperate anger for any injury that is done or offered. Lord, let me ever be courteous, and easy to be entreated; let me never fall into a peevish or contentious spirit, but follow peace with all men; offering forgiveness, inviting them by courtesies, ready to confess my own errors,

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apt to make amends, and desirous to be reconciled. Let no sickness or cross accident, no employment or weariness, make me angry or ungentle and discontented, or unthankful, or uneasy to them that minister to me; but in all things make me like unto the holy Jesus. Amen."

Jeremy Taylor, 1613-1667

A Baby Can Learn to Rest

A little booklet was sent to me entitled "The Lamb Will Rule, Not the Lion," by Esther Ann Morey.

"One of the best things I ever did was start a quiet time with our son when he was about five months old (just starting to sit up). I would hold him on my lap and have a quiet time. I gently restricted his movement into a small range by holding his wrists loosely. He could move, but not a whole lot. There we would sit without any entertainment for about five minutes, if he was compliant. If he resisted and threw a fit, the five minutes started after the fit was over. And a fit he did throw. For the first few days he was really mad! He would scream, and I would whisper, 'Rest,' and, 'I love you,' in his ear while he took his breath for the next scream. The first few days he would be in a rage for about twenty minutes—an eternity it seemed! After his crying changed from anger to repentance and his movements stopped fighting me, I would start the five minutes, whispering encouraging things in his ear from time to time and then say cheerfully, 'It's over! It's time to get down!'

"After a week or two of doing this almost daily, his crying times got shorter and shorter and then disappeared altogether. His nervous system learned to come to rest. He actually began to enjoy our quiet time together. I began slowly stretching our quiet time, adding five minutes to it a week until I was up to twenty minutes. After that I could take him almost anywhere—to church, to gatherings, to presentations—and he would sit quietly and contentedly on my lap. People would comment how lucky I was to have a child that would sit still like that. They thought he was born that way! If only they knew....

"I believe this was a very beneficial part of our

discipline in his first year. Before he knew the meaning of 'no' he was being taught how to 'shut down' and how to come to rest. It also taught him that what he wants to do sometimes has to be put on hold." (Copies: \$2.00 each, Kokomo Christian Fellowship, P.O. Box 299, Kokomo, IN 46903-0299. Phone: [317]457-6061).

Spiritual Mothering

A single woman missionary writes, "I come from a huge family where self-sacrifice was just a part of 'normal' life, and no one ever knew she was doing that, but, sadly, I find very few women willing to give themselves up to the task of mothering, which is worth more than career, having gym memberships, hair and nail appointments, etc. Women who are 'willing to put their lives on hold' and stay home are considered exceptional.... I look for service and chances to bless others with my single state."

Note from Lars

Back in early September, Elisabeth and I were in Cambridge, England. We were to take some friends out to lunch after church to a respectable pub. The parking lot was quite full so I ran in to see if a table was available. After finding that they had one, but I should go and see the waitress, I turned to enter the dining room. I noticed a substantial oak beam with the words "Duck or Grouse" on it. Being smart, I ducked and continued walking, whereupon, on my third step, I whacked my head into an equally substantial oak beam which had no sign. Suppose anyone with half a sense would not have needed to read the second sign. The knock was loud enough for the folks at the near tables to hear it, and I'm sure some were watching me, but not a flicker of recognition to the fact. I continued walking to find my waitress. She assured me of a table. Then, turning around, I walked back through the dining room, this time ducking under both those beams, going out to get Elisabeth and the others. Upon seeing me, Elisabeth said, "What happened? You've got blood on your head, running down past your eyebrow." I mopped

up and we reentered to have a delicious lamb dinner.

What good is a knock in the head? Well, it made me remember that last year I did not thank all of you who have so generously helped to keep the Newsletter in the black, until May or June had rolled around, but now here it is, the year has just ended, and we're on to '97, on time with my gratitude. For your interest, the Newsletter is sent to 15,600 in the U.S. and 71 foreign countries. Careful of low beams! We trust the Lord may meet your needs in the new year.

Recommended Reading

Ella Easton Kellogg: *Studies in Character Building*. This must have been written a hundred years ago, but it's full of wise child training about obedience, self-control, the education of appetite, truthfulness, employment for little fingers, and much more. Price: \$10 plus \$3.75 shipping and handling. Sonlight Education Ministry, P.O. Box 518, Colville, WA 99114. Phone: (509)684-6843.

Keep in Touch

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January 2 Spartanburg, S.C., Ladies' First
Thursday, First Baptist Church, Ruthi Neely,
(803)585-0834.

January 6-7 Taping for *Gateway to Joy*.

January 31 Pasadena, Calif., Lake Avenue Church,
David Koser, (818)795-7221.

February 1 Redlands, Calif., Moody Women's Day,
Jo' McCarthy (312)329-4402.

February 21-22 Dubuque, Ia., Women's Bible
Studies of Dubuque, Ann Riley, 1733 Eden Lane,
Dubuque, IA 52001.

February 28-March 1 Hampton, Va., Liberty
Baptist Church, Sharon Haughton, (804)826-2110
or (804)851-7871.

March 14-15 Chambersburg, Pa., First United
Methodist Church, (717)263-8491, or Peggy
Shank, (717)264-1147.

March 21 Vineland, N.J., Faith Bible Church,
(609)691-3460.

March 21 Plumsteadville, Pa., Christian School,
(215)766-8073.

March 22 Doylestown, Pa., Covenant Church,
(215)794-7909.

April 5 Westfield, Mass., Evangelical Church,
Sylvia Wallis, (413)572-4661 or (413)562-1504.

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His Patient Silence

When Jesus was captured by the mob on the Mount of Olives He was taken to the house of the high priest where the guards mocked, beat, blindfolded Him, and demanded, "Prophecy! Who hit you?" Luke's account says that many other insulting things were said to Him, but not a word of reply is recorded. It was a solemn moment in His trial when, in all the confusion and cross-examination of witnesses, the high priest asked Jesus, "Are you not going to answer? What is this testimony that these men are bringing against you?" But Jesus remained silent and gave no answer" (Mark 14:60-61).

What a tense, nearly heart-stopping moment it must have been—every eye fixed upon the Prisoner, every spectator waiting with bated breath for His reply. He spoke not a word. With the calm that flowed from unbroken communion with His Father, He heard the blasphemy, the insults, the ridicule. Despised and rejected by men, "He was oppressed and afflicted, yet He did not open His mouth; He was led like a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is silent, so He did not open His mouth" (Isaiah 53:7).

In Debrecen, Hungary, there is a museum built specifically to house Munkacsy's stunning triptych: Christ on the Pavement, Christ before Pilate, Christ on the Cross. Tears rushed to my eyes as we entered the immense room—three scenes, each filling an entire wall from ceiling to floor. The figures are life-size, the facial expressions of the spectators running the gamut from smugness and satanic glee to agonized love. In the first panel Christ stands erect and quiet, surrounded by a motley crowd. In the second, He has been stripped by His jeering captors and clothed in the purple robe. The crown of thorns has been jammed onto His brow. Still He stands, perfectly composed, as Pilate, with folded arms and knitted brow, wrestles with his soul-ripping dilemma. In the last, the face of Jesus is lifted to heaven, His mouth slightly open. Is it the tormented human cry of dereliction, "Why hast Thou forsaken Me?" or is it, perhaps, the final victory

of spirit over flesh, His "Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit"?

"For the transgression of my people He was stricken.... It was the Lord's will to crush him and cause him to suffer" (Isaiah 53:8, 10). *It was the Lord's will to crush Him.* Ought we not to meditate on that when we are tempted to ask why God allows us to suffer? We live in a fallen world, a world desperately in need of redemption. Jesus was not a stoic or indifferent or impervious. He bore *our* griefs. He carried *our* sorrows—bore them and carried them in a human body that felt every pain, heard every insult flung against Him, read the expression on every face, yet kept His perfect patience. "Shall I not drink the cup that the Father has given me?" (John 18:11).

Jim Elliot, age twenty-two, wrote, "I think there is nothing so startling in all the graces of God as His quietness. When men have raged untruths in His Name, when they have used the assumed authority of the Son of God to put to death His real children, when they have with calloused art twisted the Scriptures into fables and lies, when they have explained the order of His creation in unfounded theories while boasting the support of rational science, when they, using powers He grants them, claim universal autonomy and independence, He, this great silent God, says nothing! His tolerance and love for His creatures is such that, having spoken in Christ, in conscience, in code of law, He waits for men to leave off their bawling and turn for a moment to listen to His still, small voice of the Spirit. Now, after so long a time of restrained voice, bearing in Almighty meekness the blasphemies of His self-destroying creatures, now, how shall break upon the ears, the consciousness, hearts, and minds of reprobate men the voice of One so long silent?

"It shall thunder with the force of offended righteousness; rage with lightning bolts upon the seared consciences; roar as the long-crouched lion upon dallying prey; leap upon, batter, destroy, and utterly consume the vain reasonings of proud humankind; ring as the battle shout of a strong, triumphant, victory-tasting warrior; strike terror and gravity to souls, more forcefully than tortured screams in the dead of night!

O God, what shall be the first tones of Your voice again on earth? And what their effect? Wonder and fear, denizens of dust, for the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with battle-cry, with the voice of the archangel, and the trumpet blast of God Himself—made more terrible, if that could be, by the long suffering of His silence" (from the entry of November 29, 1949, in *The Journals of Jim Elliot*, Revell-Baker).

In the meantime, Heaven is silent. "Yes," writes Sir Robert Anderson, "but it is not the silence of callous indifference or helpless weakness; it is the silence of a great sabbatic rest, the silence of a peace which is absolute and profound—a silence which is the public pledge and proof that the way is open for the guiltiest of mankind to draw near to God."

"For God did not appoint us to suffer wrath but to receive salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ. He died for us so that, whether we are awake or asleep, we may live together with him" (1 Thessalonians 5:9-10).

What a thrilling hope—that we may live together with Him in heaven! But think of this—we may live together with Him *here and now*, a daily walking with Him who loved us and gave Himself for us.

Perhaps these thoughts may help our meditations during Holy Week.

Singing in the Rain

A radio listener tells me she met a man whose convictions matched hers. He was everything she had hoped for. After five months he dropped out of sight. Eight years later she was engaged to another. After some time he confessed that he simply was not ready for marriage.

"The pain my heart was put through is, as you well know, hard to describe. But we serve a God of comfort and even beyond that, a God of *joy!* Indescribable joy. I had determined in my heart that I would not give in to depression. I've always said that there's an element of pleasure in depression, making us want to dwell in the pain. 'The weapons of our warfare are divinely powerful,' and praising the Lord became my weapon. I never cried at work (that was the Lord's doing) but as soon as I got in my car, torrential rains would come pouring down, along with feelings of rejection and humiliation. I never let that last longer than it took my hand to push the tape into the tape player, and with every ounce of strength I had, I would start (by forcing

myself) to sing praises to Jesus. In a matter of a couple of minutes or less, His precious Holy Spirit would flood my heart in an unspeakable surge of joy and power and peace! I would come home and continue. I knew I had to hold on to my Father's hand at a time like that. In a few months (maybe weeks) my heart was completely healed and restored! Praise the Lord!"

Forcible Shakings

Among the myriad tales of sorrow that my mail brings are those of parents to whom God has given a child with special needs. I am awed to read of the amazing grace whereby some of those parents respond to such a gift. Jackie Karsh of Mt. Vernon, Washington, sent a photo of her precious Joanna, thirteen—microcephalic, blind, mentally retarded, unable to do anything for herself. She has had countless surgeries and hospitalizations, and must be fed by a tube. Her father became a Christian because he was confronted with something he could not fix.

C.S. Lewis wrote to his friend Owen Barfield, "Only these forcible shakings can deliver us from worldliness." The Karshes love Joanna. "We have all learned more about the heart of Christ because of her than we have from any sermon," Jackie says. "Once I said to the Lord, 'I wish I had a prayer partner today.' He spoke to my heart very clearly—'You have Joanna.' I was 'blown away,' as the children say, but I took her hand and *we* prayed... We are a family who has a handicapped child but we're not a handicapped family! People ask, 'How is this affecting your other children?' I answer, 'Very well.' They know that if anything ever happens to them, their family will care for them, and they are and will be loved unconditionally. Once at a dance I saw my son Byan ask a girl in a wheelchair to dance. She accepted, and he danced next to her, holding her hand. I weep with gratitude every time I think of it."

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Freddie Holmes of Peyton, Colorado, wrote to tell me about her two handicapped sons. She asks us to join them in a prayer of *thanksgiving*. Merlin is fifteen, born with bilateral club foot deformity. This he accepts, by the grace of Jesus Christ, with wit, humor, and wisdom, rather than with self-pity. Miles, fourteen months old, was born with multiple random anomalies for which he has had surgery and will have another in March. Freddie asks us to thank God for the baby's sweet disposition, and for a successful outcome, God willing, to the second surgery.

"Please pray also," she asks, "that we as a family will continue to recognize the *hidden eternal gifts* [emphasis mine], under the temporary facade of human suffering, with which we have been blessed. Our girls, Corinna, eighteen, and Luella, eleven, and Tessa, six, are of sound body. Pray for their continued spiritual growth through knowledge, faith, and obedience to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Thank you."

Forcible shakings. I read such stories with awe (and shame), and I remember the solemn words of Jesus, "I tell you this: anything you did for one of my brothers here, however humble, you did for me" (Matthew 25:40).

The Other Side of Misery is a selection by George MacDonald in *The Wind from the Stars*, a little gem of a book, 365 selections from his writings which, alas, has just gone *out of print*. But I could not omit it, since it follows so beautifully the foregoing pieces.

"It seems to me, also, that in thinking of the miseries and wretchedness in the world we too seldom think of the other side. We hear of an event in association with some certain individual, and we say—'How dreadful! How miserable!' And perhaps we say—'Is there—can there be a God in the earth when such a thing can take place?' But we do not see into the region of actual suffering or conflict. We do not see the heart where the shock falls. We neither see the proud bracing of energies to meet the ruin that threatens, nor the gracious faint in which the weak escape from writhing. We do not see the abatement of pain which is paradise to the tortured; we do not see the gentle upholding in sorrow that comes even from the ministrations of nature—not to speak of human nature—to delicate souls. In a word, we do not see, and the sufferer himself does not understand, how God is present every moment, comforting, upholding, heeding that the pain shall not be more than can be borne, making the thing possible and not hideous."



Just to keep you abreast of the aging process—seventy now—here's E.E. herself, taken by Kimberly Slaughter in September, 1996.

Prayer

"Lord! When I am in sorrow, I think on Thee. Listen to the cry of my heart, and my sorrowful complaint. Yet, O Father, I would not prescribe to Thee when and how Thy help should come. I will willingly tarry for the hour which Thou thyself hast appointed for my relief. Meanwhile strengthen me by Thy Holy Spirit; strengthen my faith, my hope, my trust; give me patience and resolution to bear my trouble; and let me at last behold the time when Thou wilt make me glad with Thy grace. Ah, my Father! Never yet hast Thou forsaken Thy children, forsake not me. Ever dost Thou give gladness unto the sorrowful, O give it now unto me. Always dost Thou relieve the wretched, relieve me too, when and where and how Thou wilt. Unto Thy wisdom, love, and goodness, I leave it utterly. Amen."

J.F. Starck, 1680-1756

The Proof of Love

It is not difficult to talk about loving God. It is easy to write about it, sing about it, even pray about it. But

Jesus said, "If anyone loves me, he will obey my teaching. My Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him. He who does not love me will not obey my teaching" (John 14:23-24).

The love by which one person puts his very self at the service of another, for that other's sake, is the bond that unites them. For in so willing the good of his beloved, the lover makes *that good* his own as well. And in their sharing of that good, the two are one without ceasing to be two. Self-giving love, to God and to others, is the only way to fulfillment and joy.

If I Condemn You

In Lubeck Cathedral, Germany, is this inscription:

Ye call Me master and obey Me not;
Light, and see Me not;
The Way, and follow Me not;
Wise, and hear Me not;
Rich, and petition Me not;
Eternal, and seek Me not;
Friend, and trust Me not;
Lord, and serve Me not;
Powerful, and honor Me not;
Just, and fear Me not;
If I condemn you, blame Me not.

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Travel Schedule March - June 1997

March 14-15 Chambersburg, Pa., First United Methodist Church, (717)263-8491, or Peggy Shank, (717)264-1147.

March 21 Vineland, N.J., Faith Bible Church, (609)691-3460.

March 21 Plumsteadville, Pa., Christian School, (215)766-8073.

March 22 Doylestown, Pa., Covenant Church, (215)794-7909.

April 5 Westfield, Mass., Evangelical Church, Sylvia Wallis, (413)572-4661 or (413)562-1504.

April 18-19 Atlanta Metro Area, Phyllis Maxwell, (770)935-0005.

April 26 Chicago, Ill., Moody Women's Day, Jo' McCarthy (312)329-4402.

April 28-30 Elizabeth, Ill., Triple Creek Ranch, (815)858-2435.

May 4-7 India, Women's Prayer Fellowship, Tamil Nadu.

June 5, 6 Beijing, China; Holly Sheldon, Phone (65)562-5554; FAX (65)563-5554.

June 7-8 Ulaan Baatar, Mongolia, Candice Purnell, Phone/FAX 976-1-358518.

June 14 Grenville Christian College, Brockton, Ontario, (613)345-5521.

June 15-21 (Family reunion)

June 30 Taichung, Taiwan Missionary Fellowship, Walter McConnell 886 (7) 363-8364.

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Give Yourself Away

When Jesus began to explain to His disciples that He was to go to Jerusalem where He would be killed, they could not fathom the *necessity* of His suffering—that He *must* go, and He *must* be killed (Matthew 16:21). Furthermore, His suffering was to be at the hands of the religious leaders. It was an outrage, and Peter took Him aside and said so. Jesus then pierced their hearts, as He pierces ours, with the categorical imperatives of true discipleship: three seemingly very dangerous and impossible demands: deny self, take up the cross, follow.

To deny oneself means, quite simply (though it may frighten us), to give oneself away. That was precisely what Jesus Himself had been doing all during the three years when the disciples walked with Him, saw His miracles, received His teaching, heard Him pray. It was a daily, unstinting pouring out of Himself for the life of the world. It was an unequivocal lesson in the meaning of LOVE.

Can we follow Him in this—in the *twentieth century*? Is not self-denial an unhealthy concept? Jesus asserted Himself “only, solely, altogether, in an infinite sacrifice of devotion” (George MacDonald). That is what He asks of us who want to be His disciples. The student must be as the teacher, the child as the father. The father requires of him nothing that he *is* not or *does* not himself.

Angus Kinnear, in his biography of Watchman Nee (out of print), tells of a Chinese farmer, who as a new believer experienced a real crisis of faith. He found that his neighbor had breached his retaining bank and was running the farmer’s water onto his own land. What to do?

He went to the elders of his church. “It is not righteous!” he said. “It is unjust! What is a Christian to do?” They knelt together in prayer. The answer came from Jesus’ own words in Matthew 5:19ff, “I tell you, do not resist an evil person. If someone strikes you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also. If someone wants to sue you and take your tunic, let him have your cloak as well.” We usually skip words like that,

sure that in our own case they cannot apply. Not so the Chinese convert. “If we do only the *right* thing,” said the elders, “we are unprofitable servants. We must go beyond what is merely right.” The next day the farmer toiled all morning at his treadmill, pumping water for his neighbor’s two strips of wet land below. Then, in the afternoon he worked to pump the water he needed for his own land. The neighbor, of course, was dumbfounded, but it was not long before he himself was drinking of the Water of Life. That is Christianity. That is the costly obedience Jesus asks of us: Give yourself away. If someone strikes you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also. If someone forces you to go one mile, go with him two miles.

Being incorrigibly utilitarian in our thinking we will probably ask, “But will this work in *my* case?” If we are listening carefully to the Master instead of to the pragmatists we may hear the still, small voice: “Did it ‘work’ in My case?” Strong food for thought! Daily He is asking us, “Will you give yourself away [perhaps in some small preference quietly relinquished] and leave the results with Me? Will you take up this particular cross which is presented to you today [a distasteful duty which can’t be evaded; an honest confession, long postponed; an act of reconciliation] and trust Me to give you strength to do it? Do you truly desire to be a child of my Father?” He will require of us nothing but what He is and does Himself. He is “the one prime unconditioned sacrificer and sacrifice.”

Remember Ugo Bassi’s word (which, I am told, is inscribed on the war memorial in Edinburgh):

“Measure thy life by loss and not by gain,
Not by the wine drunk but by the wine poured forth,
For love’s strength standeth in love’s sacrifice,
And he that suffereth most hath most to give.”

See Christ in His Little Children

In the November/December 1994 newsletter I told of a family in Greer, South Carolina, who had two biological children and sixteen adopted ones of whom *ten* were handicapped. Why do they do this? “Oh, Elisabeth!” said Debbie, the mother. “There are so

many children out there that nobody wants. *We want them! We love them!*" In January of this year following a speaking engagement I suddenly found myself surrounded with a most delightful group of children. They were some of the Rettews, begging Lars and me to come to breakfast next morning.

We went. I don't know when we've seen a happier family. There was Debbie in the kitchen, whipping up a sausage/egg/cheese casserole, blueberry muffins, and grits. There were children all over the place (three more have been added since 1994 and one is with Jesus). A sweet little girl of ten was very quietly and carefully tending to a whole tableful of handicapped brothers and sisters, dishing out their food, pouring milk. There were four in wheelchairs, one of them a boy of twenty who never stopped smiling. In an infant seat in a corner was Travis, a tiny boy of sixteen years who cannot see, hear, or speak. He will not grow. He is one of two who must be fed with a tube. Eight will always wear diapers, three are blind, three are black or biracial. Debbie usually does eight loads of washing per day.

"When we drive by the churches that have little white crosses in the yard we explain to the children that those represent babies who are killed before they are born because the parents don't want them. 'But Mama,' they say, 'Don't they know about us? Don't they know we'll take their babies?'"

The children sang for us, loudly and exuberantly, "I'm adopted, I'm adopted!" They recited Scripture and asked me for stories of jungle Indians. They showed us their rooms—three or four beds in each, neatly made. There were two empty cribs—"just in case," Debbie said. "We never know when the Lord will want to give us another but we're hoping!"

Bill, the father of the family, was as calm and cheerful as Debbie. He was giving a bottle to a tiny girl in his arms whom they had named Anna Elisabeth. Doctors had planned to let her die because of a serious brain anomaly.

I asked if the children ever squabble. Debbie had to stop and think. "Sometimes they can get pretty loud," she said. What is the secret of this peaceful home? The answer is love, sacrificial love, self-abandoning love. The healthy children, surrounded by suffering, learn this by example. Their home is a visible example of Jesus' words in Matthew 25:40: "I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me." And *He will not forget*.

The Rettews are servants of all. In the letters they send out there is not a word about money. They ask,

"Let us know how we can help you." 3616 Brushy Creek Road, Greer, SC 29650; Phone (864)877-9327.

At Evening

In the story of my upbringing, *The Shaping of a Christian Family*, I described "The Cottage" where we had vacations in New Hampshire. My grandfather wrote of a scene just across Gale River from that cottage. This exquisite piece has taken on new meaning for me now that I've reached the biblical quotient for old age ("threescore years and ten"):

"There is a little wooded hill, overlooking a broad and open valley in the northern New England country, from which the sunset view is very wonderful. Some who are privileged to live close to the foot of that knoll in the summer call it Goodbye Hill because it is their custom to let the afternoon outlook from this hill close their summer days just before leaving for home, a picture that lingers in the memory. The clearing on the brow of the hill faces the southeast. On the right is a village, and as one's gaze sweeps the horizon at sunset, shadows of a great hill to the west steal over the village and river, touching all with the grey of evening. Turning to the left follow the rim of the valley along the mountain summits glowing with light, and beneath them the broad farms and sheltered white houses with glittering touches of streams in the meadows. The eyes sweep that horizon, but they rest inevitably upon Mt. Lafayette, lifting its brown peaks high against the sky to the east.

"The shadow upon the village mellows all the lines of nestling homes. The level rays of the sun, streaming forth beneath the bank of clouds in the west, tinge the foothills of Lafayette, and reach more and more with their marvelous artistry up and up the wooded slopes, until the craggy peaks themselves are arrayed in royal purple. It is a strange and wonderful revelation of titanic handiwork that upon the face of the mountain not far from the summit is a cross formed by upright and transverse ravines in the rock; and often in the early summer

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it is clearly outlined by the snows still lingering after the winter's storms when the rest of the mountain is clad in brown and grey and green. The sunset light reveals the cross as you gaze from Goodbye Hill.

"As you turn from the scene to take your way to the valley once more, the peaks of Lafayette fade into the broad shadow of twilight, while above them in the deepening blue of the sky a single star appears, shining in lonely splendor. The vision of evening as one sees it from Goodbye Hill does not easily fade.

"We need the evening light upon life in order to understand life at all. The blaze of day is often blinding. When shadows fall and light flows eastward along our own levels we see much that we never could see until then. A preacher-warrior, not long since gone to his rest, said to some friends who were asking him to record some of his reminiscences, 'Yes, I shall be glad to do it. It is evening now, and the light is mellow.' Life needs the mellow light for its interpretation, and it needs the Cross and the Star."

**Philip E. Howard, *The Many Sided David*
(out of print)**

Do Not Brood Over the Past

A poem by Annie Johnson Flint, "I Look Not Back" ("God knows the fruitless efforts, the wasted toil, the sinning, the regrets," etc.) has been one of my spiritual treasures for years, helping me to *forget those things which are behind*. Brenda Foltz (remember her story of the lost contact lens?) has done this poem in beautiful calligraphy. She will be glad to send you a copy if you'll send her a self-addressed, stamped envelope with a *suggested* donation of one dollar (she doesn't want the cost to be a deterrent). Her address: 7910 335th Ave. NW, Princeton, MN 55371.

Praise of the Lamb

Revelation 5 speaks of everything created joining in praise of the Lamb. Their voices will be quite a chorus of bleating, quacking, roaring, squeaking, growling, chirping, whistling, grunting, cackling, mooing, mew-ing, trumpeting, snarling, peeping, hissing, chattering, cawing, trilling, ratcheting, squealing, humming, cooing, screeching, howling, baying, neighing, whinnying, whickering, braying, bellowing, gobbling, crowing, singing, barking, and croaking. (I wonder how Noah's wife put up with all that?) But at last, when everything that has breath shall praise the Lord, I think the noise

will be interpreted as "Holy, holy, holy! Worthy is the Lamb!"

I went to a Florida beach early one morning. Starlight. Warm tropical breeze. Solitude. Sighing of a gentle surf, low tide. Sat on a sand dune to watch the sun rise, read the Bible, and pray. Listened to ground-doves, mocking-birds, a cardinal. Watched tiny crabs, looking like delicate stagecoaches with two footmen atop. A grey heron stalked solemnly on the sand, gobbling them. A pelican crash-landed in the waves. A fishing boat went by. A jet plane headed north. Found a strange dead fish—18" long, like a thick bag with "tire treads" on its underside, a big rubbery mouth, huge eyes.

"How many are your works, O Lord! In wisdom you made them all, the earth is full of your creatures. There is the sea, vast and spacious, teeming with creatures beyond number—living things both large and small" (Psalm 104:24-26, NIV).

I came upon many turtle tracks. When the sea turtle makes her way out of the sea up onto the dry sand to lay her eggs, she is alone. She chooses the exact time and tide, the right distance from the high water mark, the depth she must dig. No one instructs her—no one, that is, but her Maker. And what communion do they hold there in the moonlight? Who gives her strength to bear the load of up to 250 eggs while at the same time she is digging a deep hole to deposit them? Who teaches her that she must cover the eggs with sand and smooth it so that the nest is not easily detectable? Who leads her back into the deeps? She obeys Him, thus joining the throng who glorify Him day and night.

Came home to nothing but bad news on TV—many things to tempt me to worry. But then I remembered that we are always under "the blessed controller of *all* things" (1 Timothy 6:15, PHILLIPS). He has clearly told us that we are not to worry about anything whatever. We are to remember the birds—ground-doves, mockingbirds, cardinals, pelicans, and herons, among countless others—fed by a heavenly Father, the lilies that toil not, even the grass which is clothed by God. Often I have been comforted by the reminder that my heavenly Father knows exactly what I need, and He has told me to seek His kingdom and His righteousness, "and all these things will be given to you as well. Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own" (Matthew 6:33-34).

In the midst of deep sorrow I have found great peace in washing dishes or ironing—the ordinary work given by my Father. Instead of moaning, "I can't handle this"

(referring to my sorrow), I proceed to handle the day's tasks. They are props, given by God Himself. *Do the next thing!*

Prayer

O Thou, whose name is Love, Who never turnest away from the cry of Thy needy children, give ear to my prayer this morning. Make this a day of blessing to me, and make me a blessing to others. Keep all evil away from me. Preserve me from outward transgression and from secret sin. Help me to control my temper. May I check the first risings of anger or sullenness. If I meet with unkindness or ill-treatment, give me that charity which suffereth long and beareth all things. Make me kind and gentle towards all, loving even those who love me not. Let me live this day as if it were to be my last. O my God, show me the path that Thou wouldst have me to follow. May I take no step that is not ordered by Thee, and go nowhere except Thou, Lord, go with me. Amen.

Aston Drenden (dates unknown)

Prayer Requests

Pray for the staff of my daily broadcast, *Gateway to Joy*. I am so grateful for all those who make it possible—producer-director, announcer, counselors, transcribers, editors, secretaries, packers, those who handle mail and those who answer it—all of them indispensable. Pray that they may find joy in doing this work for God.

Thank God for the near-perfect health He has given to Lars and me. Not once in thirty-three years have I had to cancel a speaking engagement because of health problems. May we never take any of God's good gifts for granted.

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June 15-21 (Family reunion at "The Cottage.")

June 30 Taichung, Taiwan Missionary Fellowship, Walter McConnell, 886 (7) 363-8364.

July 1-5 Taichung.

August 24-30 Bermuda, Willowbank, (809)234-1616, FAX (809)234-3373.

September 6 Milwaukee, VCY America Inc., Jim Schneider, (414)935-3000; (800)729-9829.

September 13 Naples, Maine, Cornerstone Gospel Church, Myra Marstaller, (207)693-6102.

September 23 Dallas, First Baptist Church banquet.

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The World's Squeeze

Recently on *Gateway to Joy* I gave some talks on the subject of modesty. I expected negative letters. I had none. I received instead a flood of very favorable ones, including several from men who are as appalled as many of us women are at the way *Christian* women dress, not only on the beach or in the backyard but in church. Here are excerpts from one man's letter:

"I'm especially burdened about the almost total lack, it would seem, of recognition among Christian women—evangelical, Bible-taught (up to a point) women—of the concept of modesty and femininity in dress and deportment. My sisters of the Mennonite and Holiness persuasions are notable exceptions to the glaring lack of awareness among most other Christian ladies. I almost hate to see hot weather come again—for I shall see a rush among both men and women to see how many clothes they can take off and get by. I understand that women's different thought patterns may allow them to view the 60-75 percent exposure of male skin in a bathing suit without any arousal problems. At least they try to tell me that.

"I can't argue with them, but I can state my reaction. The sight of a reasonably shapely woman in a form-fitting suit which leaves almost nothing to the imagination is not good for the man who knows he should not lust after the body of another besides his wife. Sometimes, if the point is raised, a woman will sharply respond, 'You just have a dirty mind!' or, 'Well, you don't *have* to look!'

"I suppose there is only one answer for a Christian man—stay away from those places. But there is a year-round problem. The women today have taken over the wearing of pants. That all-too-customary apparel, with its lack of femininity in every respect in my judgment, has resulted in a careless, sloppy, 'don't-give-a-hoot' attitude in sprawling posture on a chair or couch, legs spread in every direction except straightforward. Most females, while wearing a dress (rare occasions for most), still retain sufficient modesty to sit like a lady, or, if wearing an all-too-short skirt, squirm and tug, going through ridiculous motions trying to cover that which

should not have been exposed to start with. A judge in Michigan suggested that the dress, or lack of it, of a certain woman was the cause of her being raped. No, I won't be that foolish, but I definitely feel that a Christian woman needs to be aware that she *owes* it to men to consider that she is guilty (not consciously, perhaps) of causing men to sin by her dress. Have you addressed this issue in print?"

I am not sure that I have, but I have been observing it with deepening dismay for years, deploring not only the frankly sexy and provocative outfits but also the thoughtlessness, even what appears to me to be a defiant and calculated sloppiness, which characterizes so many women (and men too). Look at the high-fashion magazines. One is confronted with page after page of sullen, insolent, contemptuous faces and slouching figures wearing clothes which appear to have been thrown on—or mostly off.

What ever happened to plain old-fashioned neatness? Simple prettiness? When I was a girl a thousand years ago we did our best to look at least neat and possibly a little bit pretty even if we knew our faces and hairdos weren't all we'd have liked them to be.

And then there is the unisex look. I was a bit taken aback recently at a conference when the three women who provided the music came onto the platform wearing slacks. Very likely the dear ladies had never been given reason to question such a choice, but I am an older woman, required by God's Word (Titus 2:3-5) to teach the younger. May I suggest that we ought to think seriously about what it means to be *women*,* women of God, aiming more at clothing which is *distinctly* feminine, at least in public? There are occasions, of course, when trousers are appropriate—horseback riding, mountain climbing, walking in bitter cold weather, gardening, or painting the porch ceiling. But please, give the men (and the rest of us) a break, ladies. Wear skirts more often than pants!

"You mean we've got to dress *up* all the time?" they ask. No, certainly not always "up," but how about a skirt—even denim or khaki if you like, with a crisp blouse instead of the ubiquitous and far from appealing

* See my book, *Let Me Be a Woman*, a paperback available from us at 10 Strawberry Cove, Magnolia, MA 01930. \$5.00 postpaid.

T-shirts and—worse and worse—*sweats!* Have mercy on the poor people who have to look at you!

Yet there is hope. A lovely group of seven girls from nearby Gordon College came to my house for tea recently. I was delighted to see how feminine they all were in both manner and dress. Although they were strangers I supposed they had made a special effort just for me. No, they assured me, they usually wear dresses or skirts, *even on campus!* “Do you get flak?” I asked. They smiled. “Yes, sometimes, but we don’t mind.” We spent a delightful hour talking about womanliness, courtesy, and the fact that one’s appearance, manner, and tone of voice reveal something about respect for others—and, most importantly I think, they are visible signs of an invisible reality. They show us something deeper, something about the heart. We know that only God can look fully at one’s heart. Man looks on the outward appearance—it’s the only thing he can look at. What sort of message does he read?

“The women should be dressed quietly, and their demeanor should be modest and serious. The adornment of a Christian woman is not a matter of an elaborate coiffure, expensive clothes or valuable jewelry, but the living of a good life” (1 Tim. 2:9, 10, PHILLIPS).

May I issue an earnest plea to both men and women to give serious thought to how we affect others by our manner of dress, whether it is a matter of truly Christian modesty and decency, or simply an earnest effort to look cleaner, neater, and *unmistakably* manly or womanly?

Another aspect is worth thoughtful consideration: should we aim to be always in the vanguard of fashion so as to draw attention to ourselves? Or—the other extreme—draw attention by allowing ourselves to become frumpy because we think we should not care about such worldly things as dress?

“Don’t let the world around you squeeze you into its own mold, but let God re-mold your minds from within, so that you may prove in practice that the plan of God for you is good, meets all his demands and moves toward the goal of true maturity” (Rom. 12:2, PHILLIPS).

Clay Pots

The Indians of Ecuador make clay pots of very simple design with no ornamentation or glaze. The women challenged me to try shaping them as they did, rolling “snakes” of wet clay and then coiling them round and round until they had a perfectly smooth and balanced vessel. It looked rather easy so I decided to have a go at it. Alas. I found that it was a highly developed skill. Clearly mine was not a master hand. My attempts to imitate it provided hilarious entertainment for my jungle friends, as

did just about everything else I tried.

The next step was to build a very hot fire of thorns and brushwood and bake the pot. It was then ready for use, to carry water from the river or to cook in. Nobody gave two hoots about the pots themselves. They were all made of the same old clay from the same old river. What mattered was what was inside.

The apostle Paul likens us to mere clay pots (2 Cor. 4:7). The Potter has formed us, shaped us into a useful vessel, put us through the fires of testing that we might be fit to hold a priceless treasure: “The light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ” (v. 6, NIV).

Many a night found me sitting in my hammock by the fire, pondering those words after everyone had long since gone to sleep. What spiritual treasures God had given me, from my earliest memory, and here I was, charged with the task of sharing them somehow with my neighbors. To the Indians I was merely a freak, a foreigner, and a liability. I couldn’t even manage to make a pot, and they had no idea that I actually *was* one—a pot made of common human clay, holding a treasure of which they as yet knew nothing. Never did a missionary feel more useless and helpless than did I in those days as I struggled desperately with the unwritten Auca language. What was I doing here? How strange were the ways of God!

I can think of no clearer analogy of our place in God’s service, and no more accurate picture of the *relative* merits of who we are and what we have to offer. We shall always be common clay pots, “to show that this all-surpassing power is from God *and not from us.*” May we never forget that.

Love, Paul said in another passage (1 Cor. 13:7, PHILLIPS), “is neither anxious to impress nor does it cherish inflated ideas of its own importance.”

Prayer

Grant unto us, Almighty God, of Thy good Spirit, that quiet heart, and that patient lowliness to which Thy comforting Spirit comes; that we, being humble toward Thee, and loving toward one another, may have our hearts pre-

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pared for that peace of Thine which passeth understanding, which if we have, the storms of life can hurt us but little, and the cares of life vex us not at all, in presence of which death shall lose its sting, and the grave its terror; and we, in calm joy, walk all the days of our appointed time, until our great change shall come. Amen.

George Dawson, 1821-1876

The Father's Voice

Norbert Selking, of Hebron, Illinois, who writes to me and prays for me, wrote, "I am reminded of our young family as they were growing up. As a farmer working out in the fields of my dad's Indiana farm, quite often I would be out all day cultivating the corn or taking care of new litters of pigs. Then there would be those evenings I'd come into the house and my wife would tell me that the children had been particularly cantankerous, fussing and fuming all day. She had tried everything to quiet those little ones. Then, under some special inspiration, I would scoop up one of these little ones and would hum the "Missouri Waltz" while dancing at the same time. Was it the melody that would quiet them? No, I'm not that good a singer. Was it the steps of the waltz that would quiet them? No, though the waltz is my favorite dance. No, it was the voice of their father that would cause these children to relax and become still.

"My prayers for you and others are like that, Elisabeth. With simplicity of heart we too may allow ourselves to be gathered up into the arms of the Heavenly Father, and let Him sing His love song over us. I believe for this reason the book of Psalms has become such a vital part of my daily devotions."

The Husband's Love

Bob Urban and his wife, of Moscow, Tennessee, have taken in a number of foster children. "Our first experience was a sibling group of three: a sixteen-month-old girl, a four-year-old boy, and a five-year-old girl. Talk about when the rubber hits the road! They stayed with us for five weeks until they were reunited with their parents. We currently have a seventeen-year-old girl staying with us through foster care. She is five and a half months pregnant.

"I share this with you not to gain praise, but to glorify our Lord and remember that whatever we do for the least of these, we do unto Him. It is surprising how many friends and neighbors think that these children are a waste of time. I see this as a sad reflection of our soci-

ety. With each of the children that my wife and I care for, my attitude should be one of adoption, just as Christ has adopted us into His family. If I am to be the head of our house, then I must try to be a good shepherd. The good shepherd must lay his life down for his sheep, not with money or things but with availability.

"My wife is second in my life, but she does not mind that I consider Christ as first. This doesn't mean that I live a sinless life, but I strive on toward the goal and continue to seek where I am in relation to the Lord. A new chapter in our life is beginning. We are being blessed with our first child after three years of trying. My wife is nine weeks along and doing well other than being sick all day and night. Being a man I thought she'd like to be reminded of the verse about having joy all the time. It has somewhat lost its appeal for her, but I was able to get a smile while she was leaning over the toilet!

"When she is feeling poor, I must be able to fill in for her. Whether it be cooking a meal, doing laundry, cleaning the bathroom, or whatever she may need done. With the Lord as my helper, I can do all things through Him who strengthens me. For when I am weak, He is strong. I am thankful to have these opportunities that the Lord has provided me, and remember to call on the peace of God which surpasses all comprehension. I hope and pray the Lord will make me the man He wants me to be. Having many shortcomings, I must not imitate what is evil, but what is good. And one day I may have no greater joy than to hear of my children walking in truth."

Does a Falling Tree Make Noise?

We have all heard it said that unless there is an ear to hear it, a tree falling in the forest makes no noise. Quantum mechanics tells us there is no tree at all until someone *sees* it. The following verses were once circulated at Balliol College, Oxford:

There was a young man who said, "God,
Now doesn't it seem to you odd
That this great chestnut tree
Simply ceases to be
When there's no one about in the quad?"
"It really is not at all odd,
I'm *always* about in the quad.
And the great chestnut tree
Never ceases to be
In the mind of yours faithfully, God."

Note from Lars

Letters from you kind readers continue to come in. As I've said before, we appreciate them but it's impossible for Elisabeth to answer all of them so I pitch in with a few. Every now and then I get one I'd love to answer, but the fellow doesn't have a last name. His first name is Anonymous and doubly frustrating is that he doesn't include his address. Generally Anonymous' letter is not a favorable review of some article in this newsletter. I try to answer every unfavorable letter so that at least the writer knows we have read and will ponder it. I'm sure Anonymous feels bad, but if in the future you want to take on the handle of Anonymous, please send your address along with it.

Recommended Reading

It's a Lifestyle, by Nathaniel and Andrew Ryun, two courageous men who take a clear stand for sexual purity. "Dating only weakens the spiritual growth and foundation of the Church. By taking young people's eyes off Christ and putting them on the opposite sex, the Church has encouraged another god before the one true God." Alternatives to dating? Read the book! Published by Jim Ryun Ministries, 16718 Thirteenth St., Lawrence, KS 66044, phone/fax (913)749-3325. Price: \$8.50 postpaid.

Book on Tape by Elisabeth Elliot

The book *These Strange Ashes* has been out of print for several years, but you can listen to my reading of the story—my first year as a jungle missionary, 1952-53—when, through four stunning blows, I learned a bit more of God's unsearchable riches. Order from Lars Gren (**not from the Newsletter**), 10 Strawberry Cove, Magnolia, MA 01930, \$9.00 postpaid.

The Elisabeth Elliot Newsletter

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Travel Schedule August-October 1997

August 24-30 Bermuda, Willowbank, (809)234-1616, Fax (809)234-3373.

September 6 Milwaukee, VCY America Inc., Jim Schneider, (414)935-3000; (800)729-9829.

September 13 Naples, Maine, Cornerstone Gospel Church, Myra Marstaller (207)693-6102.

September 23 Dallas, First Baptist Church banquet.

October 1 San Diego, North American Baptist Women's Union, phone/fax (703)893-2710.

October 4 Hermosa Beach, Calif., Hope Chapel, Vicky Ramirez, (310)374-4673.

October 10 Danvers, Mass. National Christian Home Education Leadership Conference, Michael Farris, (540)338-7600.

October 16 Albany, Ga., First Baptist Church, (912) 883-8000.

October 17, 18 Shreveport, La., First Assembly of God, Wade DeForest, (318) 686-8376 or (318) 688-4825 (home).

October 31 Gaithersburg, Md., Covenant Life Church, Carolyn Mahaney, (301)869-2800.

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Injustice

What to do when you've been hurt and feel sure you didn't "deserve" it?

Any who long for holiness must learn that that quality cannot be merely "bestowed" on us. Holiness is a lifetime process which requires suffering. Our human response is to avoid it in any way we can.

James, "a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ," writes in his epistle (James 1:2-4): "Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything."

If you think of those who have most deeply influenced your spiritual life, you will discover that every one of them has suffered, often in ways which seem greatly "undeserved." If it is accident or illness we may label it merely "fate," but if it is wrong done to them by a human being it seems highly "unfair." Were you to ask them what they had learned in the deep waters and the hot fires (see Isaiah 43:2), they would tell you that they had recognized the testing of their *faith*, which had produced, through the grace of God, perseverance. That process is necessary for all of us. Christ Himself experienced far more hurts, injustice, and pure hatred than you and I will ever know. "During the days of Jesus' life on earth, he offered up prayers and petitions with loud cries and tears to the one who could save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverent submission. Although he was a son, he *learned obedience from what he suffered*, and once made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him" (Hebrews 5:7-9).

Dare we suppose that *we* do not need the lessons of suffering? Shall we refuse to take up the cross and follow our Lord and Master? My friend Arlita Winston, who teaches a group of pastors' wives, gave me what she calls "the Balm of Gilead," four simple (not *easy!*) steps toward peace when we have been wronged—perhaps even outraged—and are convinced we didn't deserve it:

1. *Confess* (my anger, hatred, desire for revenge, self-pity....). Both I and the one who wronged me now need the same Cross—the Cross on which our sinless Savior suffered.
2. *Repent*. This is a 180-degree turn-around.
3. *Pray*, "Wash me with Your blood, cleanse me."
4. *Bless* the one who hurt you. Forgive him and bless him!

"Dear friends, do not be surprised at the painful trial you are suffering, as though something strange were happening to you. But rejoice that you participate in the sufferings of Christ, so that you may be overjoyed when his glory is revealed" (1 Peter 4:12-13).

Suffering is a *gift*. "It has been granted to you on behalf of Christ not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for him, since you are going through the same struggle you saw I had, and now hear that I still have" (Philippians 1:29). Fénelon (1651-1715) said, "Accustom yourself to unreasonableness and injustice. Abide in peace in the presence of God, who sees all these evils more clearly than you do, and who permits them. Be content with doing with calmness the little which depends upon yourself, and let all else be to you as if it were not."

"Now if we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory. I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us" (Romans 8:17-18).

Jesus told us that if we *want* to be His disciples, we must *deny ourselves* (give up all right to ourselves), *take up the cross* (which is "no great action done once for all; it consists in the continual practice of small duties which are distasteful to us"—J.H. Newman), and we must *follow Him*. May He grant to us the grace to do these painful but wonderfully liberating things! And may we never forget the *JOY* which follows obedience. Trust and obey—there's no other way to be happy.

As I look back over a long life I can see that whenever I have disobeyed, it has led sooner or later to misery. Whenever I have obeyed, it has led to peace and joy, even though the path of obedience has sometimes entailed suffering.

"O Lord, you are my God; I will exalt you and praise your name, for in perfect faithfulness you have done marvelous things, things planned long ago" (Isaiah 25:1).

Miss Andy

When the Tamiami Champion pulled into the Orlando railroad station one hot day in September 1941, a very tall, slim, dark-eyed lady in white was waiting for a new pupil of Hampden DuBose Academy. She picked me out at once—a tall, very shy blonde girl of fourteen, wearing—of all things in *Florida in September*—a beige felt hat (we all wore hats in those days when we went anywhere), a blue wool dress, and brown suede pumps.

"Hello!" said the lady. "You're Betty Howard and I'm Miss Andy. We're so glad you're here!"

She took my suitcase, led me to a station wagon, and drove me to the seedy old hotel in which the academy was then housed. This was the beginning of three years of boarding school—a school the like of which no one would believe. There were about a hundred students, one third of whom were m.k.'s (missionary kids), one-third p.k.'s (preachers' kids), and one-third o.k.'s (ordinary kids). I was one of the last category. The school had been founded by Pierre Wilds DuBose, who had been a missionary kid in China and had a heart for those like him who were separated, often at an early age, from their parents. They made a home for all of us. All the teachers, I found, were unsalaried—living day and night in the dormitories during the school year, in cabins at a camp in North Carolina in the summer. Perhaps some occasionally were allowed a short visit home.

Miss Andy lived in the dormitory with us girls. Daily we saw lived out the high principle of Jesus' words in Matthew 25:40, "I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me." She, like the other teachers, showed us the meaning of sacrifice. She laid down her life for us. Love always means sacrifice.

Miss Andy was a woman with a gentle and quiet spirit, a radiant smile, total selflessness. She not only taught school. She planned the menus, did the shopping and countless other errands. When the school lost its only two paid employees, the cooks, it was Miss Andy who took over the task—not neglecting her teaching responsibilities. How was it possible? God knows.

In 1950, Dr. DuBose asked me to come to teach public speaking, taking the place for one semester of another teacher, his daughter, who was having a baby. I was Miss Andy's roommate during those months and was allowed to call her Jane. Far more intimately than I had had

opportunity to observe before, I now saw, in humblest ways, what true sacrifice means. Jane was available to any and all who needed her, at any time of the day or night. She and Dottie (Miss Hill) were often working on whatever needed to be worked on. If the phone rang at 3:00 A.M., it was Jane who answered it. If someone needed to be driven somewhere, Jane was the chauffeur. She had to be up and dressed by 7:00 A.M. or earlier, seven days a week.

She taught Bible classes not only to students but to Mrs. DuBose's church women. She prepared their elegant teas and the Christmas buffet supper—a lavish affair to which friends of the school were invited and students were trained (severely, beforehand) to serve.

Jane was—will always be—to me an icon of lovingkindness and quiet, hidden selflessness. On the last day of her life she taught school as she had done for fifty-nine years, and then cooked dinner. Like the woman who poured perfume on Jesus' head, she did what she could. As I review the life of my beloved Jane it seems to me that she did what she couldn't! But we know from whence came her help—the Lord who made heaven and earth, the Lord who promised, "As thy days, so shall thy strength be."

Letter from Australia

A young man writes, "I have found it immensely helpful over the past few years to listen to old saints pray—Christians from a world before mine, before the 'instant blessing syndrome,' a world of rural labor, struggle and sweat, faithfulness in the mundane things of life. There is such sweetness in their quiet thanksgiving for God's goodness, and I find myself longing to imbibe something of their humility and steadfastness and contentment. Committing Paul's prayers to heart has helped nurture some calmness and contentment in hard times and good." Why not follow this man's example? Try, for example, Ephesians 3:14-21.

One Secret Act

"One secret act of self-denial is worth all the mere good thoughts, warm feelings, passionate prayers, in which idle people indulge themselves" (J.H. Newman).

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How May I Serve Christ Today?

A hymn by John Keble (1822) has been a great help to me as I seek to make all that I do an offering to the Lord. A day here at home always holds housework, correspondence, and some ways in which I can serve my husband. This hymn has enriched my understanding of Paul's rules for Christian households, found in Colossians 3:18-24. He speaks to wives, husbands, children, fathers, and slaves. The work of a slave was surely the most menial and thankless, but what a changed aspect that work would hold if he saw it as service to the Lord Himself!

"Slaves, obey your earthly masters in everything; and do it, not only when their eye is on you and to win their favor, but with sincerity of heart and reverence for the Lord. Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving."

All work, if offered to Him, is transformed. It is not secular but sacred, sanctified in the glad offering. There was once an anchoress (a female hermit) in England who had renounced the world in order to live in seclusion. She was enclosed for life inside a little cell built into the church wall. There was a very small window opening to the street where passersby often paused, asking for her prayer and counsel. This, most of us would agree, was "spiritual" work. But it came to pass that the route of the main thoroughfare was changed and few came by to seek her help. The neighborhood children, however, found her and began to bring their broken toys. Gladly she mended the toys, seeing this as the Lord's new assignment—sanctified as was her former work.

Is there not a very important lesson for all of us here? In the very place where God has put us, whatever its limitations, whatever kind of work it may be, we may indeed serve the Lord Christ. The following are a few of the stanzas of Keble's hymn. Think about them while you peel a carrot, drive a truck, listen to a bore, receive criticism, or do any other task which seems odious:

New every morning is the love
Our waking and uprising prove,
Through sleep and darkness safely brought,
Restored to life and power and thought.

If on our daily course our mind
Be set to hallow all we find,
New treasures still, of countless price,
God will provide for sacrifice.

The trivial round, the common task,
Will furnish all we ought to ask;
Room to deny ourselves—a road
To bring us daily nearer God.

Pray for India

In May we were invited to Pollachi for the annual conference of the Women's Prayer Fellowship of South India. Four hundred women sitting cross-legged on a cement floor for hours at a time, backs straight, faces lifted heavenward, is a scene which will be always with me. They were, one and all, dressed in saris, that most beautifully feminine of all women's costumes. (They asked me to wear one when I spoke. It took fifteen minutes of expert winding, pleating, and wrapping to dress me. A sari is one piece of fabric, eighteen feet long.) They were there for four days, sleeping on a cement floor, the day beginning with a prayer meeting at 4:30 A.M. and continuing until 10:00 or 11:00 P.M. when supper was served (on the days they did not fast). I spoke, of course, by interpretation, marveling that they did not seem bored or restless but gazed at this pale-faced stranger with eager smiles and warm sympathy. Our two hostesses throughout the trip were Princess, who is 27, and Daisy, 26—both missionaries to tribespeople in the north. One of those groups, the Malto, numbers 100,000, and there are 35,000 Christians. I was astounded to learn that there are 4,635 different tribes or "people groups" in India, forty of which still practice human sacrifice. There are 1,652 languages in India, only forty-nine of which have the whole Bible; forty-six have the New Testament. Do pray for them, and for precious little Princess and Daisy, whose lifestyle is perhaps the most sacrificial I have ever heard of in missionary work.

Recommended Reading

His Thoughts Said ... His Father Said ... by Amy Carmichael, (available from Christian Literature Crusade, 215-542-1240, \$4.50). These are dialogues between a Christian (you will easily identify with "the son") and his God. Here's a sample:

#43 "Is It My Custom to Forget?"—In the late evening the son looked back over the day and was discouraged. But as one whom his mother comforteth, so did his Father comfort him. He said to him, "Didst thou not in the early morning bear upon thy heart thy beloved ones, as Aaron bore the jewels on his breast? Didst thou not offer to Me every hour of the day, every touch on other lives, every letter to be written, everything to be done?"

As the hours passed over thee perhaps thou didst forget,
but is it My custom to forget?"

#88 "There Will Not Be the Torment of Uncertainty"—
The son thought of one who seemed to be needed in
two places at the same time. Whatever the decision,
part of himself must be rent. But most racking of all
was the torment of uncertainty.

His Father said, "Would an earthly father leave a
willing child in doubt about his wishes? How much less
would thy heavenly Father do so unkind a thing? Must
the decision be made today? Then there shall be a sign
from Me today. Can the matter be deferred? Then there
shall be a going on in quietness. Before action must be
taken, I will cause something to happen which will
show the way of My choice. Though part of himself be
rent, there will be peace which not even that rending
can hurt. There will not be the torment of uncertainty."

And the son recalled the peaceful story of the Cloud.
Whether it were two days, or a month, or a year that the
Cloud tarried, the people journeyed not; but when it
was taken up, they journeyed.

Correction

In a recent Newsletter I said that the biography of
Watchman Nee was out of print. It isn't. The title is
Against the Tide, by Angus Kinnear, available also from
Christian Literature Crusade for \$5.95.

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September 6 Milwaukee, Wis., VCY America Inc., Jim
Schneider, (414)935-3000; (800)729-9829.

September 13 Naples, Me., Cornerstone Gospel Church,
Myra Marsteller, (207)693-6102.

September 21 Dallas, Tex., Prestonwood Baptist
Church, singles' classes, (972)387-4475.

September 23 Dallas, Tex., First Baptist Church ladies'
banquet, Patty Lovvorn, (214)824-5579.

October 1 San Diego, Calif., North American Baptist
Women's Union, phone/fax (703)893-2710.

October 4 Hermosa Beach, Calif., Hope Chapel, Vicky
Ramirez, (310)374-4673.

October 10 Danvers, Mass., National Christian Home
Education Leadership Conference, Michael Farris,
(540)338-7600.

October 16 Albany, Ga., First Baptist Church, (912)883-
8000.

October 17, 18 Shreveport, La., Springs of Grace Baptist
Church, Jennifer Weimer, (318)227-3732.

October 18 Shreveport, La., First Assembly of
God, (318)686-8376 or 668-4825.

October 31 Gaithersburg, Md., Covenant Life Church,
Carolyn Mahaney, (301)869-2800.

November 1 Gaithersburg (same as above)

November 2 Edgewood, Md., Assembly of God, Rev.
Thomas Twigg, 809 Edgewood Rd., 21040; (410)676-
4455.

November 17-21 Willingen, Germany, Dept. of the
Army, Protestant Women of the Chapel, Maj. Harry E.
Colter, chaplain, 49-6221-577119.

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The Elisabeth Elliot Newsletter

November/December 1997

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An Unusual Christmas Celebration

The work of Amy Carmichael in south India, known as the Dohnavur Fellowship, is still very much alive. Sometimes foreigners help for a limited time, but an Indian woman, Nesaruthina Carunia, is the director. All her regular staff are Indian. In the beautiful compound there is a hospital where at Christmastime a feast is given for the lepers—a feast very different from American celebrations, yet one which surely means infinitely more to those sufferers than our elaborate and expensive ones. As I read Balaleela's account in the prayer letter, *Dust of Gold*, I thought what a prodigious undertaking it is, yet how full of deep joy both for the guests and for those who work so hard to prepare everything. Ponder the relative simplicity of the occasion, in contrast to our frantic Christmas spending and our so often harried and hectic attempts to "have fun." Here is the story:

"Behold, I am the Lord, the God of all flesh; is there anything too hard for Me?" (Jeremiah 32:27).

"Always pray and never lose heart" (Luke 18:1).

"These were challenging verses to me when I was praying about the Leprosy Feast. Very few patients had been coming to collect medicines recently as the special drug we were giving had been stopped in accordance with Government ruling. It was the rainy season and this could have prevented many from coming to the Feast, but God had everything in hand.

"Cooks were engaged, foodstuffs and vegetables, etc. were bought, cooking vessels hired. Firewood was stacked ready and extra electric lights installed. Banana leaves, for use as plates, were washed and placed in neat piles; spoons and coconut-shell ladles counted. Hospital staff enjoyed collecting the yellow tecoma flowers to make into garlands and the whole place was decorated with colored stars, etc.

"The night of cooking started with prayer, then the employees washed and chopped and cooked. The team was cheered by visits from our Accals and Annachies

[the women and men who work at Dohnavur, which includes those who care for the more than four hundred children who live there]. The Lord controlled the weather, so that they were able to do most of the cooking in the outer courtyard. However, early in the morning heavy rain began, and a place had to be found for the frying under cover of the roof. When it was all finished the garlands were hung, and the outpatient waiting-halls looked beautiful. The patients started to arrive and before 9:00 A.M. there were more than 150 people. We held the meeting inside the hall instead of in the open air and the people listened attentively. The speaker had a profound message for the patients as well as for those helping them. After the meeting, the guests found a place to sit with their leaves in front of them. Heaps of rice and curry were served and they happily started to fill up their vessels also, to take home for other family members! Although it is the custom in India to eat with the fingers, some guests needed spoons because their fingers were too deformed or missing altogether.

"Each guest was given a Christmas card with a Tamil Bible text added, a banana, and the children also had a flower posy to decorate their hair. They all seemed very happy.

"After the Feast, those who needed medicines collected them and set off for home. As soon as they had left it started to pour with rain, which made their journey difficult but made our job of cleaning up much easier. The remaining food was distributed among the employees who had worked all night and those who had helped clear up afterwards.

"The Lord helped us to pray and not lose heart, and our reward was to see so many patients come. Praise and glory to God for Whom nothing is too hard."

(Footnote from Elisabeth: Those who wish to receive that most unusual of all missionary letters, *Dust of Gold*, in order to join in prayer for the Dohnavur Fellowship, may write to Mrs. J.R. Sessions, 3737 West Lake Dr., Augusta, GA 30907. Her telephone: [706]860-6470.)

This Single Truth

And is it true? For if it is,
No loving fingers tying strings
Around those tissueed fripperies,
The sweet and silly Christmas things,
Bath salts and inexpensive scent
And hideous tie so kindly meant,
No love that in the family dwells,
No carolling in the frosty air,
Nor all the steeple-shaking bells
Can with this single truth compare—
That God was Man in Palestine
And lives today in Bread and Wine.

John Betjeman

Travels

Beijing: a little yearly retreat with American women who work in China. Spoke to various groups, once in the university, once in a very tiny, cramped apartment for a few students who courageously have come to Christ—a charming, happy crew, their lives so recently transformed. Lars watched a huge slaughtered animal being de-furred outside a restaurant which advertised *dog* as its specialty. He decided against eating there.

We had never been to China before. Its vastness, its teeming millions, its industry overwhelmed me. So it exists? There really is a place called China? I thought of the hymn sung to the tune of Londonderry Air, "I cannot tell how He will win the nations, how He will claim His earthly heritage, how satisfy the needs and aspirations of East and West, of sinner and of sage. But this I know, all flesh shall see His glory, and He shall reap the harvest He has sown, and some glad day His sun will shine in splendor when He the Savior, Savior of the world, is known."

Mongolia: a thirty-hour train trip out of Beijing, past the Great Wall which climbs needle-sharp peaks; past where coolies were working on a superhighway using hand tools, cutting stone, carting dirt in wheelbarrows, digging tunnels; past little villages, mud-brick houses and outdoor ovens, nuclear plants and coal heaps, green grass country like the high Andes, horses drinking from a stream, shepherds with flocks, rice paddies with squatting figures at work. At 9:00 P.M. the train is emptied at the border of Mongolia. The wheels must be changed to a narrower gauge. We fill out papers,

passports are examined again and again, five hours later we board and go to bed. A knock on the door demands papers and passports—*again*. We are searched and questioned, an exercise in futility, as no one speaks English! To bed again, another knock, two officials scratch heads over what to do with us, finally give up. By 8:45 A.M., we've seen horses, cows, goats, dogs, camels, and one small deer or antelope. We are crossing the vast Gobi Desert, familiar to me because as a child I had read of Mildred Cable and Francesca French, those two dauntless missionaries who crossed it, but not by train. We stop in a town where little boys beg for handouts. We toss out cookies and pens. They pounce on them and tear away. Later we are excited to see a herd of dromedaries close to the railroad. We are met at the Ulaan Bataar station by Martha Taylor, six feet two, gracious and lovely Southern Baptist, and her driver to whom she spoke the most impossibly difficult-sounding language I've ever heard. Supper with a Christian Mongolian family: meat turnovers, cabbage and carrot salad. I spoke to earnest young people in a Bible school. They prayed simultaneously with great fervor and listened intently. A beautiful drive out of the city into great rolling hills, green grass, weird rock formations. A visit to a *ger* (*yurt* in Russian)—a round house like a cake, built with wooden slats covered with skins, then with felt (which Mongolians invented, they said), then with white canvas. All are alike, about twenty feet in diameter with a stove in the center, a hole in the roof. They were friends of Martha, and although they were not expecting us, they immediately set about fixing food: very weak tea with hot milk and *salt*, yogurt, boiled lamb, and strange hard slabs of butter that doesn't melt. Mongolians as a rule eat nothing but meat and milk. "Animals eat vegetables," they explain, "We eat the animals." There were brightly painted wooden beds and cupboards, a very adequate and simple life—and in such magnificent surroundings. Back to the city, tea with a group of sweet Christian Mongol girls, other meetings including a weekend retreat for expatriates, then a flight back to Beijing. Supper in a restaurant

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where no one spoke English. Huge hilarity. We managed to get chicken with peanuts and boiled fish by using appropriate gestures which had the whole staff in stitches. Flying home on June 10 I woke to a breathtaking wrinkled no-man's land (Siberia?)—brown earth spotted with frozen puddles, snow-covered mountains stretching to the far horizon, and black rivers snaking through all. Not a sign of humanity.

And of the missionary convention in Taichung and the hastily arranged speaking engagements in Hong Kong in July I must say nothing but thank you to all who pray for us. I was aware of a keen experience of my utter dependence on the Lord, a "being sheltered" by Him, and remembered a hymn my mother loved to sing, "All the way my Savior leads me, what have I to ask beside?"

Family Reunion

Those of you who have read *The Shaping of a Christian Family* know about our beloved Gale Cottage in Franconia, New Hampshire. In June, the six of us Howards with our spouses had a happy reunion there. It is not easy for us to get together—Phil, the "patriarch" of the family at seventy-three, lives in Edmonton, Alberta; Dave in Miami; Ginny, Tom, and I in Massachusetts; and Jim, the youngest, in White Sulphur Springs, Montana. We did a lot of laughing, singing hymns to the accompaniment of an ancient little melodeon or a modern keyboard, going over all the family quotes, and talking about our wonderful parents, whom we appreciate far more than we knew how to when we were children. We did some mountain climbing and some praying. One evening Tom and Jim sat on the sofa by the huge fireplace, reading Beatrix Potter's *Two Bad Mice*. Ginny leafed through a bird book, Lars dozed, two in-laws, Joyce and Lovelace, read and wrote letters, and I thought about our priceless heritage.

Prayer

"Lord, I do not know what to ask. You alone know what I need. You love me better than I know how to love myself. O Father! Give to your child what she herself is too ignorant to pray for. I dare not ask either for crosses or consolations. I simply present myself before You. I open my heart to You. I adore Your purposes even though I don't know them. I am silent. I offer

myself in sacrifice, I yield myself to You. I want to have no other desire than to accomplish Your will. Teach me to pray. Pray You Yourself in me. Amen."

Fénelon (modern English translation by E.E.)

Bad Times Back in B.C.

"Children today are tyrants. They contradict their parents, gobble their food, and tyrannize their teachers" (Socrates, 470-399 B.C.). Nothing changes without discipline. "Do not withhold discipline from a child; if you punish him with the rod, he will not die. Punish him with the rod and save his soul from death" (Proverbs 23:13).

The Most Terrifying Verse

A radio listener named David Landon writes, "I have long maintained and frequently said that the most terrifying verse in the New Testament, for a Christian husband, is Ephesians 5:23. Wifey doesn't have to love her hubby—she just has to submit to him and be in subjection. He can be the second worst monster in the world, but if she is in subjection, she is in the will of God. Friend husband, however, must love his wife—in the sense of *agape*—and *as Christ loved the church*, if you please—as much as and in the same manner as Christ loved the church. There is room for a whole series of sermons on that topic if we could only find a sufficiently astute preacher. We are not told to love only loveable women, but the woman we are married to—and there are no limits on her disposition. She may be an angel from heaven, or second cousin to Jezebel. We are to love her with an *agape* love, a disinterested desire for her highest good, regardless of how she feels toward us. Thank goodness I don't have to *like* her. That is the only thing that keeps me from banging my head against the wall. If I had to do that, I would just give up completely. Fortunately, I am married to an angel who somehow got lost on her way home. When I proposed to Opal, I was forty-two and she was forty-seven. I told her, 'Look, ol' gal, I'm a crotchety old bachelor and you're a fussy old maid. There is no way in the world that we are going to get along perfectly. The only thing I have to offer is that we'll have fewer problems as man and wife than as spinster and bachelor.' She said yes, and we had the problems, as prophesied, but after thirty-two years, we wouldn't trade it for anything."

The Story of Daily Light

One of the ways which helped our family memorize Scripture was the reading of *Daily Light*, a little book of Scripture only, without comment, one page for each morning, one for each evening of the year. My father read the evening portion to us at suppertime. Throughout my life and the lives of my parents and hundreds of others I've known, this book has been our companion, astonishingly suited to the needs of the day, as though the very subjects were arranged by God Himself for each particular reader. And very likely they were.

Many years ago my great-uncle Charlie (Charles G. Trumbull) wrote to the publishers (Samuel Bagster and Sons, Ltd., London) for the story of how *Daily Light* came into being. Robert Bagster replied:

"This book was prepared entirely within our family, mostly by my father, Jonathan Bagster, his sister, and eldest daughter, while others of the younger ones (myself included), worked in a subordinate position. Few are able to appreciate the heart-searching care with which every text was selected, the days, nay weeks, of change, alterations, and improvements, until at last each page was passed.

"It has been said that each page was prayed over. This is true enough but far less than the fact that the portions were left for weeks to see if any further guidance came."

My uncle comments, "It has often struck me as a wonderful thought that hundreds of thousands of Christians throughout the world, to its remotest corners, are each day reading the same page with its message of comfort and help."

The Elisabeth Elliot Newsletter

Servant Ministries, Inc.
Post Office Box 7711
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48107-7711

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I encourage you who wish to spend a quiet minute or two each day with a single theme straight from the Word of God to buy yourselves this little treasury. It is available from Zondervan in both King James and New International versions.

Travel Schedule November 1997–February 1998

November 1 Gaithersburg, Md., Covenant Life Church, Carolyn Mahaney, (301)869-2800.

November 2 Edgewood, Md., Assembly of God, Rev. Thomas Twigg, 809 Edgewood Rd., 21040, (410)676-4455.

November 17-21 Willingen, Germany, Dept. of the Army, Protestant Women of the Chapel, Maj. Harry E. Colter, chaplain, 49-6221-577119.

December 6-8 Gillette, N.J., Renewal Resources, Clara Bickel, (908)647-8371.

December 13 Ipswich, Mass., First Presbyterian women's Christmas tea, Jacki DeBlois, (508)356-7690.

January 12, 13 Taping for *Gateway to Joy*

January 17 S. Hamilton, Mass., Gordon-Conwell Seminary, David Horne, (508)468-7111.

January 20 Leesburg, Fla., First Baptist women's dinner, (352)787-1005.

January 31 Boston, EANE Congress, Andrew S. Accardy, (617)229-1903.

February 14 Louisville, Ky., Southeast Christian Church, Lynn Reece, (502)451-0047.

February 20 Houston, Tex., New Life Christian Center, Sharon Cave, (713)947-1678.

February 21 College Station, Tex., women's conference, Marsha Ross, (409) 694-9335.

February 28 Murfreesboro, Tenn., Trinity Presbyterian Church, (615)895-2018.

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The Future Is Not Our Province

While a new year offers us a fresh start, it can also bring anxiety. Questions crowd into our minds. Will my job become redundant? Is God going to keep me single for another whole year? Where is that mate He's supposed to be bringing me? Where will the money come from for college, rent, clothes, food? Must I continue to suffer this person, this church, this handicap, this pain, this loneliness? We have a calming word in Psalm 138:8, "The Lord will fulfill his purpose for me; your love, O Lord, endures forever—do not abandon the works of your hands." That word stands. He will fulfill. His love endures. He will not abandon.

We are meddling with God's business when we let all manner of imaginings loose, predicting disaster, contemplating possibilities instead of following, one day at a time, God's plain and simple pathway. When we try to meet difficulties prematurely we have neither the light nor the strength for them yet. "As thy days so shall thy strength be" was Moses' blessing for Asher—in other words, your strength will equal your days. God knows how to apportion each one's strength according to that day's need, however great or small. The psalmist understood this when he wrote, "Lord, you have assigned me my portion and my cup; you have made my lot secure" (16:5).

"What may be tomorrow's cross I never seek to find.

My Father says, 'Leave that to Me, and keep a quiet mind.'"

Anonymous

To lug into this new year all the baggage of last year would greatly impair our ability to concentrate on what our heavenly Father wants us to do. If there is someone we should forgive and learn to love, if there are debts which we have not paid, dishonesty we need to confess, an apology we must not postpone—or even a garage or closet that needs to be ransacked!—let us do what we ought to do *now*. Then we can say with Paul, "Not that

I have already obtained all this, or have already been made perfect, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. Brothers, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 3:12-14). The Lord says, "Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past. See, I am doing a new thing!" (Isaiah 43:18-19).

Oswald Chambers wrote, "Our yesterdays present irreparable things to us; it is true that we have lost opportunities which will never return, but God can transform this destructive anxiety into a constructive thoughtfulness for the future. Let the past sleep, but let it sleep on the bosom of Christ. Leave the Irreparable Past in His hands, and step out into the Irresistible Future with Him" (*My Utmost for His Highest*, Dec. 31).

Students often ask me how to find out what God's will is. I tell them that the will of God for them today is to study! That's not what they want to hear, but that is surely an important part of God's will for students. They must not cut classes, plagiarize on their papers, cheat on exams, treat the professor disrespectfully, or shirk their duty to their roommate. Faithfulness today is the best preparation for the demands of tomorrow. If my job is to wash the car or fire an employee (I'm thankful I've never had to do that!) or fish for lobsters *today*, the faithful performance of that humble task will enable me to accept tomorrow's assignment. When the young virgin Mary received an unexpected visitor she was greatly troubled and wondered what his greeting meant. The angel said, "Do not be afraid, Mary," and gave her the staggering piece of news that she was to give birth to Jesus, the Son of the Most High, whose kingdom would never end. What thoughts must have flashed through her mind as to the future—how explain this, for example, to her fiance Joseph? She did not give way to that fear. She said "Behold"—a word that means look upon, regard, consider—"the handmaid of the Lord," putting herself instantly at His disposal, an act of unreserved self-donation and perfect surrender. She was attentive,

willing, ready to receive the Lord's word.

When Mary's story is told in Latin the word is *Fiat*, a loaded word meaning "So be it," "Let it happen as You wish," or "May it be to me as You have said." And what of us? Will we welcome the new year, assured that we are safe in the hands that hold the stars? Can we wholeheartedly surrender to God, leaving quietly with Him all the "what if's" and "but what about's"? Will we truthfully say to Him, "Anything You choose for me, Lord—to have, to be, to do, or to suffer. I am at Your orders. I have no agenda of my own"? It comes down to *Trust* and *Obey*, "for there's no other way to be happy in Jesus," as the old gospel song goes. Our future may look fearfully intimidating, yet we can look up to the Engineer of the Universe, confident that nothing escapes His attention or slips out of the control of those strong hands. Remember the assurance of St. Julian of Norwich: *All shall be well, and all shall be well, and all manner of things shall be well.*

In the story of my growing up, *The Shaping of a Christian Family*, I have told of our ritual of hymn singing every morning after breakfast. Usually we went straight through a hymn book, one hymn per day, no stanzas omitted. But on April 5, 1952, I was to sail from New York for Ecuador, where I hoped to be a missionary. My father made an exception on that early morning and allowed me to choose the hymn we would sing. This is the one I chose, little imagining how powerfully and literally it would describe the following years:

I Take Thy Promise, Lord

1. I take Thy prom - ise, Lord, in all its length,
2. There may be days of dark - ness and dis - tress,
3. Days there may be of joy, and deep de - light,
4. And all the oth - er days that make my life,
5. Spend Thou these days with me, all shall be Thine

And breadth and ful - ness, as my dai - ly strength,
When sin has pow'r to tempt, and care to press,
When earth seems fair - est, and her skies most bright;
Mark'd by no spe - cial joy or grief or strife,
So shall the dark - est hour with glo - ry shine.

In - to life's fu - ture fear - less I may gaze,
Yet in the dark - est day I will not fear,
Then draw me clos - er to Thee, lest I rest
Days fill'd with qui - et du - ties, triv - ial care,
Then when these earth - ly years have pass'd a - way,

For, Je - sus, Thou art with me all the days.
For, 'mid the shad - ows, Thou wilt still be near.
Else - where, my Sav - iour, than up - on Thy breast.
Bur - dens too small for oth - er hearts to share.
Let me be with Thee in the per - fect day. A - men.

Whatever Happened to Hymns?

Dr. James Montgomery Boice, pastor of Tenth Presbyterian Church in Philadelphia, feels as I do about one of the saddest features of contemporary worship: "The great hymns of the church are on the way out. They are not gone entirely, but they are going. And in their place have come trite jingles that have more in common with contemporary advertising ditties than the psalms. The problem here is not so much the style of the music, though trite words fit best with trite tunes and harmonies. Rather it is with the content of the songs. The old hymns expressed the theology of the Bible in profound and perceptive ways and with win-some memorable language. Today's songs are focused on ourselves. They reflect our shallow or nonexistent

theology and do almost nothing to elevate our thoughts about God.

"Worst of all are songs that merely repeat a trite idea, word, or phrase over and over again. Songs like this are not worship, though they may give the church-goer a religious feeling. They are mantras, which belong more in a gathering of New Agers than among the worshipping people of God."

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The Shepard Family

Yes, more than one person has told me it was time to include a picture of my daughter's family. Back from left: Walter III 20, Elisabeth 18, Christiana 15, Jim 13, Colleen 11, Valerie and her pastor-husband Walt Jr.; front row: Evangeline 8, Theo 5, Sarah 4.

Quiet Time

"It is impossible for us to make the duties of our lot minister to our sanctification without a habit of devout fellowship with God. This is the spring of all our life, and the strength of it."

H.E. Manning, 1808-1892

Meekness Is Not Inherited

A reader of the book *Keep a Quiet Heart* wrote that this sentence had on her a profound impact: "Meekness is an explicitly spiritual quality, a fruit of the Spirit, *learned*, not inherited."

"Oh how firmly I waited, tarried, prayed, hoped and believed, in ignorance, arrogance, and stubbornness for the fruits of the Spirit to be poured out on me as a gift. I assumed God would grant love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, gentleness [meekness], goodness, faithfulness, and self control just as He granted my salvation. How my mouth dropped open and my eyes filled with tears and my head shook 'No' as this answer came to my desperate entreaties. I realized that peace lies in obedience, doing the will of my Father, and acceptance.... My next step led to searching every scripture

on meekness (the opposite of anger) and finding out that meekness is a cultivated response. I am forced to learn of Christ."

Gateway to Joy

Some of you may not know about a fifteen-minute broadcast called Gateway to Joy, five days a week. One listener says my program is "not easy to listen to—the issues you address are painful, unpopular, uncomfortable—but I love listening, learning, sharing with others, and being accountable before my children!" By calling 1-800-759-4JOY you can find out if there is a station near you that carries it. Those who have computers may wish to visit our Web site at www.gatewaytojoy.org, where transcripts of the programs are available for reading (or listening through RealAudio).

Note from Lars

The day is sunny—78 degrees. I've not gone bonkers. Today is 14 September. Of course you're reading it in January '98. That's the way deadlines work. So it is with positive anticipation that I thank all of you for keeping the newsletter in the black through another year. We also appreciate those who sign up but are unable to contribute. Never hesitate to do so if that is your case.

Through the year we have had the pleasure of meeting some of you on the road. Always enjoyable unless there have been mailing problems. Others of you have been helping to increase the volume of letters to us. Since letters are handled by the Grens it has passed the point where we can answer all. I try to help out with a postcard, which may or may not be a help. But we do read them and take them seriously.

So now that '97 is behind us, may '98 be for you a year of experiencing God's peace and joy, as Elisabeth says, "in this present moment."

Prayer

My brother Phil Howard has reminded me of the desperate plight of so many Christians who are being horribly persecuted, imprisoned, tortured, and killed. He sent me a map showing Cuba, Algeria, Iran, Sudan, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Sri Lanka, China, Bhutan, and Indonesia—all of them places where severe persecution

is a near-daily occurrence. The twentieth century has seen more Christians die for their faith than in the previous nineteen centuries combined. Dr. Paul Marshall's book *Their Blood Cries Out* (Word Publishers), is a bibliography describing what is happening. May God give us compassion and the will to seek His direction about what we can do.

Against Counseling?

Word has got round somehow that Elisabeth Elliot is categorically against folks going to professional Christian counselors. Not true! I most earnestly want to encourage people in trouble to take those troubles *first* to the Cross. An hour of silence on our knees in the presence of God is worth far more than hours of stewing or phone calls to people who will feel sorry for us. This is not to say that all difficulties should be resolved in an hour, of course. Learning to *accept* one's lot for today only is a good beginning. Waiting on God is a hard discipline. We'd often rather talk about it to "somebody with skin on." But "O what peace we often forfeit, O what needless pain we bear, all because we do not carry everything to God in prayer!" "But I did pray and nothing happened," we may say. Love is very patient. Love always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. Remember that we have a "Wonderful Counselor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father" (Isaiah 9:6).

KEEP IN TOUCH

Are you moving? Getting married? Leaving school? *Don't forget to send us your change of address.* The post office DOES NOT FORWARD third class mail like the Newsletter. *Please remove your address label below and send it with your new address to:* The Elisabeth Elliot Newsletter, Post Office Box 7711, Ann Arbor, MI 48107-7711.

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February 28 Murfreesboro, Tenn., Trinity Presbyterian Church, (615)895-2018.

March 1, 2 Murfreesboro (same as above)

March 2, 3 Lookout Mountain, Tenn., Lookout Mountain Presbyterian Church, (423)821-4528.

March 7 Denver, Colo., Pillar of Fire, Pat LaPlante, (303)428-0910.

March 8 Denver, Colo., Radio 910 KPOF, Belleview Community Chapel, (303)428-0910.

March 13, 14 San Juan Capistrano, Calif., Assemblies of God, Judy Rachels, (714)252-8695.

March 16 Modesto, Calif., Calvary Chapel, Karin Kyle, (209)521-5501.

March 23, 24 Taping for *Gateway to Joy*.

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Suffering and Joy

In 1976 I learned that Corrie ten Boom was to speak at nearby Gordon College in Wenham, Massachusetts. "Oh!" thought I, "I do hope she will tell us of her prison experience!" Of course I bought tickets for my daughter and me, and it was with great anticipation that we went. She did indeed tell her story and then, to my astonishment, she invited Valerie and me to have tea with her later that week. When we arrived at the house where she was staying her secretary met us at the door, explained that Corrie was in bed—not ill, just her one-day-a-week in bed, doctor's orders, so that she could continue to "tramp for the Lord." She was by then, I believe, in her eighties.

As we entered the bedroom she stretched out her hands to us with a warm, welcoming smile. We asked for more of her story.

"Oh, I've had a very happy life! I've been single because the Lord chose single life for me. I had said, 'I'm yours, Lord, lock, stock, and barrel!' I prayed for victory over the sex life and Jesus gave it."

We spoke of the meaning of suffering. "American Christians are open and eager," she said, "but they do not understand the suffering they must undergo. Christians in Communist countries are much happier. They have to be genuine because of the terrible price they must pay."

I asked how we ought to prepare for suffering.

"Soak in the Word!" was her answer. I was glad for that, for I have often been asked why I speak and write so often about suffering. There are more than a hundred references to suffering in the New Testament alone.

"I learned of my heavenly Father's love through my own father," Corrie said. "When as a child I couldn't sleep he would put his big hand over my little face. In prison I would say to the Lord, 'Father, just put Your big hand over my little face.' Then I could sleep."

Did she like the movie about her life, *The Hiding Place*?

"Yes, but of course only about one one-hundredth of the suffering was shown."

Because I speak often in public I wondered if she

might sometimes feel as I do: Is it right to tell the same story over and over? What if my audience were to say, "Has she got nothing else to talk about except things that happened decades ago?" Her answer comforted me.

"Oh, yes! I dreaded that criticism. But I spoke to my Father—I must have something new! But He said, 'That is the story I gave you. You tell that story!' No, it is humbling to have to say the same thing."

And what of earthly honor?

"If He gives grace, He may give honor too. But I always remember the donkey—he was not proud. He knew that the palms and Hosannas were not for him. They were for Jesus! So when I'm given compliments I make a little bouquet of them at the end of the day, and I give my bouquet to Jesus."

Her secretary served us tea and biscuits as we talked about many things. Then Corrie suddenly jumped out of bed and ran (in her purple silk pajamas) over to her suitcase. She took out a square of satin which she held up so that we saw nothing that could be called a pattern, only a jumble of colored threads. Turning it over she showed us a beautifully embroidered gold crown on a purple background. Then she repeated from memory the lovely words of Grant Colfax Tullar, entitled "The Weaver":

"My life is but a weaving betwixt my Lord and me,
I do not choose the colors—He worketh steadily.
Ofttimes He weaveth sorrow, and I in foolish pride,
Forget He sees the upper, and I the underside.
Not till the loom is silent, and the shuttles cease to
fly
Shall God unroll the canvas and explain the reason
why.
The dark threads are as needful in the Weaver's
skillful hand
As the threads of gold and silver in the pattern He
has planned."

She inscribed her book *In My Father's House* for me, and *The Hiding Place* for Val. We left there knowing we had been with a true saint and prophet. It was an especially crucial juncture in my life. My one and only child was about to leave for college, an event filled with joyful anticipation for her but a great mixture of

sorrow and joy for a mother. I was a widow then, and dear Corrie, such a glad and strong soldier for Christ, was a very special messenger for me at a crossroad.

How blessed I have been in my life to have known many true soldiers of the Cross. I cannot count them, but I know that my mother's guest book holds the names of people from forty-two countries and twenty-four nationalities. We grew up on missionary stories. So I take the admonition of the writer to the Hebrews:

"We want each of you to show this same diligence to the very end, in order to make your hope sure. We do not want you to become lazy, but to imitate those who through faith and patience inherit what has been promised" (Hebrews 6:11,12, NIV).

"Keep your lives free from the love of money and be content with what you have, because God has said, 'Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you.' So we say with confidence, 'The Lord is my helper; I will not be afraid. What can man do to me?' Remember your leaders, who spoke the word of God to you. Consider the outcome of their way of life and imitate their faith. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever" (Hebrews 13: 5-8, NIV).

Whatever may be troubling you at this moment is not new to the Lord Jesus. He is not taken by surprise. He is *the same*—in a prison cell in World War II and in the midst of your dilemma. It is no dilemma to Him. Consider the outcome of Corrie's life. Jesus is the same for you. He is not going to leave you. The negatives in verse six in the original are more powerful than the English language can express.

When Billy Graham on one of his television broadcasts interviewed Jeanette Clift George, who played the part of Corrie in *The Hiding Place*, he asked what characteristic of her personality seemed most outstanding. Without a moment's hesitation Jeanette answered, "Joy! It was her joy!" What was the source of that joy? Was it because Corrie was blessed with an unusual optimism, or because things had always worked out so nicely for her? It was far from that. She had learned the meaning of Paul's words in 2 Corinthians 4:15-18:

"All this is for your benefit.... Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal."

She followed her Master, fixing her eyes on Him "who for the joy set before him endured the cross,

scorning its shame, and sat down at the right of the throne of God. Consider him who endured such opposition from sinful men, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart" (Hebrews 12:2, 3, NIV).

No Excuses

"In retrospect, almost all my life since the day I was first arrested had been the same: just for that particular week, that month, that season, that year, there had always been some reason for not writing—it was inconvenient or dangerous or I was too busy—always some need to postpone it. If I had given in to common sense, once, twice, ten times, my achievement as a writer would have been incomparably smaller. But I had gone on writing—as a bricklayer, in overcrowded prison huts, in transit jails without so much as a pencil, when I was dying of cancer, in an exile's hovel after a double teaching shift. I had let nothing—dangers, hindrances, the need for rest—to interrupt my writing, and only because of that could I say at fifty-five that I now had no more than twenty years of work to get through, and had put the rest behind me.

"My petty interferences—people, children, housework, public demands (but most of all, my own native undisciplined self)—bump against such reality. I continue to pound my balled fist against my own soft soul and to insist, No excuses! No excuses!"

Alexander Solzhenitsyn

Child Training

In 1956, when Valerie was nearly a year old, Mother sent me these excellent principles from Matthew Henry (1662-1714):

Proverbs 19:18 "Chasten thy son while there is hope, and let not thy soul spare for his crying." Parents are here cautioned against the foolish indulgence of their children, that are untoward and viciously inclined, and that discover such an ill temper of mind

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as is not likely to be cured but by severity.

1. Do not say that it is all in good time to correct them. No, as soon as ever there appears a corrupt disposition in them, check it immediately, before it gets head [sic] and takes root, and is hardened into a habit; *chasten thy son while there is hope*, for, perhaps if he be let alone awhile, he will be past hope, and a much greater chastening will not do that which now a lesser would effect. It is easier plucking up weeds as soon as they spring up, and the bullock that is designed for the yoke should be betimes [before it is too late] accustomed to it.

2. Do not say that it is a pity to correct them, and that because they cry and beg to be forgiven, you cannot find in your heart to do it; if the point will be gained without correction well and good; but if you find as it often proves, that you are forgiving them once, upon a dissembled [false, counterfeit] repentance, and promise of amendment, does but embolden them to offend again, especially if it be a thing in itself sinful, as lying, swearing, ribaldry, stealing or the like, in such a case put on resolution, and *let not thy soul spare for his crying*. It is better that he should cry under thy rod, than under the sword of the magistrate, or, which is more fearful, that of divine vengeance.

Family Devotions

A reader asks me for suggestions for devotions for families with older children. I am very thankful to have grown up in a home where family devotions were held every morning *and* evening—without regard to our ages. Few families do that today. Few did it in “my day,” but my father took seriously the command of Deuteronomy 6:5-7, “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up.”

Every morning after breakfast we went into the living room for what my father called “Prayers.” The routine was always the same, even though there was a sixteen-year span between the oldest and youngest. Top priority was learning to sit still. The baby on Mother’s lap was not exempt from that lesson. We were reminded that the same applied at the table, in the car (seatbelts were unknown) and in church. It seems to be taken for granted today that children cannot be quiet.

Some folks even think it would be cruel to expect it!

We began with a hymn. Either Dad or Mother played the piano, and we all sang, all the stanzas. As a result, we learned theology quite painlessly from those great old hymns, and they are in our heads and in our hearts to this day.

Then followed a short reading from Hurlbut’s *Story of the Bible* (we wore out three copies, I think). We then went to our knees. Daddy prayed, including each of us and others. He ended his prayer with, “In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, who taught us to pray,” whereupon we joined in praying the Lord’s Prayer.

Were we model children who paid attention to all this? Far from it! But it is wonderful how much sinks in by “osmosis”! We know dozens, perhaps hundreds, of hymns by heart. On the rare occasions when we get together, we sing—in parts. We have little trouble locating things in the Bible. We were greatly blessed in having parents who prayed.

I was with my daughter and son-in-law the first day they attempted “family” prayers. Their first child was two or three days old. Predictably, he set up an ear-splitting shriek as soon as Walt opened the Bible. Walt gave it a few tries, then sent the Bible skidding across the table. “Forget it! No way can we have family devotions with *this* going on!” Stick with it, I told him. You’ll be astounded at your children’s retention. Trust God for them.

Unequal Marriage?

If your spouse is an unbeliever or an uncommitted believer, you may receive a small bimonthly publication from Mary B. Wine, Box 2611, Kokomo, IN 46904. To subscribe she asks only for a donation. For a sample, please send one first-class stamp.

I Can Never Be Thrown Away

“God has created me to do Him some definite service; He has committed some work to me which He has not committed to another. I have my mission.... I am necessary for His purpose. I may never know it in this life, but I shall be told it in the next.... I am a link in a chain, a bond of connection between persons. He has not created me for naught. I shall do good, I shall do His work; I shall be an angel of peace, a preacher of truth in my own place, while not intending it, if I do but keep His commandments and serve Him in my calling.

"Therefore I will trust Him. Whatever, wherever I am, I can never be thrown away. If I am in sickness, my sickness may serve Him; in perplexity, my perplexity may serve Him. If I am in sorrow, my sorrow may serve him. My perplexity, or sickness, or sorrow may be necessary causes of some great end, which is quite beyond us. He does nothing in vain; He may prolong my life, He may shorten it; He knows what He is about. He may take away my friends, He may throw me among strangers, He may make me feel desolate, make my spirits sink, hide the future from me—still He knows what He is about!"

John Henry Newman

The Shepard Family's Move

Last November my son-in-law, Walter D. Shepard III, accepted the pastorate of the Harrison Bridge Road Church in Simpsonville, South Carolina, of which Dr. Jay Adams had been the pastor. Dr. Adams, a well-known author and teacher who has been a mentor to Walt for a number of years, is in his mid-seventies now and has not the best of health. Walt was happy in the church he had served for ten years in Orange County, California and was surprised to receive Dr. Adams' invitation. But consultation with his wife and family, his own congregation, the people in Simpsonville, and, of course, lots of praying and seeking the will of God convinced him that this was His call. Valerie and the children are happy at the prospect of being in a small town, a great contrast to the "other world" of southern California.

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ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

Travel Schedule March–May 1998

March 8 Denver, Colo., Radio 910 KPOF, Belleview Community Chapel, (303)428-0910.

March 13, 14 San Juan Capistrano, Calif., Assemblies of God, Judy Rachels, (714)252-8695.

March 16 Modesto, Calif., Calvary Chapel, Karin Kyle, (209)521-5501.

March 23, 24 Taping for *Gateway to Joy*.

April 3, 4 Orlando, Fla., Calvary Chapel of Merritt Island, Linda Wolfe, (407)452-8387.

April 15, 16 Caister, England, FIEC, Malcolm Laver, 011-44-181-681-7422.

April 17 Hertford, England, All Nations College.

April 18 Harrow, England, Rayners Lane Baptist Church, 011-44-181-868-8584 or 427-6576.

May 2 Cincinnati, Ohio, Christian Medical and Dental Society, (423)844-1000.

May 3 Bristol, Tenn., The Cameo Theatre, Jennifer Berkley, (423)878-6279 (8:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M. EST).

May 8, 9 Wheaton College 50th class reunion.

May 10 Jacksonville, Fla., First Baptist Church, Guinell Freeman, (904)366-1242.

May 15, 16 Toronto, Canada, Focus on the Family, Dr. Bruce Gordon, (604)684-8333.

May 23 Memphis, Tenn., Victory Valley Auxiliary, Chryll Vollmer, (901)526-8403.

May 30 Mobile, Ala., Mrs. John Blachscher, Dauphin Way Baptist Church, (334) 342-3456.

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The World Must Be Shown

(A commencement speech)

One afternoon about forty years ago I was sitting in a hammock in a little thatched house in eastern Ecuador. On the floor sat Minkayi, an Auca Indian, telling a story into the plastic microphone of a little old-fashioned tape recorder. This is what he was saying:

“One morning I had gone a short distance in my canoe when I heard the knocking of another man’s canoe pole. It was Dabu. ‘Are you going home?’ I asked him. ‘Yes,’ he said, ‘Naenkiwi says those foreigners are cannibals.’ Later I found Gikita in his house. He said he was going to get some spears. My spears were not far away. Soon I found Gikita and Dyuvi putting red dye on their spears, getting them ready. ‘Naenkiwi says those foreigners are going to eat us,’ they told me. I still had not dyed my spears, but when afternoon came they had all dyed theirs and I was just sitting there. Finally I told my mother to go down and bring my spears up so I could dye them. ‘Just bring a few,’ I said, and off she went. I asked Naenkiwi how many spears he had. ‘Two hard ones and two lightweight ones,’ he said.”

Minkayi’s story ran to six pages. He got pretty excited, telling me how he and five other men had ambushed five white men one afternoon on the Curaray River. He described the journey to the beach, up hills, across rivers, through an old clearing where he had once seen a jaguar, finally reaching the place where a small airplane had landed. He said one of those foreigners was walking up and down the beach, calling out, “Puinani! E ati puinani!” which means “Come! Come as friends! Come without harm!”

“But we rushed at them with our spears and war cries,” Minkayi said, making the vivid sound of spears striking living flesh. He spared none of the details of the long struggle, the suffering, and the Indians’ final victory when five white men lay dead.

It seemed impossible to me that this cheerful, friendly man had killed my husband. He picked up Jim Elliot’s picture from the top of the kerosene box that

served as my bookcase. “Look at him smiling at us!” he said. “If we had known him as we know you, he’d be sitting here, smiling at us today! A *cannibal!* We thought he was a cannibal!” The absurdity of it struck him funny. A big grin broke over his face.

There was nothing new to Minkayi about killing people. He and the others had done it countless times. If you think you are going to be eaten you protect yourself somehow. I thought of Jesus’ words when He was about to leave His disciples: “The time is coming when anyone who kills you will suppose he is performing a religious duty. They will do these things because they do not know either the Father or me. I have told you all this so that when the time comes for it to happen you may remember my warning. I have told you this to guard you against the breakdown of your faith.”

What a tale to tell to guard against the *breakdown of faith!* And what a strange way to begin a commencement address, you may be thinking. What you want is encouragement, not discouragement. It was what Jesus’ disciples wanted too—a few encouraging words, some guarantees that the future was going to be great.

I remember my graduation fifty-three years ago. I was so nervous I broke out in hives and never heard a word the speaker said. You’re graduating now, thank God. You’ve done a lot of work and your faithful, worn-out teachers have spent a great deal of energy and patience on you. Your parents breathe a sigh of relief that you’ve made it through this institution—and then they catch their breath a little bit thinking of the next one!

It is my heart’s desire today to give you something to hold onto for the rest of your lives. Jesus did not want His disciples to put their faith in the wrong places. He reminded them in no uncertain terms that things happen—things we don’t plan. What kind of certainty, what sort of protection, can we expect if we’re realistic? The world talks about “securities.” That usually means money in some form or other, and we all know that money insures nobody against anything. What they call life insurance is really death

insurance—death and taxes are two things we can count on. You may insure your house and it gets robbed or burned down or the roof blows off or termites chew it to bits. You pay for health insurance and then you get some weird disease that isn't covered. Somebody rear-ends your car and sues you because there was ice on the road.

But what about us Christians? Have we some guarantees? If we really pray hard enough and go to church and read the Bible and all that, don't we have a right to expect that the worst disasters will miss us and things won't be quite so bad for us as they are for everybody else?

For just a few minutes I want you to think. I want you to get both oars in the water. How would you answer a question about the Christian's guarantees? Once upon a time some Indians sharpened up their spears and then used them on some Christian men who had hoped to give them the Word of God. Those men knew that death was a possibility. They sang a hymn together: "We rest on Thee, our Shield and our Defender." The territory was dangerous but they went in obedience to Jesus Christ, trusting that He would give them success.

But Aucas know how to throw spears. Could God have prevented those spears from reaching their targets? Yes. Did He? No. Mystery is something we must all come to terms with. "If God were small enough to be understood He would not be big enough to be worshipped" (Evelyn Underhill).

I tell you this story, young men and women, to guard you against the breakdown of your faith. Dr. J.I. Packer says, "The popular idea of faith is of a certain obstinate optimism: the hope, tenaciously held in the face of trouble, that the universe is fundamentally friendly and things may get better." I would have had to be an optimist of the most incorrigible obstinacy to have held onto that sort of faith in the dark times of my own life. It has been the faith of the Son of God who loves me and gave Himself for me that has held me in the darkest valleys and the hottest fires and the deepest waters. He too went down to death for our sakes. He too was misunderstood, doubted, hated, and finally nailed to a Cross.

Packer says faith requires a going out to, laying hold of, and resting upon the object of its confidence. What we need to see today is that if the object of our confidence is the blueprint we've worked out for ourselves, we're in trouble. If the blueprint doesn't work, the faith

doesn't work. If what we call "our faith" means what we think God ought to do about things, it won't last long if He doesn't do it our way.

"Blind unbelief is sure to err and scan His work in vain.

God is His own interpreter, and He will make it plain."

William Cowper

How do you suppose Daniel felt about having to be dumped into that den of starving lions? What about his friends who were tied up and heaved into a blazing furnace? What about Paul, who was beaten with rods, stoned, shipwrecked, and imprisoned? Well, of course, the end of those stories was happy—the lions didn't eat Daniel, the furnace didn't burn up Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, and Paul survived—for a while. But then there was John the Baptist who had his head chopped off because he was obeying his Lord and Master. Stephen was stoned to death for preaching the gospel. The book of Hebrews tells about people who were—*get this*—sawn in two because of their faith! And shall we forget the price our sinless Savior paid for our redemption? He was captured, blindfolded, slapped, punched, whipped, stripped, crowned with thorns, and nailed to a wooden Cross with real iron nails. Think about that.

The real question we need to face, ladies and gentlemen, is exactly what a Christian is supposed to do when terrible things happen. There are two choices, and only two: we can trust God or we can defy Him. We believe that God is God, He's still got the whole world in His hands and knows exactly what He's doing, or we must believe that He is not God and we are at the awful mercy of mere chance.

Jesus did not promise physical safety for His disciples. He did not expect it for Himself. Just before His death He said, "I shall not talk much longer with you, for the Prince of this world approaches." You know who that was: Satan, of course—coming to gloat over Jesus' capture and betrayal and crucifixion. It was going to

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happen for sure. Jesus knew it. But listen to what He said next: "He has no rights over me, but the world must be shown that I love the Father and do exactly what He commands."

Satan was given permission—for a while. Satan is allowed to do appalling things today too. For a while. We tremble in our boots thinking about crime, pollution, inflation, and the Great Computer Crash that's supposed to happen on the stroke of midnight, December 31, 1999. Divine permission is given for many frightening things—for a while. But Christians know what the end will be—the kingdoms of this world will become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever.

But in the meantime, Class of 1997, the world must be shown. There has to be living proof that some men and some women today actually love God and will do exactly what He says. In the past six weeks my husband and I have been in India, China, and Mongolia. In each country we met people who, because of the story of five American missionaries killed by the Aucas, have committed themselves unreservedly to Christ.

Faith is a decision. It is not a deduction from the facts around us. We would not look at the world of today and logically conclude that God loves us. It doesn't always look as though He does. Faith is not an instinct. It is certainly not a feeling—feelings don't help much when you're in the lions' den or hanging on a wooden Cross.

Faith is not inferred from the happy way things always work. It is an act of the will, a choice, based on the unbreakable Word of a God who cannot lie, and who showed us what love and obedience and sacrifice mean, in the person of Jesus Christ.

So while we live and work, the world must be shown, uncompromisingly, clearly, unapologetically—as Daniel and Paul and five young missionaries and Jesus Himself demonstrated—that we love God and will by His grace obey.

For most of you it will not mean lions' dens or Auca spears or imprisonment, but it will mean a daily, faithful, humble, glad obedience to the same Lord who has held steady all those who commit themselves to Him. It will mean the choice between faith and unbelief, between being honest on your income tax or cheating just a little bit, between keeping your virginity until marriage or giving it away to somebody you aren't married to. It will mean the willingness to stand against what everybody's doing and what everybody says is OK.

Prayer for a Perplexed Graduate

"O my God, Thou and Thou alone art all-wise and all-knowing! I believe that Thou knowest just what is best for me. I believe that Thou lovest me better than I love myself, that Thou art all-wise in Thy Providence and all-powerful in Thy protection. I thank Thee, with all my heart, that Thou hast taken me out of my own keeping, and hast bidden me to put myself in Thy hands. I can ask nothing better than this, to be in Thy care, not my own. O my Lord, through Thy grace, I will follow Thee withersoever Thou goest, and will not lead the way. I will wait on Thee for Thy guidance, and, on obtaining it, I will act in simplicity and without fear. And I promise that I will not be impatient, if at any time I am kept by Thee in darkness and perplexity; nor will I complain or fret if I come into any misfortune or anxiety. Amen."

It will mean the surrender of what the world calls safety and an acceptance of whatever sacrifice and suffering God may choose to send. He is not finished with any of us. He assigns me new lessons every day. When I have disobeyed it has led to misery. When I have obeyed it has brought me joy. The story is God's story. The end will be glorious beyond our wildest dreams—for those who put their trust in Him.

Do it! Choose Jesus Christ! Deny yourself, take up the Cross, and follow Him—for the world must be shown. The world must see, in earnest young men and women, a discernible, visible, startling difference.

Put your trust in Him. Not in people or circumstances or dreams or programs or plans, not in any human notion of what will or won't happen, but in the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, of Daniel and all the others—the God whose Son went through the darkest valleys so that you and I might be saved. If somebody was willing to give his life for you, would you trust him? Of course you would. Jesus loved you then. He loves you now. He'll be loving you every minute of every hour of every day of the rest of your life, and no matter what happens, nothing can separate you from that love. I know it's true. I have found that sure and steadfast Refuge in my Lord and Savior—the only real safety—the Everlasting Arms! I'm an old woman now—not just "getting older," as they say—I "done got

there"! That gives me an advantage. I've walked with God longer than you have. I know He keeps His promises.

So now you're graduating. The Prince of this world approaches. He has no rights over you—but the world must be shown that you love the Lord and will do exactly what He says.

God keep you, every one of you, from fear, from faltering, and from faithlessness. Remember that the world is watching. What sort of man, what sort of woman, do they see?

(This talk was given in 1997 at Grenville Christian College—a boarding/high school in Brockville, Ontario, Canada.)

Looking unto Jesus

This is the title of a lovely little booklet by Theodore Monod. A radio listener writes, "I went ahead with plans to leave my husband and children. When the booklet came all I had to do was read the back cover and I was completely overwhelmed with the awful reality of what I was about to do, and the wonderful reality of what surrendering my plans to God could do. I returned my whole heart to the Lord and my family, seeing in a new way my sinfulness and His redemption. Though I've been a Christian for many years, the quality of my relationship with Him has been very different ever since the booklet arrived.... There is now peace between us and patience. I'm still praying for joy, but am willing to wait." You can obtain the booklet by sending one dollar and a self-addressed stamped (32 cents) envelope to Gateway to Joy, Box 82500, Lincoln NE 68501.

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May 23 Memphis, Tenn., Victory Valley Auxiliary, Chyrll Vollmer, (901)526-8403.

May 30 Mobile, Ala., Mrs. John Blachscher, Dauphin Way Baptist Church, (334)342-3456.

June 4, 5 Syracuse, N.Y., N.Y.S. Home School Convention, Sharon Grimes, (315)496-2410.

June 6 Swansea, Mass., Grace Gospel Church, (508)675-7844.

June 13 South Bend, Ind., University of Notre Dame, 800-338-2445.

June 24 St. Louis, Mo., North American Christian Convention, (513)598-6222.

July-August No engagements.

Hymn for Grace at Table

(tune: Sun of My Soul)

We give Thee thanks with grateful hearts.
Grant that the strength this food imparts
Be only used to do Thy will;
Thy pleasure, Lord, in us fulfil.

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The Elisabeth Elliot Newsletter

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Verbal Authority

The Bible tells us that children are to obey their parents. In our many travels Lars and I observe that few young parents have any idea that a child *can* be taught to obey. Some of them, alas, feel that it would damage their little egos to correct them. But God's word is clear: "He who spares the rod hates his son, but he who loves him is careful to discipline him." But how to begin?

A young couple asked me to help them learn to discipline their 10-month-old son. We met in a restaurant and, to my dismay, they brought the child with them. My heart sank for I had hoped they would leave him at home so that we might have uninterrupted conversation.

The child was put in a high chair (the kind without an attached tray) at one end of the table. His mother and father were on his right on one side of the table, I at his left. The couple chatted to me and another guest who was at my left. It did not take long before the baby grabbed his mother's fork. Without a word she took it from his hand. He looked around, then reached across her plate for her knife. She took it away. Next was the spoon. She said *nothing*, simply took it out of his hand. He cried, pouted, waited a short time, then reached for her water glass.

By this time the mother was exasperated and helpless. She called the waitress, asked for a glass of milk and some crackers for the child, while the adults read the menu and the child fussed. When he had finished with crackers and milk he began to eye my spoon. Slowly he moved his left hand toward it. I simply lowered my face to the level of his, looked him kindly in the eye, and said quietly, "Jeremy, no." He withdrew his hand at once and looked at his mother.

She was oblivious. It was evident that she did not understand verbal authority, supposing that the child was too young to *understand* since he was too young to *talk*. A child is usually farther ahead in understanding than most parents realize. Not once had she said no.

The meal progressed with some conversation and further grappings between mother and child. Every now and then the child eyed me, then finally began very slowly to move his hand once again toward my spoon. This time all I did was look him steadily in the eye. I said nothing. He looked away, pouted, and withdrew his hand.

Jeremy had never seen me before, but he recognized verbal authority. On his right were two helpless young parents, earnestly wanting to do right by their child (or they would not have asked for my help), yet never addressing him by name, never issuing the simple command "No." The interesting thing about the whole scene was that this baby clearly understood the authority on his left, and just as clearly understood that there was no such thing on his right. I am afraid the parents failed to see the lesson I had hoped to show them.

What infinite pains parents would avoid if they would only start early to teach children the meaning of *verbal* authority. As soon as a child can crawl, usually around seven or eight months, he will immediately begin to touch things he ought not to touch: books, the TV, knickknacks on the coffee table, etc. He will very likely make a beeline for the very thing he is to be taught not to touch. If parents "child proof" the house, putting everything out of the baby's reach, they are teaching him that he may touch anything *within* reach. What happens then when he goes to the grocery store or to his Aunt Susie's house? Disaster! "No" and "Come" must be taught at once. Note four things that will help:

1. Speak the child's name in a calm tone of voice.
2. Establish eye contact
3. Issue a one word command, "No" or "Come."
4. Do not repeat.

The initial lesson will require repetition. It might be wise simply to set aside a whole uninterrupted hour to teach the lesson. Think what infinite pains will be averted for the rest of his growing-up years if he learns thoroughly that Daddy and Mama mean exactly what they say, and they mean it the first time. But if a parent makes a habit of repeating commands, he is training the child to delay his obedience. My parents made it clear to us that delayed obedience would be treated as disobedience.

If the children are older and things seem to have gotten a bit out of hand I suggest that you call a family council. Gather everybody together and explain to the children that their parents have made some bad mistakes. Confess to them that you are very sorry about this, you realize that you have not created as happy a home as you want to have, but you have now learned some things and are going to start over. (Your children will be astonished that parents, too, have to learn things!) Then down on your knees, everyone! Pray for the Lord's forgiveness and ask Him to help you to be what mothers and fathers are supposed to be to their children, and to help the children to do what they ought to do, quickly and cheerfully. Perhaps you will ask each child to pray briefly.

The next step is to make it clear that you are going to *expect* your children to obey you. It is amazing what can result from a clear understanding of the expectations. Depending on the ages of the children, you might want to illustrate the necessity of obedience by referring to the coach of an athletic team—he calls the shots, the players do exactly what he says. If they don't, there's no game. Or point to traffic laws which make it possible for everybody to move in an orderly way, according to the speed laws, and on the right side of the street. If one person runs through a red light he could kill somebody.

Do not despair! Yes, you long to have a peaceful home and it seems that our adversary the devil is continually "walking about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour" (1 Peter 5:8). But we have a Mighty Fortress, a God who loves us and promises to help us. Things should be done in a Christian home "decently and in order" (1 Corinthians 14:40).

Drop Thy still dews of quietness
Till all our strivings cease;
Take from our souls the strain and stress;
And let our *ordered* lives confess
The beauty of Thy peace.

John Greenleaf Whittier

I know it is possible to have a peaceful home. My parents, who had six children, made it so. My friends Joe and Arlita Winston, parents of five and now grandparents of twenty-three, ordered their home in such a way as to eliminate chaos. Thousands have done it.

"Though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ" (2 Corinthians 10:3-6).

Jesus Christ has overcome the world. He can demolish the strongholds which the enemy may have established in your home. My great-grandfather, Henry Clay Trumbull, reared eight children. He wrote a book, *Hints on Child Training* (available from *Gateway To Joy*, 1-800-759-4JOY), in which he says, "It is a parent's privilege and it is a parent's duty to make his children, by God's blessing, to be

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and to do what they should be and do, rather than what they would like to be and do.”

Another excellent book is *To Train Up a Child*, by Michael and Debi Pearl (\$6.00 inc. postage. Make check payable to The Church at Cane Creek, 1000 Pearl Rd., Pleasantville, TN 37147).

Vance Havner, that delightful old Southern preacher, had a good definition of the discipline which works best with a small child: “the posterior application of superior force.”

“Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight” (Proverbs 3:5,6). Be assured that I am praying for you. May the Lord give you His own peace, and the wisdom you need each day as you turn to Him for help.

One Summer Morning

It was very early. The sun had not risen, and the sea was palest mauve and silver. There was a solitary sailboat with one very tall, slim sail that looked like a shining spear. All was calm, and the little waves curled their white fringes slowly around the black rocks. One lone fisherman stood in his accustomed place near the edge of a great slab of granite. It is our usual habit to rise around five o'clock, and we can count on him to be there every summer morning, waiting, quietly waiting for that big striper that may win the prize offered by the city of Gloucester each year. Occasionally my quiet time is on the balcony and I am moved by a stanza of John Ellerton's hymn, “The Day Thou Gavest”—“As on each continent and island the dawn brings on another day, the voice of prayer is never silent, nor die the strains of praise away.” Isn't it a lovely thought that at every moment of every night and day someone is praying? And the prayers of all the saints, we are told in Revelation, ascend to God like incense. Imagine! An angel with a golden censer stands at the altar and the smoke of the incense, together with the prayers of the saints, goes up before God from the angel's hand.

Teach Us to Pray

Lord Jesus, Intercessor, O teach us how to pray:
Not wave-like, rising, falling, in fitful clouds of
spray.

The mighty tides of ocean a deeper secret know,
Their currents undefeated move whatever winds
may blow.

Lord Jesus, Intercessor, Creator of the sea,
Teach us the tide's great secret of quiet urgency.
Spindrift of words we ask not. But, Lord, we seek to
know

The conquering patience of the tides whatever
winds may blow.

Amy Carmichael

From an Over-the-Road Trucker

Jim Fry (one of a number of truckers who listen to *Gateway To Joy*) wrote: “I'm an over-the-road truck driver living in Ohio. The Lord is very good to my family, getting me home regularly to be with my wife and daughter. You did a program a little way back about God's timing of things. How true that is! To me things don't just happen. My wife says, ‘That's not *odd*—that's *God*.’ I hear you whenever I can, searching the stations. One week you talked about poems every day. Having never been much on poems, I listened anyway, just to get to hear you. (By the way—you and I talk a lot in my truck, we get along great, and are of course on a first name basis!) On Monday I picked you up again and you said this week would be another week of poems. The first thing I thought was, ‘Not another week of poems!’ As soon as I thought that you said you were sure there was a truck driver out there somewhere thinking, ‘Oh no, not another week of poems!’ I'm sure at that time the other motorists on the road were staring as I roared in laughter, slapping my knee. There are other times driving down the road straining to see through tears flowing like streams.”

Prayer

“O Lord, Strength of our life, be Thou, I entreat Thee, our Strength unto life eternal: our Strength when temptation assails us, for Thou art stronger than our strongest enemy; our Strength when we go down into the valley of the shadow of death, for the last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. By Thy Rod and Thy Staff comfort us. Amen.”

Christina G. Rossetti (1830–1895)

My Gracious Lord

Thank You, O Divine Redeemer, that:
My hurt heart You have captivated!
My hard head You have penetrated!
My listless life You have renovated!
My sinning soul You have reinstated!
In the name of Your only-begotten Son and my
Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.

Beth Carpenter (a listener to *Gateway To Joy*)

“He has kept us hitherto. He will take care of us tomorrow. Either He will shield us from suffering or He will give us unfailing strength to bear it.”

St. Francis de Sales

Travel Schedule August – December 1998

August No engagements.

September 4-6 Tulsa, Okla., Christ in Youth, Tony Allmoslecher, (417)781-2273.

September 10-11 Taping for *Gateway To Joy*.

September 19 Myrtle Beach, S.C., Grand Strand Women's Day, Ruth Walker, (803)249-2312.

September 25-29 Toalmás, Hungary.

October 16 Grass Valley, Calif., Calvary Chapel, Vicki Sullivan, (916)268-2539.

October 17 Diamond Bar, Calif., Calvary Chapel, Golden Springs, (909)396-1884.

November 3-5 Asheville, N.C., The Cove, (704)298-2092.

November 7 Anderson, S.C., Family Life, Kit Coons, (864)225-2456.

November 13 Reading, Pa., ACTV, fall banquet, George Keitel, phone/fax (610) 378-1378.

November 16-17 Taping for *Gateway To Joy*.

December 29 Washington, D.C., Chinese Mission, David Chow, (717)687-8564.

December 30-31 Orlando, Fla., Campus Outreach Conference, (706)823-2460.

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Is He a God of Love?

This is an ancient question. Job said, “Your hands shaped me and made me. Will you now turn and destroy me? Remember that you molded me like clay. Will you now turn me to dust again?” And the psalmist cried, “Has his unflinching love vanished forever? Has his promise failed for all times? Has God forgotten to be merciful? Has he in anger withheld his compassion?”

Who of us has not at times wondered if anyone was Out There? Are we utterly at the mercy of mere chance? Is there, after all, no care, no order, no purpose, no meaning? Are we adrift in a sea of nothingness, at the mercy of chance, mishap, calamity, misfortune, disaster, catastrophe—undesigned and unintended?

Surely such agonizing thoughts must have plagued Joseph as he lay for years in prison. What was God up to all that time? Did Joseph question His wisdom, His love, His very existence? Did he ask God why He had permitted his brothers to hate him? They had planned to murder him, then, finding they could make some money, sold him into slavery. A faithful servant, he was lied about by an adulterous woman and because of her went to prison. His fellow prisoners promised to put in a good word for him, but forgot. But when the great famine came Joseph had by then been released and elevated to the position of prime minister and was therefore able to save his hateful brothers and his old father from starvation. What a strange concatenation of events!

Have you ever thought about the fact that the birth of Jesus led to the slaughter of countless baby boys? That Jesus prayed all night before choosing the disciples—and Judas was one of His choices? That Peter’s deliverance from prison led to the guard’s death? That Elymas’s opposition to Paul led to his own blindness—but *then* to the proconsul’s salvation?

God does indeed move in mysterious ways. The results can sometimes bewilder us, but we can rest assured that *everything* that happens fits into God’s pattern for good, to those who love God. That pattern is in process, every minute of every day. Romans 8:28 and 29 answer our desperate questions and make God’s purpose as clear as it can be to us mortals. He is shaping us into the image of Christ. What does it take to make an image? Michelangelo made it sound quite simple: take a block of marble and knock off whatever doesn’t look like David. God’s shaping process cannot be painless, for it takes the powerful blows of a hammer, the careful chip-pings of a chisel, and the patient rasping of a file. Most of us have known some hammer blows in our lifetime, some lesser treatments we could call chip-pings, and probably nearly every day the rasping of that file which is meant to smooth off the rough corners and edges. It is a loving Father who shapes us, and only He knows precisely what is needed to conform each individual into the image of His beloved Son. May He make us teachable!

The Weaver

My life is but a weaving
Between my Lord and me,
I cannot choose the colors—
He worketh steadily.

Ofttimes He weaveth sorrow,
And I in foolish pride
Forget He sees the upper
And I, the underside.

Not till the loom is silent
And the shuttles cease to fly
Shall God unroll the canvas
And explain the reason why.

The dark threads are as needful
In the Weaver's skillful hand
As the threads of gold and silver
In the pattern He has planned.
Grant Colfax Tullar

Don't Do It

Today's so-called freedom of choice often leads not to freedom but to crushing bondage. Take, for example, the freedom the world offers in its motto JUST DO IT! A radio listener wrote of her own devastating experience of those shackles, and begged me to pass on her story.

"At seventeen years of age I chose to rebel against God and entered a relationship with my boyfriend that delivered not happiness but guilt and grief. I 'fell in love' and rather than trust God, I went after the object of my desire with all the wiles and passions of a teen-age romantic. At first what we did 'felt good'—for the moment. I tried pushing my guilt into a closet and shutting the door, but kept on doing what came naturally. I remember thinking even then, 'What will you say to your daughter some day if she asks "Were you a virgin when you got married?" 'Over the years that question has come to mind time and time again.

"The day before the wedding my fiance forced himself on me, and never having said NO before, I felt helpless to stop him. All these years later I still feel the hurt and violation of that moment. There was no tenderness, no love, only desire, lust, passion.

"How could I have known the repercussions through the years of that one decision on my part to have my own way and not God's? I realize what a precious, holy gift we so thoughtlessly threw away in our youth. And now I have had to ask my daughter, 'Are you pregnant?' and hear her tearful reply 'Yes.' I cannot express in words the deep wound to my soul this has caused. Although I did not make her decisions for her, I see that by my actions and choices so many years ago I left her spiritually vulnerable to Satan's onslaught.

"If only I could look each teen-age girl in the eye and tell her, 'There are consequences to every moral decision you make, there are repercussions

that will follow you the rest of your life and into the next generation!'

"How I yearn to look each teenage boy in the eye and tell him 'Be strong. Be a real man. Trust God's word, discipline yourself, don't give in to youthful lust and trade your birthright of godly love for a mess of pottage that will turn to ashes in your heart.'

"I have learned too late the truth I heard a man of God say: 'Love can always wait to give. Lust can never wait to get.'

"And you know—it's funny (*sad*) not a single time did those stolen moments of passion and lust bring real pleasure to me, either physically or emotionally."

The Bible is perfectly clear on this matter. God has given the guidelines which lead to true fulfillment and joy.

"Brothers, we instructed you how to live in order to please God, as in fact you are living. Now we ask you and urge you in the Lord Jesus to do this more and more. For you know what instructions we gave you by the authority of the Lord Jesus. It is God's will that you should be sanctified: that you should avoid sexual immorality; that each of you should learn to control his own body in a way that is holy and honorable, not in passionate lust like the heathen, who do not know God.... God did not call us to be impure, but to live a holy life. Therefore, he who rejects this instruction does not reject man but God, who gives you his Holy Spirit" (1 Thesalonians 4:1-8).

The Better Way

"I have been dating a wonderful man for about three months. We read most of *Quest for Love* together, and were continually amazed at the examples of

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couples who did things God's way, and the heart-break of the ones who didn't. Joel [not his real name] is a perfect example of a man who knows it is his God-given responsibility to be the initiator and pursue. He did not begin his pursuit until God said, 'Now's the time,' and then he sought me gently yet persistently. After many years of being the one to display my feelings first, and being the initiator, I cannot tell you the relief and the freedom that being pursued brought to me. I never realized that in doing the pursuing, I was really going against God's perfect plan. When Joel told me he loved me, he also told me he wanted to marry me. When he declared his love, I had no problem believing him because he had already demonstrated that love to me and proved to me his intent by his actions and his constant care and interest in my life. Elisabeth, there is certainly no better way, and I'm so thankful God brought Joel into my life. He is just what I've prayed for for many years.... Thank you for being bold and honest with your readers. Godly men really do need to rise to their duty and pursue godly women. This is God's perfect plan." (Gentlemen: *Selah!*)

Hymn of Love (1 Corinthians 13)

If I have the language ever so perfectly and speak like a pundit and have not love that grips the heart, I am nothing.

If I have decorations and diplomas and am proficient in up-to-date methods and have not the touch of understanding love, I am nothing.

If I am able to worst my opponents in argument so as to make fools of them, and have not the wooing note, I am nothing.

If I have all faith and great ideals and magnificent plans and wonderful visions, and have not the love that sweats and bleeds and weeps and prays and pleads, I am nothing.

If I surrender all prospects, and leaving home and friends and comforts, give myself to the showy sacrifice of a missionary career, and turn sour and selfish amid the daily annoyances and personal slights of a missionary life, and though I give my body to be consumed in the heat and sweat and mildew of India, but have not the love that yields its rights, its coveted leisure, its pet plans, I am nothing, NOTHING.

Virtue has ceased to go out of me.

If I can heal all manner of sickness and disease, but wound hearts and hurt feelings for want of love that is kind, I am nothing.

If I write books and publish articles that set the world agape, but fail to transcribe that word of the Cross in the language of love, I am nothing.

Worse, I may be competent, busy, fussy, punctilious, and well-equipped, but like the church at Laodicea—nauseating to Christ.

(By a missionary student in Indian language school. This is from *The Prairie Overcomer*, January, 1955. I was cut to the heart as I thought back over my own attitudes during my missionary work in Ecuador. God knows I needed the above reminder today and every day.)

Definition of Sin:

A consequence of our dissatisfaction with God's design for us. (R.C. Sproul)

Recommended Reading

Killing Fields, Living Fields, by Don Cormack—an unfinished portrait of the Cambodian Church, the church that would not die. This book stunned me. It is hard to know how to say anything at all about such heroism, such uncompromising faithfulness in the midst of unspeakable suffering. It was CBC's book of the Year, 1998, published by OMF International.

An Obscure Missionary Couple

Last April John Jauchen of Help for Christian Nationals, Inc. (972-780-5909) wrote, "I was nine years old in 1956 when Jim Elliot and his four missionary companions were ambushed in the jungles of Ecuador. The photos published in LIFE magazine that January became etched in my spirit. I was never the same after that! I wanted my life to be marked with the kind of dedication those missionaries had. On a recent trip to Peru I stayed in the home of Bert Elliot (Jim's older brother) and his wife Colleen.

They arrived in Peru by boat in 1948.... Whether in a well-publicized death (thousands of North American missionaries, motivated by the Auca Indian martyrs, have reproduced themselves around the world during these past forty years) or in a relatively unknown life (Bert and Colleen's work is not well known even in mission circles), God's work will move on. His church will be built. His Son's name will be exalted around the world.

"To be included in this unstoppable eternal enterprise—what more could anyone ask in this life? I returned home deeply grateful for God's careful leading in my life, and with a prayer that the joy so real after fifty years of serving Christ would daily be as obvious in me as it was in the Elliot home during my unforgettable days of ministry with them."

A Note From Lars

Are you in need of an arm extension to make normal print readable? Sorry, none available, at least from me. Magnifiers from the local Wal-Mart might be available. Now if it's large print for you or some old relative, I can help you. At least with Elisabeth's *A Path Through Suffering*. That's good news. Bad news: it sells for \$15, not counting postage and handling by the "Gopher." Good news: the Gopher will sell it for \$12, including postage and handling. His needs are modest and he has not heard of collective bargaining nor the 40-hour work week. If you care to order something from *him* (**not from the newsletter**) it's Lars Gren, 10 Strawberry Cove, Magnolia, MA 01930.

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October 17 Diamond Bar, Calif., Calvary Chapel Golden Springs, (909) 396-1884.

November 3-5 Asheville, N.C., The Cove, (704) 298-2092.

November 7 Anderson, S.C., Family Life, Kit Coons, (864) 225-2456

Widow's Mite Mission

If you should find yourself wondering what to do with excess books, cassettes, clothing, shoes, housewares, blankets, bedding, sewing materials, seeds, tools, candles and holders, pots, pans, envelopes, stamps, toys, recipe books, S & H Green Stamps, Gold Bond and Blue Chip Stamps, or just about anything else (money is always nice, too)—I'd urge you to send it to Jim and Betsy Frazier who are doing a sacrificial and unsung work with Navajos and Sioux. Address: The Widow's Mite Mission, C-33 Box 432, Flagstaff, AZ 86004).

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A Dog's Thanksgiving

“I remember fixing the wounded leg of my dog. There was some struggle and a hurt crying but he kept licking my hand. The hand of the one who was hurting him and the hand of the one who was healing him were the same, and his endurance of the one rested in his trust in the other. Out of the depths have I cried unto Thee, O Lord.” From *This Cup*, by Addison Leitch (my second husband, who died in 1973).

There are many lessons for us in the mysterious animal world. Have we ears to hear, eyes to see, hearts to learn those sweet lessons?

Our Heavenly Healer often has to hurt us in order to heal us. We sometimes fail to recognize His mighty love in this, yet we are firmly held always in the Everlasting Arms. The dog's leg was hurting. Add's ministrations were as delicate as possible, yet they hurt too, and the loyal dog accepted them and thanked him with his eyes. Have we the humility to thank our Father for the gift of pain?

“No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it” (Hebrews 12:11). Let us give thanks!

The Test of my Love for God

What is the true test? We can sing about it, talk about it, preach about it, write poetry about it, pray about it. But Jesus spelled out the acid test: “If you love me, you will obey what I command. Whoever has my commands and obeys them, he is the one who loves me” (John 14:15 and 21). Obedience is the valid proof.

If my reaction to one who has done me wrong is less than a loving forgiveness, I simply cannot claim to love God. When we pray “Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us” we are telling God that we will receive from Him exactly the mea-

sure of forgiveness which we have willingly offered to the trespasser. Will that be enough? Will that cover our trespasses against our Savior? No, it won't, for Jesus said, “If you forgive men when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins.” This is the only petition in the Lord's prayer with a condition added. We must be careful to honor that condition. Forgive me, Lord, as I have forgiven that person who has not asked for forgiveness, that person who has ruined my marriage or my business or my chance to succeed, that person who goes on blithely as though he had done nothing wrong and couldn't care less. Will I erect a wall between him and me? Then I do the same to God. It's the same wall. Therefore I cannot obtain forgiveness. We must admit guilt—rather than hide in “an aristocracy of self-righteousness.” To be a Christian means rising out of our guilt, and being transformed by God's forgiveness.

Watchman Nee told the story of a Chinese farmer who, as soon as he became a believer, underwent a severe test to the validity of his faith. A daily task was to pump water by hand up the steep hillside. A neighbor breached the retaining bank and ran the farmer's water onto his own garden. “It is not righteous!” said the farmer to the elders in the church. “What does a Christian do in such a case?” The elders knelt with him in prayer, then thought of Jesus' words, “If someone takes your coat, give him your cloak also.” “If we do only the ‘right’ thing,” said the elders, “we are unprofitable servants. We must go beyond what is merely right.”

The next day the farmer went to work at his treadmill, pumping water for his neighbor's two strips of wet land below. He then spent the afternoon laboriously pumping water for his own garden. The neighbor, of course, was dumfounded. He questioned the Christian, and it was not long before he too was drinking the Water of Life.

A lady who had heard this story said to me, “I know why God had me come here today. I've had years of

contention with a neighbor who has been gradually encroaching on my property. I've been furious with him, and no amount of reason has helped the situation. Today I learned that I do not have to expect reason! I am going to deed to him the property he has appropriated. How simple! And what a relief!"

"We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love our brothers. Anyone who does not love remains in death" (1 John 3:14). No need to remain in death—just let go of the bitterness.

"Oh, how many times we can most of us remember when we would gladly have made any compromise with our consciences, would gladly have made the most costly sacrifices to God, if He would only have excused us from this duty of loving, of which our nature seemed utterly incapable. It is far easier to feel kindly, to act kindly, toward those with whom we are seldom brought into contact, whose tempers and prejudices do not rub against ours, whose interests do not clash with ours, than to keep up an habitual, steady, self-sacrificing love towards those whose weaknesses and faults are always forcing themselves upon us, and are stirring up our own. A man may pass good muster as a philanthropist who makes but a poor master to his servants, or father to his children" (F.D. Maurice, 1805-1872, from Mary Wilder Tileston's lovely devotional, *Daily Strength for Daily Needs*).

Count Your Blessings

When I first talked to Debbie Rettew of Greer, South Carolina, she and her husband Bill had nineteen adopted children, ten of whom were seriously handicapped. When I last talked to her, she told me that the whole family had recently traveled by van to Iowa for a convention, and upon arriving home found three more little boys who hoped to stay with them. Having lost count, I asked how many people there are in the family now. Twenty-eight, she said, counting the mother and father. "And how many bedrooms have you?" Five. A cozy place, simple, cheerful, well-ordered, peaceful, and spilling over with love—sacrificial love, filled (of course) with joys and sorrows.

Many other parents need prayer too. A four-year-old boy named Nathan, the sixth of eight children, has been having several hundred seizures per day. His mother Judy asks that we pray for the seizures to stop, for development to continue so he may walk, talk, and

be able to chew food. "He is a great joy and has been used by the Lord numerous times during his four years," says Judy. And there's Juana, whose little Mary was born without eyeballs. And so many, many others, all over the world.

Think about those children of yours who can be so rambunctious and irritating. Can they walk? Talk? Chew? See? A trustful psalmist wrote, "Lord, you have assigned me my portion and my cup; you have made my lot secure" (Psalm 16:5).

A Quieter Christmas

Advent is the four weeks preceding Christmas. It means the coming of Christ. Do we pause first to ponder that marvel, that incomprehensibly holy event, or are we more likely to forget it in the race to the mall?

"How silently, how silently the wondrous gift is given.

So God imparts to human hearts the blessings of His heaven."

Phillips Brooks,
"O Little Town of Bethlehem"

For many folks Christmastime means a great deal of hard work (or a load of guilt because they didn't do much about it!). Must we insist on giving people more things they neither want nor need? How much "stuff" is too much? "Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; a man's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions" (Luke 12:15).

Does gift giving have to be frantic? Consider the time and energy it takes to get to the mall, perhaps taking children along and (of course) feeling duty-bound to make sure they join the long line to sit on Santa's lap (and if you allow them to "believe in Santa Claus" what do the poor little tykes make of the one in the mall and the three others on the street corner?). Confronted with the stupefying array of junk calculated to subdue the courage of any loving soul, where does one

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begin? Desperation sets in. Purchases are reluctantly made. You hope the recipients will be thrilled, but there's a strong chance they'll be trekking it back to the store on December 26.

I'm really not a Scrooge. Gift-giving is a lovely thing of which I have countless times been the recipient. There are those who seem to have "an educated heart"—the ability to know just what will bring delight. If you haven't that ability, you can be pretty sure that a gift certificate, a check, or comestibles will be happily received.

May I make a timid suggestion for those who feel it a moral obligation to *buy* things? Dump the fliers and catalogues that lure you to the stores. Surely it is not necessary for *everyone* to elbow his way into the pushing, shoving throng. I would hope that some, perhaps for the first time, will try staying home. A man in the nineteenth century said, "The fretfulness of our spirits is more hurtful than the heaviness of our burden." You may be among the least frantic and harried if you simply stay home. Put on some gentle music, get out the recipe file, and bake something—a few loaves of bread, a batch of fudge sauce, some brownies. Anyone can bake brownies, and who doesn't enjoy receiving them? It's work, of course, but nowhere nearly as exhausting as shopping. One can be quiet. One can think. One might even sing some carols and pray.

Now hear this—a great suggestion. A friend told me that her family avoids all the delirium and desperation by keeping Christmas only for its spiritual significance, contemplating the wondrous story at home and worshipping at church. Then on January 6 they have a celebration with gift-giving, as the tradition of the Wise Men's arrival indicates. Think about it. Perhaps you'll try it.

The Origin of the Christmas Tree

It began in Germany more than 500 years ago. It is said that Martin Luther was walking through a forest one snowy night at Christmastime. The trees shining in the moonlight and starlight were so lovely that he chopped one down, took it home and put small candles on it to imitate what he saw in nature.

Christmas Breakfast

Try something really simple—a cup of coffee and a nice bowl of yogurt with nuts, diced fresh fruit and honey. My daughter's family tradition is a delicious baked Rome apple for each, as the *pièce de résistance*, along with the usual toast, etc.

Prayer

"O God, who makest cheerfulness the companion of strength, but apt to take wings in time of sorrow, we humbly beseech Thee that if, in Thy sovereign wisdom, Thou sendest weakness, yet for Thy mercy's sake deny us not the comfort of patience. Lay not more upon us, O heavenly Father, than Thou wilt enable us to bear; and, since the fretfulness of our spirits is more hurtful than the heaviness of our burden, grant us that heavenly calmness which comes of owning Thy hand in all things, and patience in the trust that Thou doest all things well. Amen"

Rowland Williams, 1818-1870

Postscript

I was touched but not surprised by John Jauchen's letter (in my September/October Newsletter). He had visited Bert Elliot (Jim Elliot's older brother) and his wife Colleen in Peru, and wrote of the impact their lives had had on him. "I returned home deeply grateful for God's careful leading in my life, and with a prayer that the joy so real after fifty years of serving Christ would daily be as obvious in me as it was in the Elliot home during my unforgettable days of ministry with them."

I too visited them in (I think) 1957 with my daughter Valerie, and watched with awe their cheerful self-sacrifice and genuine love for the people, a love which was clearly returned. They traveled by launch the rivers of the eastern rain forest for half of each year, taking the gospel to remote Indians, and the other half of the year by camper in the high Andes to reach mountain Quichuas with the gospel. They now live a bit more "normally" in a house in Trujillo on the coast, seldom by themselves, always hospitable to whoever turns up at the door. They teach and preach, do dental work and deliver babies, care for sick folks in

their home, travel far and wide to encourage the believers and seek for new ones. They have established several Christian schools. Never do they ask for money. Both have cancer and have been urged to move back to the states. "Why should we?" they ask. "They don't cure cancer in the states. As long as the Lord lets us, we plan to stay." I couldn't help thinking of old C.T. Studd, missionary to China and Africa. He said, "What God wants is hot hearts. Any old turnip will do for a head!"

A fellow missionary said to me, "I'm going to tell you something about your brother-in-law that you will never learn from him. He has established forty-five churches in Peru." When I repeated that to Bert and Colleen they laughed. "If you could see some of those little struggling groups ...!" God sees them.

A Note from Lars

It's that time of the year again. At times I believe the year has been shortened to 8 months. Guess some of you are in stores these days trying to find a gift for Aunt Susie, hoping that you're not giving her the same as a year or two ago or worse—sending an unused trinket back to her. She'll recognize it. Whatever, you'll be thanked for it after the 25th. I, on the other hand, can thank you prior to the 25th. Why? Because you have been so generous with your support to this newsletter. We still send to all who request it, with or without donation. For your interest, it is sent to 74 countries. May the Joy of Christmas be yours, even if you're a harried shopper—and the Peace of the Lord for the New Year.

The Elisabeth Elliot Newsletter

Servant Ministries, Inc.
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Ann Arbor, Michigan 48107-7711

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

Travel Schedule December 1998–February 1999

December 29 Washington, D.C., Chinese Mission, David Chow, (717)687-8564.

December 30-31 Orlando, Fla., Campus Outreach Conference, (706)823-2460.

January 8, 9 Phoenix, Ariz., Calvary Community Church, Leslie Martin, (602)973-4768.

January 16-20 St. Petersburg, Fla., Family Life Speaker Retreat, John Kriz, (501)223-8663.

January 29, 30 New Haven Conn., Yale University, Campus Crusade for Christ, Charmain Yun, (203) 785-1734.

February 6 Dallas, Tex., Omnipotence of Love Conference, (800) 361-0210.

February 20 Wheat Ridge, Colo., Applewood Baptist Church, Bev Green, (303) 232-9575.

February 21 Wheat Ridge, Colo., Applewood Baptist Church, Sunday school.

I was asked if I would care to be a published poet. All I needed to do was to send in a sample plus \$50 or so and I would be on my way. This honor almost went beyond my having received, on another occasion, a 1997 Certificate of Leadership from a political party. They did not tell me my area of expertise, but did let me know that they would appreciate a gift for the honor bestowed. We are not qualified to bestow honors. We try to keep a sane estimate of our own capabilities and in that we send our greetings and heartfelt thanks for 1998.

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What to Do Next

Every summer I go into the attic and clear out a few more things. Last summer I delved into the box containing all the letters I had ever written to my parents, beginning in 1941 when I went away to boarding school. Mother had carefully kept in chronological order the letters from all six of her “bairns” until 1982 when her mind lost its keen edge. It seemed rather foolish to hold on to things if one was never going to look at them again, so I pulled out the file which describes a crucial segment of my life, my first widowhood (my husband was one of five missionaries in Ecuador killed by Auca Indians on January 8, 1956). Valerie was ten months old. The only missionary on our jungle station at that time, I was strongly tempted to fear. Would I be able to make it without dishonoring my Lord? How to carry on without Jim, who had been running the station, building our house, managing the Quichua workers, teaching the new believers, working with me on Bible translation? Where to begin? What to do next?

Very likely some of you are asking yourselves this last question. An array of things you had meant to do last year were not done. Things you prayed earnestly for in 1998 did not happen as hoped. People you counted on fell by the wayside. All sorts of not-asked-for events took place. Matters that simply must be dealt with this year stare you in the face. I can't think of a better time to review that tremendous eleventh chapter of Hebrews. The word *faith* occurs twenty-eight times.

The ancients were commended for a solid faith full of hope and based on a strong certainty. As we contemplate the end of this millennium we might take an invaluable lesson from them: *obedience to God is our job. The results of that obedience are God's.*

Did Noah have private misgivings about constructing that preposterous vessel? I should think he had, but his trust outweighed his doubts. He simply

obeyed. When the Lord told Abraham to leave his country, his people, and his father's household, was he astounded? fearful? rebellious? He obeyed and went, not knowing where he was going. When called to make the supreme sacrifice of his son Isaac, did his heart leap from his chest? He reasoned that God could (and perhaps might) raise the dead. He got up early in the morning, saddled his donkey, took two servants and his son, cut enough wood for a burnt offering, and set out on a three-day journey, every step of which must have been agony. When all was prepared (including his heart, surely), he raised the knife, his trust and obedience perfected—whereupon God sent an angel with a message, “Because you have not withheld your son, your only son, I will surely bless you ...because you have obeyed me.”

Moses chose to be ill-treated along with the people of God rather than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a short time. Following the stories of more heroes in Hebrews 11 who are named, are heroes unnamed who were tortured, jeered at, flogged, chained, imprisoned, stoned, sawn in two (Think about that one!)—and on and on.

Verse 39: “These were all commended for their faith, yet none of them received what had been promised. God had planned something better for us so that *only together with us* would they be made perfect.” That stuns me. Their perfection awaits *ours*. Their names are to be linked with yours and mine. Yours, Tom, Dick, and Harry! And yours, Elisabeth.

So what on earth shall we do (if we're still here on earth) before the Year Two Thousand? The answer is given:

“Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us. Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider him who endured

such opposition from sinful men, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart” (Hebrews 12:1-3).

Are we aware that there is a race marked out for each of us? How determinedly will we run? If you are one of those who has not received what was promised, will you trust God anyway?

Help us, Lord, to get rid of whatever weighs us down, to keep our eyes fixed on Jesus, “who for the joy set before him endured the cross.”

In what form shall we expect our crosses to be presented to us in the year 1999? Something heroic, perhaps? Dramatic? Spectacular? Very unlikely for most of us, I think. John Henry Newman (1801-1890) wrote, “To take up the cross of Christ is no great action done once for all; it consists in the continual practice of small duties which are distasteful to us.” Perhaps it is simply one of those small duties, gladly tackled, that will point to what to do next. If the assignment is a fearful one, take courage from that valiant and tested old Scot named Samuel Rutherford (1600-1661): “For some it is ‘Down crosses and up umbrellas!’ but I am persuaded that we must take heaven with the wind and the rain in our faces.”

Two of the Widows

Wherever I go I am asked “What ever happened to the other four widows?” People want to know how we “coped,” did we struggle, etc. I wrote to the four asking each to send a brief reply. So far I have heard from two. Marj Saint Van Der Puy wrote first:

“Nate’s three children have grown up to love the Lord. They have all married Christians and their nine children have all trusted Christ as their Savior.

“Struggles? Not that I’m aware of. Steve, when five years old, said, ‘I know why my Daddy got to go to heaven before we did. He loved the Lord more than we did.’

“I ‘coped’ by believing God makes no mistakes—that His ways are higher than ours—and trusting His promise for widows and orphans.

“Yes, I remarried after ten and a half years as a widow. I married a widower with three children—Abe Van Der Puy, president of HCJB World Radio.

“My daughter Kathy married Ross Drown and they serve with Mission Aviation. Son Steve is a business man turned missionary to the Aucas. Son Phil teaches in a Christian school.

“Books about Nate are *Through Gates of Splendor*, Elisabeth Elliot, Tyndale House; *Jungle Pilot*, Russell Hitt, Discovery House; *Tale of the Yellow Woodbee*, Dave and Neta Jackson, Bethany House; *Nate Saint*, Janet and Geoff Benge, YWAM Publishers.”

Olive Fleming Liefeld wrote, “My book, *Unfolding Destinies*, Discovery House, the story of my husband Pete, tells of God’s leading in spite of our human struggles as we tried to determine God’s will. His death was not the end of my life. At first it was very hard for me to cope with not only grief over Pete’s death but two miscarriages which left me childless. I did not know what to do. I had been in Ecuador only a short time. Because many people were praying for us and certainly because of the Lord’s grace, I was able to get through the years that followed. There were those who encouraged, comforted, and gave wise counsel. I returned to my home in Seattle. My first few years were busy with speaking engagements and working with young people. Busyness did not bring healing, it only kept the wounds open. Even time did not bring healing. It was up to me to trust God. My acceptance of His ultimate purpose in the death of the men, even though I did not understand it, finally brought peace.

“Three and a half years after Pete was killed I married Walter Liefeld, who was studying for his doctorate and pastoring a small church. Later he was asked to teach at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School in Deerfield, Illinois. For thirty-two years he was a professor of New Testament. We have had a ministry separately and together over the years, and even in retirement there are still many opportunities. The Lord did lead and bless, and continues to bring blessing into my life. We have three grown children and five grandchildren. Walt and I were with Marj and Abe last March for a few days. In May we had board meetings to attend in Seattle so I went a few days early to spend time with Marilou. We had a great time. When will we see you?”

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Two Old Letters

An aged shut-in named Ruth Hyde of Memphis wrote to me in April 1956 with this story: An admiral in the Navy, stationed in Italy, read the *Life* edition of the martyrdom of five missionaries. Several weeks later in an accident at sea he was out on a life raft. Suddenly Jim Elliot's words came back to him: "When it comes time to die, make sure that all you have to do is die." He realized he was not at all ready to die, and he prayed that he would be saved. They were rescued, and when he got back to his home a book was waiting for him from a Christian friend of Miss Hyde. The admiral wrote him about his experience, and the friend had opportunity to bring this man to Christ.

A letter from Shandia, our Quichua station, to my parents, dated May 1, 1956, shows the lovingkindness of the Lord:

"Valerie tumbles around the lawn every afternoon for a while before her bath. I sit in the window to keep an eye on her. She walks back and forth on the trail, chases the cat, chickens, ducks, and a little species of capybara we have for a pet. She imitates the noises of all these animals, as well as anything else she hears. She is always singing.

"The path of the just is as a shining light that shineth more and more.' This has come to me so many times, in so many ways lately. Sometimes I wonder how it can shine at all without Jim, and yet the Lord said it would shine *more*, so I trust Him for the fulfillment of that word—'if He doesn't, His throne will *topple*,' as Miss Shane used to say! I believe He is fulfilling it to me already. I know peace which is even greater than during those first days (which then seemed miraculous). And each day, as I sit down to supper, the shadows of evening falling and light reflected on the river before me, I think, 'One day nearer Home, one day less to roam!' and it is thrilling to me! *What* will it be? And the hymn, 'And is it so, I shall be like Thy Son?' is so precious to me. I must go to bed. I love you so much. Betty."

Question

"If you didn't have time to do it right, when will you have time to do it over?"

(source unknown but wise)

Why Pray?

"We must not imagine that God has arranged everything, chronologically speaking, before our prayer.... Eternity may be regarded as the *meaning in depth* of our temporal decision or our prayer of petition. In this way, it is possible to see that my prayer is in reality a genuine initiative on the part of a free creature of God, directed towards the divine and all-embracing Being, whom I, at the moment of my prayer, address as 'Thou.' What is more, it is also possible to see that this Being has not arranged and decided everything before I come into contact with Him, but that He does this in an actual eternal now that brings the moment of my prayer to His immediate attention and creatively controls it. The more intimately we are united to Him, the bolder and the more efficacious our initiative in prayer will be. This intimate surrender to God has the effect of bringing our will into harmony with God's loving being."

E. Schillebeeckx

Hymn to God the Father

Wilt thou forgive that sin where I begun,
Which was my sin though it were done before?
Wilt thou forgive that sin through which I run,
And do run still, though still I do deplore?
When thou hast done, thou hast not done,
For I have more.
Wilt thou forgive that sin by which I've won
Others to sin, and made my sin their door?
Wilt thou forgive that sin which I did shun
A year or two, but wallowed in a score?
When thou hast done, thou hast not done,
For I have more.
I have a sin of fear, that when I've spun
My last thread, I shall perish on the shore;
But swear by thyself that at my death thy son
Shall shine as he shines now, and heretofore;
And having done that, thou hast done;
I fear no more.

John Donne

The Song of the Wren

Last summer a pair of dear little wrens moved into the wren house Lars had hung in a small oak tree. I can see the tree from the desk where I write. It was delightful to see them “case” the place, flying around, then going in and out, conversing with each other as to whether this would be a suitable domicile. After a day or two of consultation they began carrying in a variety of building materials. Then we saw the female no more, but beginning at five o'clock each morning we heard the proud male's whispering, gurgling sound, rising, then falling at the end. I was astounded at the energy that tiny creature put forth with his “singing,” so I timed it—nine times per minute, 540 times per hour—virtually all day long, with hardly any intermission.

I doubt that he told his wife he'd had a long, hard day. I doubt that she complained of boredom as she warmed the tiny eggs she had produced. He worked tirelessly to feed her, and when the fledglings were ready to fly the coop what a chorus of jubilations the grateful parents put forth.

“All creatures that on earth do dwell, sing to the Lord with cheerful voice!”

They did. Shouldn't we?

Prayer

“Almighty God, Who canst give the light that in darkness shall make us glad, the life that in gloom shall make us joy, and the peace that amidst discord shall bring us quietness! Let us live this day in that light, that life, and that peace, so that we may gain the

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February 6 Dallas, Tex., Omnipotence of Love Conference, 800-361-0210.

February 20 Wheat Ridge, Colo., Applewood Baptist Church, Bev Green, (303)232-9575.

February 21 Wheat Ridge, Colo., Applewood Baptist Church, Sunday school.

March 4 Visalia, Calif., Calvary Chapel pre-crusade women's rally, (209)687-0220.

March 6 South Hamilton, Mass., Gordon-Conwell (with Val), (978)468-7111.

victory over those things that press us down, and over the flesh that so often encumbers us, and over death that seemeth for a moment to win the victory. Thus we, being filled with inward peace, and light, and life, may walk all the days of this our mortal life, doing our work as the business of our Father, glorifying it, because it is Thy will, knowing that what Thou givest Thou givest in love. Bestow upon us the greatest and last blessing, that we, being in Thy presence, may be like unto Thee for evermore. These things we do ask, in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord—Amen.”

George Dawson (1821-1876)

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A Holy Aloneness

When God had completed the prodigious labor of the creation of the heavens and the earth, He saw that something was lacking: there was no one to work the ground. So He formed a man. The method is surprising—this creature, made in the image of God, was made out of *dust*, and into his nostrils God breathed the breath of life. This living being was placed in a beautiful garden with a river to water it, and gold, aromatic resin, and onyx to enrich it. He put the man there to work the garden and take care of it. I wonder, as Adam went about his task, how conscious he was of the presence of God. Did he walk and talk with Him (in what language?), commune silently or aloud, listen to His voice? Was he aware at all that anything was lacking? God was aware. “It is not good for the man to be alone,” said God, “I will make a helper suitable for him.” Eve was created, God’s gift to allay Adam’s loneliness. But when he capitulated to her ungodly counsel sin was born.

The world is full of noise. It is “too much with us,” as Wordsworth said. “Late and soon, getting and spending, we lay waste our powers.” Might we not learn, perhaps during this Easter season, silence, stillness, solitude? It will not be easy to come by. It must be arranged. The Lord Jesus, available to people much of the time, left them, sometimes a great while before day, to go up to the hills where He could commune in solitude with His Father. Job, enduring his friends’ tiresome lectures and accusations, was very much alone on his ash heap, but it was there that he came to know God as never before. When God called Paul to preach the gospel he did not consult anyone. He went into Arabia. The old apostle John when exiled to Patmos must surely have known a *holy aloneness* through which he received the book of Revelation.

Someone may complain that he has no one to talk to. Then thank God! Talk to Him. When my husband Jim Elliot died in Ecuador I was blessed to have my ten-month-old baby and many dear Quichua friends, but we lived deep in the jungle and I longed at times for in-depth conversation in my own language. The Quichuas were very solicitous—they had loved Jim as their pastor, teacher, and friend. All of us were bereaved, but it was my job to be cheerful and to try to strengthen and encourage the Indians, who had very little Scripture as yet in their language and were accustomed to heathen howling when someone died.

We can always talk to God, remembering that God has called us into fellowship with Jesus Christ our Lord (1 Cor. 1:9). Do we consciously arrange time to receive His fellowship? When is the last time we offered Him ours? It is a strong temptation to run to the phone when we need advice or help of any kind, forgetting to seek *first* the living Word of God, whose ear is always open to our cry. Try the simple reminder of 2 Peter 2:9, “The Lord knows how to rescue godly men from trials,” or Psalm 57:1, “Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me, for in you my soul takes refuge. I will take refuge in the shadow of your wings until the disaster has passed.”

Be patient. Is God not fast enough? Are His answers too tough? A quick sympathy from a friend may suggest that you simply drop out, be good to yourself, get away from it all. Someone else will be sure to say, “You need counsel.” Are you sure? One hour at the foot of the Cross may obviate the necessity of professional counseling (no such thing existed until the twentieth century—what did folks do before then?). When Christian, in *Pilgrim’s Progress*, reached the hill of Calvary, “his burden loosed from off his shoulders, and fell from off his back, and began to tumble; and so continued to do, till it came to the mouth of the Sepulchre,

Speak, Lord, In Stillness

QUIETUDE.

6.5.6.5.

H. Green.



1. Speak, Lord, in the stillness,
While I wait on Thee;
Hush'd my heart to listen,
In expectancy.

3. For the words Thou speakest,
They are life indeed;
Living bread from heaven,
Now my spirit feed!

5. Speak, Thy servant heareth,
Be not silent, Lord;
Waits my soul upon Thee
For the quickening word.

7. Like a watered garden,
Full of fragrance rare,
Lingering in Thy presence,
Let my life appear.

2. Speak, O blessed Master,
In this quiet hour;
Let me see Thy face, Lord,
Feel Thy touch of power.

4. All to Thee is yielded,
I am not my own;
Blissful, glad surrender,
I am Thine alone.

6. Fill me with the knowledge
Of Thy glorious will;
All Thine own good pleasure
In Thy child fulfill.

E. M. Grimes

where it fell in." The Bible teaches us that there is a Wonderful Counselor. Let your loneliness be transformed into a holy aloneness. Sit still before the Lord. Remember Naomi's word to Ruth: "Sit still, my daughter, until you see how the matter will fall."

Miguel de Molinos (1640-97) wrote, "In time of trouble go not out of yourself to seek for aid; for the whole benefit of trial consists in silence, patience, rest, and resignation. In this condition divine strength is found for the hard warfare, because God Himself fights for the soul."

The Cross of Christ

"Christ touches us more nearly and deeply than our pain does, or our guilt. What in us harrows the heart, in Him 'harrowed hell.' ... He revolutionizes the eternal foundations of our moral world. But it means also that He came from a region in the moral reality of God deeper than sin or grief could shake. It signifies the very heart and Godhead of

God, the holy reality of God, an eternal act of the whole God, one drawing on the whole Trinity, therefore a final act in the heavenliest places in Christ. In being 'made sin,' treated as sin (though not as a sinner), Christ experienced sin as God does, while he experienced its effects as man does."

P.T. Forsyth, *The Cruciality of the Cross*

Unconditional Self-Abandonment

The glory of the Resurrection followed the shame of the Crucifixion. Christ abandoned Himself, became subject to death, went to Gehenna, for love of us. Therefore He was raised in power, death could not hold Him, and He opened Paradise for us.

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We can enter only as He entered—the road to glory is always the road of self-abandonment. When we see this as a mere theory we have not yet understood. It is in the opportunities of every day, with real people (i.e., real sinners), that we (sinners too) are called to His companionship: Give up your rights, abandon yourself, follow Me—follow Me to the place where death cannot possibly hold you, where animosities and offenses are vanquished, and Life springs victorious.

What do we long for above all else? Is it not *Life*? Jesus came so that we could have it—but the only life He can give us is Resurrection Life. That kind comes as the result of a glad surrender.

The Comforter, the Holy Spirit

“In all places and at all times, we can have that familiar friendship, we can have Him with us; and there may be through the day a constant interchange of private words, of little offerings, too small to have any name attached to them—by which the bonds of that familiar friendship grow closer and more real, until it comes to that special personal intimacy which we call sanctity.”

Janet Erskine Stuart (1857-1914)

Sonnet on Prayer

Lord, what a change within us one short hour
Spent in Thy presence will prevail to make;
What heavy burdens from our bosoms take;
What parched grounds refresh as with a shower!
We kneel—when all around us seems to lower;
We rise—and all, the distant and the near
Stands forth in sunny outline brave and clear;
Why, therefore, should we do ourselves this wrong,
Or others, that we are not always strong;
That we are ever overborne with care,
That we should ever weak or heartless be,
Anxious and troubled, when with us is prayer,
And joy and strength and courage are with Thee?

Richard Chevenix Trench (1807-86)

What God Asks of Us

“Holiness consists in one thing alone, namely, fidelity to God’s plan. This fidelity is equally within everyone’s capacity in both its active and passive practice.

“The active practice consists in accomplishing the duties imposed upon us by the general laws of God and the Church, and by the particular state of life which we have embraced. Passive fidelity consists in the loving acceptance of all that God sends us at every moment. Which of these two requirements of holiness is beyond our strength? ... This is all that God demands of the soul in the work of its sanctification. He demands it from the high and the low, from the strong and the weak; in a word, from all, always and everywhere....

“The passive part of holiness is even more easy, for it consists merely in accepting what most frequently cannot be avoided, and in suffering with love, that is to say with resignation and sweetness, what is too often endured with weariness and discontent.

“Perfection does not consist in understanding God’s designs but in submitting to them.... They are God working in the soul to make it like Himself.... The whole essence of the spiritual life consists in recognizing the designs of God for us at the present moment.”

Jean-Pierre de Caussade (1675-1751)

Another Widow

In the January/February issue Marj Saint Van Der Puy and Olive Fleming Liefeld, two whose husbands were killed by Aucas in 1956, wrote of their present circumstances. Marilou McCully, whose husband Ed was also killed, lives in Bonney Lake, Washington. She writes:

“To answer the questions concerning my sons: I have three sons and none of them has ever expressed any difficulty in accepting their father’s death as God’s will and plan—for Ed, and for us as his family. They all feel proud to be Ed’s sons. None of them have gone to the mission field but all three have many opportunities in their jobs

and churches to serve the Lord.

“For my part, after forty-three years, I have to say that God’s leading and care for me has far surpassed my expectations. Through the years He has opened doors and led me in ways I could never have anticipated. The opportunity to return to Ecuador and manage a children’s home was the first evidence of exceptional provision. I was able to spend the first six years as a single mother running a home for my three boys along with a number of other missionary children. It was a good and happy experience for all of us. After all three boys were in school, God led me here—to be close to family and a caring fellowship of Christians and a good job. In the fall of 1995 I retired and moved into an apartment in the home of my son Steve and his wife Ellie. It has been a very enjoyable time for me, and I thank the Lord for it. I can say with the hymn writer, ‘*All I have needed (and so much more) Thy hand hath provided. Great is Thy faithfulness, Lord, unto me.*’”

Prayer

Almighty God, we bless and praise Thee that we have wakened to the light of another earthly day; and now we will think of what a day should be. Our days are Thine, let them be spent for Thee. Our days are few, let them be spent with care. There are dark days behind us, forgive their sinfulness; there may be dark days before us, strengthen us for their trials. We pray Thee to shine on this day—the day which we may call our own. Lord, we go to our daily work; help us to take pleasure therein. Show us clearly what our

Travel Schedule March–May 1999

March 19, 20 Snellville, Ga., First Baptist women’s ministry, (770)978-5754.

April 4 EASTER.

April 24 New York City, Redeemer Church retreat, Dawn Owens, (212)353-7887.

April 29, 30 Columbus, Ga., Columbus Convention and Trade Center, (706)327-2971.

May 1 Auburn, Ala., Lakeview Baptist Church college and young adults, (334)887-7094.

May 3 Greenville, S.C., Edwards Road Baptist Church, (864)244-2975.

May 14, 15 Mountlake Terrace, Wash., Calvary Fellowship, (425)775-1509, or Cathy Taylor, (206)368-0960.

May 25 Flagstaff, Ariz., School of Tomorrow, David Logan, (927)315-1776, ext. 344.

duty is; help us to be faithful in doing it. Let all we do be well done, fit for Thine eye to see. Give us strength to do, patience to bear; let our courage never fail. When we cannot love our work, let us think of it as Thy task; and, by our true love to Thee, make unlovely things shine in the light of Thy great love. Amen.

George Dawson (1821-76)

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May/June 1999

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Whatever Happened to Hymns?

Many of the churches my husband Lars and I visit on our travels seem to know nothing of the great old hymns that have instructed, comforted, and enriched the church for centuries. Hymns constitute a crucial part of worship, but not by any means the whole. In churches which use almost exclusively what are called “praise songs,” that part of the service is usually referred to as “Worship,” as though prayer, preaching, offering, and listening were something else. May I lodge a plea to those who use overhead projectors to make sure that some great hymns are displayed in addition to the praise songs? Hymns will get you through the night.

In January of 1956, when five women were waiting with bated breath to find out whether our husbands were dead or alive, I lay in bed in Nate Saint’s home, my little daughter Valerie sick in a crib beside me. The hymn “How Firm a Foundation,” with those magnificent words taken from Isaiah 43:1-2, sustained me, especially stanzas 2, 3, and 6, memorized when I was a child in our daily family prayer time:

“Fear not, I am with thee; O be not dismayed,/ For I am thy God and will still give thee aid;/ I’ll strengthen thee, help thee, and cause thee to stand,/ Upheld by my righteous, omnipotent hand.

“When through the deep waters I call thee to go,/ The rivers of sorrow shall not overflow;/ For I will be with thee thy trials to bless,/ And sanctify to thee thy deepest distress....

“The soul that on Jesus hath leaned for repose,/ I will not, I will not desert to his foes;/ That soul, though all hell should endeavor to shake,/ I’ll never, no, never, no, never forsake!”

Someone sent me a magazine featuring a musician named Michael Card who presents to a new genera-

tion of believers ancient melodies and hymns. His music is described as “folk-flavored, biblically sound music.” Unable to recommend or comment on his work since I have heard none of it, I can nevertheless say *Amen* to his observation: “So many of today’s worship songs are all about us: ‘We do this, we do that, we worship You ...’ without presenting the depth and richness of who God is, proclaiming His greatness and His might. You can read the lyrics of one of these old hymns and learn so much about God’s attributes and His creation.”

Everywhere I go I try to point out what a tragic loss is the disappearance of these powerful aids to spiritual stamina. A true hymn has rhyme and meter, a logical progression from the first verse to the last, and I feel like jumping up and down and “hollering” to get my message across, but I try to keep it to merely begging and *implo*ring folks to get their hands on a good hymnbook. Where to find them? they ask. Perhaps they are moldering in the church basement. More than likely they’ve long since been dumped—“Young folks don’t like hymns,” we’re told. But of course they don’t *like* them—they don’t *know* them. Alas!

But help is on the way. Try *Trinity Hymnal*, Great Commission Publications, 3640 Windsor Park Drive, Suite 100, Suwanee, GA 30174 (800-695-3387). May I suggest that you keep it with your Bible wherever you’ve arranged your quiet time?

The Hazards of Homemade Vows

Many engaged couples today love the idea of writing their own wedding vows and many a minister finds no reason to persuade them otherwise. I think it was about thirty-five years ago that improvisation was introduced—a sunny California meadow, a barefoot bride wearing wildflowers in her hair, and a groom dressed like Ghandi, reading what he hopes is poetry. Things slid ignominiously downhill. At the conclusion of his own marriage a Rev. Mr. Gould of Chicago turned to his bride and said, “Thank you for choosing an outrageous cuss like me.” His bride burst out

laughing. The formality of bridal gowns and rent-a-tuxes underlines the incongruity of such events. My husband Lars attended what might be called a fun nuptial. As the groomsmen chanted, “The ring! The ring! Who’s got the ring?” down the aisle came a large and reluctant dog with the ring attached to his collar.

Marriage is not a private transaction. It ought never to be a mere *concoction*. It is public business as the couple joins the enterprise of the human race. The vow creates the couple, not the couple the vow. Why would a Christian bride refuse the time-honored vow, “I N. take thee M. to be my wedded husband, to have and to hold from this day forward, for better for worse, for richer for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love, cherish, and to obey, till death us do part, according to God’s holy ordinance; and thereto I give thee my troth”? It is as G.K. Chesterton wrote, “[The opponents of vows] appear to imagine that the ideal of constancy was a yoke mysteriously imposed on mankind by the devil, instead of being, as it is, a yoke consistently imposed by all lovers on themselves. They have invented a phrase, a phrase that is a black and white contradiction in two words—‘free-love’—as if a lover ever had been, or ever could be, free.... It is exactly this back-door, this sense of having a retreat behind us, that is, to our minds, the sterilizing spirit in modern pleasure. Everywhere there is the persistent and insane attempt to obtain pleasure without paying for it.... Thus, in religion and morals, the decadent mystics say, ‘Let us have the fragrance of sacred purity without the sorrow of self-restraint’.... Thus, in love, the free-lovers say, ‘Let us have the splendor of offering ourselves without the peril of committing ourselves; let us see whether one cannot commit suicide an unlimited number of times.’

“Emphatically it will not work. There are thrilling moments, doubtless, for the spectator, the amateur, and the aesthete; but there is one thrill that is known only to the soldier who fights for his own flag, to the ascetic who starves himself for his own illumination, to the lover who makes finally his own choice. And it is this transfiguring self-discipline that makes the vow a truly sane thing.”

If the prospective bride and groom read earnestly Chesterton’s remarks, will they still have the temerity to cobble up their own vows?

Promotion

“If every call to Christ and His righteousness is a call to suffering, the converse is equally true—every call to suffering is a call to Christ, a promotion, an invitation to come up higher.”

Charles Brent (1862-1929)

Notes for Quiet Time

“Thou shalt remember all the ways which the Lord thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldest keep his commandments, or no” (Deuteronomy 8:2). In a file from my teens and twenties I found these notes from my quiet time, entitled *What God Is to Me*. I was helped by reviewing it.

- | | |
|------------------------------|-------------------|
| 1. My inheritance | Numbers 18:20 |
| 2. My praise | Deuteronomy 10:21 |
| 3. My strength | Psalms 118:14 |
| 4. My song | Psalms 118:14 |
| 5. My salvation | Psalms 23:1 |
| 7. My righteousness | Jeremiah 23:6 |
| 8. My fortress | Jeremiah 17:17 |
| 9. My refuge | Psalms 46:1 |
| 10. My hope | Jeremiah 17:7 |
| 11. My dwelling place | Psalms 90:1 |
| 12. My defense | Psalms 89:18 |
| 13. My king | Psalms 89:18 |
| 14. The strength of my heart | Psalms 73:26 |
| 15. My portion forever | Psalms 73:26 |
| 16. My trust | Psalms 71:5 |
| 17. My rock | Psalms 62:6 |
| 18. My strong tower | Psalms 61:3 |
| 19. My helper | Psalms 54:4 |
| 20. My shield | Psalms 28:7 |

(...and there are many more—should we feel discouraged, disheartened, insecure? Is there any reason to fear the future?)

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An Assault From the Enemy

From time to time someone writes to me in great distress, convinced that he or she has committed the unpardonable sin. Our adversary the devil, that “perverse fiend attempts our utter overthrow by the terror which he infuses into our minds at the remembrance of our sins, in order to make us throw ourselves into the gulf of despair.

“In this peril, hold fast to this infallible rule, that *the remembrance of thy sins is the effect of grace*, and tends to salvation, when it produces humility, sorrow for having offended God, and confidence in his mercy. But when such thoughts disquiet thee, and make thee fearful and fainthearted, though they may look so like truth as to make thee believe thyself condemned, and thy day of salvation to be past, know assuredly that they come from the deceiver; humble thyself, then, the more, and trust the more confidently in God; so shalt thou overcome the enemy with his own weapons, and glorify the Lord. Mourn, indeed, over thine offences against God, as often as they recur to thy memory; but yet implore their pardon with a full trust in his Passion.

“I will say further, that should God himself seem to say to thee that thou art not one of his sheep, still on no account let go thy confidence in him; but say to him, with all humility: ‘Thou hast good reason, indeed, O Lord, in my sins to condemn me; but I have greater reason in thy mercy to hope for pardon. Save, therefore, I beseech thee, this thy miserable creature, condemned, indeed, by her own sinfulness, but redeemed by the price of thy blood. I commit myself wholly to thy hands, O my Redeemer; trusting fully to thy infinite compassion, that thou mayest save me, to the glory of thy name. *Do with me what thou wilt*, for thou art my only Lord; yes, though thou slay, still will I hope in thee.’” (italics mine)

Lorenzo Scupoli, *Spiritual Combat*

How Does One Know “He’s the One”?

Dear Tanya [not her name]:

Since you’ve read *Passion and Purity*, you can easily find the answers to your questions about the characteristics and qualities which I observed in Jim Elliot. I

did not know that Jim was seriously interested in me until shortly before I graduated. You’ve read the story—he took me for a walk, told me he loved me. Better read that part again! Of course I could not possibly know that Jim was “the one” until he proposed to me in Ecuador five years later. My feelings, of course, would tell me he was the one, but no sensible person ought to trust mere feelings. It is the *will of God* which we should faithfully seek.

My advice, dear Tanya, is to tuck that young man way, way back in your head and get on with the business of trust and obedience to God. You are rushing ahead of Him. Tim *might* possibly be God’s choice for a husband for you, but much can happen between now and then. Don’t tell anybody of your love for Tim. Talk to God. Nobody else. Keep your mind on your studies. Read Romans 12:1 and 2 over and over—it’s a good recipe for discovering the will of God: (1) Tell God you’ll do anything He says. Present your body. (2) Read the Bible and pray daily in order to be “transformed by the renewing of your mind.” (3) You’ll learn the good, acceptable, and perfect will of God *if* you take one day at a time, study faithfully, don’t cheat on exams or plagiarize on papers, and are nice to your roommate!

Obedience today prepares you for obedience tomorrow (but tomorrow is, so far, God’s business). Do I sound tough? I love you! I’ve been through this agony myself!

Love, Elisabeth

How to Prepare for Tragedy

Jesus, knowing exactly what awaited Him when He went up to Jerusalem, *went*. He had set His face to go to Jerusalem, and He moved steadily through the days, doing His Father’s work of healing and peace with the same serenity which had always characterized His ministry. He told His disciples exactly what would happen and they understood none of it. On the way there, near Jericho, Jesus healed a blind man. Then He brought salvation to the house of Zaccheus. He wept over the city of Jerusalem, entered it, threw the merchants out of the temple, and carried on His daily teaching in the temple until the Zero Hour arrived.

Nothing dismayed or depressed Him enough to cause Him to quit. The prospects of torture and death

in no way hindered His day-by-day work, which, as always, pleased the Father. This was His preparation: the faithful doing of the Will, one day at a time.

Dust Under the Bed?

The headmistress of Hampden DuBose Academy where I was a student often reiterated the importance of small things. They reveal *character*, a word she pronounced with vigor. A reader was offended: "Surely God doesn't focus on the cleanliness of our homes." I would cite Zechariah 4:10 and 1 Corinthians 14:40, on which our family was raised. Would my reader suppose that the carpenter shop, in which we believe Jesus must have worked for many years, was disorderly? Of course there would be sawdust and noise, but there would surely be a visible and appropriate order. A home is much happier and more peaceful if things are orderly. Agreed? I cannot imagine what my desk and study would look like if I had not been taught at an early age that there is a place for everything and everything is to be in its place. A great simplifier!

Prayer

"Before the glorious seat of Thy majesty, O Lord, and the exalted throne of Thy burning love, and the absolving altar which Thy command hath set up, and the place where Thy glory dwelleth—we, Thy people and the sheep of Thy fold, do kneel with thousands of the cherubim singing Alleluia, and many times ten thousand seraphim and archangels, acclaiming Thine holiness, worshipping, praising, and confessing Thee at all times, O Lord of all."

The Chaldean Liturgy

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May 25 Flagstaff, Ariz., School of Tomorrow, David Logan, (972)315-1776, ext. 344.

June 4,5 Taping for *Gateway to Joy*.

June 25, 26 Eden Prairie, Minn., Wooddale Church, Sally Foote, (612)446-6300.

July 24-29 Family reunion—White Sulphur Springs, Mont.

August 9 Wales.

August 29 Alton Bay, N.H., Christian Conference Center, David Northrup, (603)875-6161.

Recommended Reading for Parents

Lots of Love and a Spanking, by Jamie Pritchett. She says this book is "aimed more at debunking what goes for discipline nowadays than for being a deep scriptural explanation of why we should follow God's word.... It's aimed more at nonbelievers than at the mature Christian." But I found it excellent for believers as well. Order from the author at 510 Indian Bay Blvd., Merritt Island, FL 32953, \$9.95 + \$3.00 shipping (6% sales tax for Florida residents).

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What Does It Mean to Be Holy?

When God finished the work of creation He blessed the seventh day and made it holy. When Moses saw the burning bush in the desert he found that he was standing on holy ground. God's Word tells us that we must be holy because He is holy. Is so awesome a mandate as holiness attainable for us sinners? Hear what the hymn writer T. Binney wrote:

*Oh, how shall I, whose native sphere is dark,
whose mind is dim,
Before the Ineffable appear, and on my naked spirit
bear the uncreated beam?*

Jesus, who is "the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being" (Hebrews 1:3) shows us the answer to that question, and the way of obedience. He said, "Here I am—it is written about me in the scroll—I have come to do your will, O God" (Hebrews 10:7).

Holiness is not an impossibility for any of us. It means first of all to be set apart, as the vessels in the tabernacle were set apart (consecrated) from ordinary vessels. For us to be holy means the will to do God's will. It means sacrifice—the offering up of my own will (which sometimes seems to me an impossibility) and the acceptance of His. He asks of us nothing which He Himself was unwilling to do. "He had to be made like his brothers in every way, in order that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God, and that he might make atonement for the sins of the people. Because he himself suffered when he was tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted" (Hebrews 2:17-18).

*There is a way for man to rise to that sublime
abode;
an offering and a sacrifice, a Holy Spirit's energies,
an Advocate with God.*

That Advocate is Jesus Christ, who, "although he was a son, ... learned obedience from what he suffered and, once made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him" (Hebrews 5:8-9).

*These, these prepare us for the sight of holiness
above;
the sons of ignorance and night may dwell in the
eternal Light,
through the Eternal Love.*

The Lord loves us, and "takes delight in his people; he crowns the humble with salvation" (Psalm 149:4).

There is an *active* practice of holiness as we carry out, for the glory of God, the ordinary duties of each day, faithfully fulfilling the responsibilities given us. The *passive* practice consists in loving acceptance of the unexpected, be it welcome or unwelcome, remembering that we have a wise and sovereign Lord who works in mysterious ways and is never taken by surprise. I heard a comforting word at the Urbana Missionary Convention some years ago. Eric Alexander, a dear Scottish preacher, reminded us that "God is not *worried* about *anything!*"

Which of these two requirements of holiness (active or passive) is beyond our strength? Remember the words of the apostle Paul, *and* the conditions (he was in prison) under which he wrote them: "I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation.... I can do everything through him who gives me strength" (Philippians 4:12,13). This is all that God demands of us in His work of sanctification. He demands it from the high and the low, from the strong and the weak; in a word, from all, always and everywhere. A promise to which I have clung for many years is the prophetic word in Isaiah 50:7, "The Lord God will help me, therefore shall I not be confounded, therefore have I set my face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed."

Perfection does not consist in *understanding* God's designs but in *submitting* to them, for "we know that

in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose” (Romans 8:28). Sometimes the explanation of his purpose (Romans 8:29) is overlooked: “For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of his Son.” God works in the soul to make it holy—to make it, finally, like Himself. The whole essence of the spiritual life consists in recognizing the designs of God for us at the present moment.

Only God’s Wounds

If we have never sought, we seek Thee now;
Thine eyes burn through the dark, our only stars;
We must have sight of thorn-pricks on Thy brow,
We must have Thee, O Jesus of the Scars.

The heavens frighten us; they are too calm.
In all the universe we have no place.
Our wounds are hurting us—where is the balm?
Lord Jesus, by Thy scars, we claim Thy grace.

The other gods were strong, but Thou wast weak.
They rode, but Thou didst stumble to a throne;
But to our wounds only God’s wounds can speak
And not a god has wounds but Thou alone.

Edward Shillito

The Gift of Place

It is always possible to do the will of God. In every place and time it is within our power to acquiesce in the will of God. Jesus comforted His disciples: “Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God, trust also in me. In my Father’s house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you” (John 14:1-2). Who is finally responsible for our circumstances? Psalm 16:5—“Lord, you have assigned me my portion and my cup, and have made my lot secure.”

We have the assurance—a calming and quieting one—that God in His infinite wisdom has placed us where we are. There are perhaps some factors which we would not happily have chosen.

When Alexander Solzhenitsyn was in prison he wrote, “How simple for me to live with you, O Lord!

How easy to believe in You! When in confusion, my soul bares itself or bends, when the most wise can see no further than this night and do not know what tomorrow brings, You fill me with the clear certainty that You exist, and that You watch to see that all the paths of righteousness be not closed. From the heights of worldly glory I am astonished by the path through despair You have provided me, this path from which I have been worthy enough to reflect Your radiance to men. All that I will yet reflect You will grant me. And for that which I will not succeed in reflecting, You have appointed others.”

Let us never suppose that obedience is impossible or that holiness is meant only for a select few. Our Shepherd leads us in paths of righteousness—not for *our* name’s sake but for His. He saw to it that in the midst of excruciating suffering those paths were not closed to Solzhenitsyn. They are not closed to us.

On Forgiving Oneself

“Entire industries exist specifically for the purpose of easing our guilt, of making us feel OK about ourselves. Our culture has appropriated the language of Christianity without any of its substance. Thus we forgive without ever having judged.... What we seem now to call forgiveness (as in therapy’s famous ‘learning to forgive oneself’) seems rather to take away the seriousness of the offense than to encourage acknowledgment of failure that could lead to repentance, and a resolution to do better. Only in a culture therapeutically obsessed, in which self is perceived objectively, not subjectively—as something apart from what we do or are—could we speak of ‘forgiving oneself.’ Forgiveness is a gift, by definition unearned. If I cannot earn or work for forgiveness, I most assuredly cannot forgive myself. I may learn to live with my past, may understand it more fully, but I cannot forgive myself. Only God and those who love us can, through the gift of for-

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giveness, redeem the past, and *make whole again*.... Unless there is judgment, there is no need for forgiveness, and thus no possibility of starting anew. For a culture in which acceptance and tolerance are the chief virtues (indeed intolerantly demanded!) and 'judgmental' is a dirty word, there can be no true second chance, no real hope" (Karen Jenson Gold, from an article in *First Things*, Nov. 1992).

No wonder people "have a hard time" forgiving themselves! It is impossible. There is no tribunal but the heart of God, to which we may freely turn, freely pour out our sorrow for our sin, and receive the precious Blood of Christ. To refuse to accept His free forgiveness is to consign ourselves to hell. Jesus bore our sorrows, paid it all, took upon Himself all the sins that all mankind could ever commit. It meant, as F.W.H. Meyers wrote in his poem, "St. Paul": "desperate tides of a whole world's anguish forced through the channels of a single heart." Isaiah 53 tells us, "He took up our infirmities and carried our sorrows.... He was pierced for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon Him, and by His wounds we are healed.... It was the Lord's will to crush Him and cause Him to suffer.... He bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors."

Can we add to that? Is His sacrifice not adequate? Corrie ten Boom said, "God casts all our sins into the depths of the sea, then puts up a sign: NO FISHING."

Letter From a Radio Listener

[The May/June issue was about hymns]

"Your program made me realize what an impact hymns have had in my own life. I looked through a hymnbook one evening and out of 133 hymns, there were only 15 I did not know. Singing the hymns of faith was what helped me get through my husband's leaving and his remarriage. I could not pray without weeping constantly, but I could sing through the tears—the songs just rolled out of me. When the fears and the grief and the unbelief welled up to the unbearable I sang, 'Abide with me, fast falls the eventide, the darkness deepens, Lord, with me abide.' I did not grow up in a Christian home, but my parents sent us to church so I learned the hymns of faith, and just like

Scripture, they remain a vital part of me."

Several have asked me for a list of favorite hymns. Here are the first ten listed (alphabetically) in my Little Brown Notebook: All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name, And Can It Be?, Beneath the Cross of Jesus, Be Still My Soul, Crown Him with Many Crowns, Dear Lord and Father of Mankind, Eternal Light, Glorious Things of Thee Are Spoken, God Moves in a Mysterious Way, Great Is Thy Faithfulness.

How to Prepare for Tomorrow

Jesus, knowing exactly what awaited Him when He went up to Jerusalem, *went*. He had set His face to go there, and He moved steadily through the days, doing His Father's work of healing and peace with the same serenity which had always characterized His ministry. He told His disciples exactly what would happen and they understood none of it. On the way there, near Jericho, Jesus healed a blind man. Then He brought salvation to the house of Zaccheus. He wept over the city of Jerusalem, entered it, threw out the merchants from the temple, and carried on His daily teaching in the temple until the Zero Hour arrived. Nothing dismayed or depressed Him enough to cause Him to quit. The prospects of torture and death in no way hindered His day-by-day work which, as always, pleased the Father. This was His preparation: the faithful doing of the Will, one day at a time. Shall we, His children, not trust Him for our future?

Voices I Hear

The voice of self beckons:

Get out there and do something important and worthwhile.

The voice of my blond-haired daughter invites me:

Mommy, let's play house. I'll be the Mommy, you be the Daddy.

The voice of self lures me:

Stand up! Be counted among the useful and make the world a better place.

The voice of my infant son cries from his crib:

I pick him up and we rock together in the silence and stillness.

The voice of self bids me:

*Work hard and seek the praise and applause of many.
The voice of my grown-up four-year-old daughter
announces proudly:*

Mommy, I colored this picture of Pooh for you.

The voice of self tempts me:

*Make sure your talent is noticed and appreciated and
bask in the spotlight.*

Three small voices plead:

*Mommy, we're thirsty, will you get us a drink of
water?*

The voice of self cries out as I wipe a little nose for the
twentieth time:

*Lord, isn't there a more glamorous job for me than
this?*

The voice of my Lord assures me:

*"If anyone gives even a cup of cold water to one of
these little ones ... I tell you the truth, she will cer-
tainly not lose her reward.—For the Kingdom of
Heaven belongs to these little children."*

Andrea Howard Hawthorne

My First 300 Babies

There is a change of address for this remarkable book
written by a very experienced midwife who made it a
practice to stay for several weeks with the newborn in
order to help the parents learn new responsibilities:
Hurst Publishing, 5881 Connor Lane, Goleta, CA
93117; phone price: (805)967-3744; \$11.95 e-mail:
hurstpub@silcome.com.

The Elisabeth Elliot Newsletter

Servant Ministries, Inc.
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Ann Arbor, Michigan 48107-7711

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

Travel Schedule July–September 1999

July 24-29 Family reunion—White Sulphur Springs,
Mont.

August 9 Wales —Geoffrey Thomas, The Manse,
Buarth Rd., Aberystwyth.

August 29 Alton Bay, N.H., Christian Conference
Center, David Northrup, (603)875-6161.

September 15 Whiting, N.J., America's Keswick,
Bill Welte, (732)350-1187.

September 18 Nashua, N.H., Grace Fellowship,
Sandy Berube, (603)883-8273, ext. 18.

A Short Note From "HIM"

I received a letter a few weeks ago addressed to HIM.
The check was also for HIM and I signed it that way.
For some of you who might have Spanish-speaking
friends or read Spanish yourself, *Passion and Purity*
and *Through Gates of Splendor* are available in that
language. Should you come across a lonesome
Norwegian, displaced or otherwise, who can still
remember his mother tongue, I also have some copies
of the Norwegian translation of *God's Guidance*. All
three are by E.E. Each book is \$10, including postage.
DO NOT ORDER FROM THE NEWSLETTER, but
from HIM, 10 Strawberry Cove, Magnolia, MA 01930.
That's it for now, folks.

Lars Gren

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The Elisabeth Elliot Newsletter

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The Vice of Self-Esteem

Letters sometimes come to me from people who are “working on” their self-esteem. Usually this means they are doing their best to feel good about themselves. It is an exercise in futility.

Several years ago (if I remember correctly) tests were given to American and Korean students. The Koreans scored far higher academically than the Americans, but when asked to grade their self-esteem were bewildered by the question. The American students on the other hand, well-versed from kindergarten, gave themselves high marks in self-esteem but did poorly academically. We might say they “felt good” about “doing bad.”

Jesus warns us not to seek the approval of men. Must we rise in the world, be “upwardly mobile,” aim at fulfillment, self-satisfaction, distinction? Remember the word in 1 John 2:17—“The world and all its passionate desires will one day disappear, but the man who is following God’s will is part of the Permanent and cannot die” (J.B. Phillips).

Amy Carmichael, when offered a royal reward for her service in India, graciously declined. She could not bear the thought of being honored in ways which her Lord Jesus avoided. If one truly wants to be His disciple he must first *give up his right to himself* (a total abandonment), *take up the Cross* (which must mean, sooner or later and in many forms, suffering), and finally *follow*—a daily obedience.

Gerald Vann speaks of “the disease of self-culture.” To have peace one must forget himself. To forget himself one must walk in truth. To walk in truth one must love God and his neighbor. When self-esteem is high, self-knowledge is very small.

Oswald Chambers wrote, “If we ever get a glimpse of what we are in the sight of God we will never say, ‘Oh, I am so unworthy,’ because we shall know we are, beyond the possibility of stating it.”

Self-esteem leads to rash judgments of others, as in the case of the Pharisee who “stood up and prayed about himself: ‘God, I thank you that I am not like other men—robbers, evildoers, adulterers—or even like

this tax collector. I fast twice a week and give a tenth of all I get.’” Jesus made it clear that the man who was justified before God was the one who had acknowledged himself a sinner. (Lord, have mercy upon us!)

“We do not dare to classify or compare ourselves with some who commend themselves. When they measure themselves by themselves and compare themselves with themselves, they are not wise” (2 Cor 10:12, NIV).

In the process of trying to convince ourselves that we are worthy, we may notice that some people whom we thought unworthy appear now actually to be better than we. This unsettling observation tempts us then to investigate further. The Tempter will gladly cooperate, impressing on our minds others’ small failings which we are happy to magnify. Thus we justify ourselves and build our self-esteem. We begin, like the publican, to thank God we are not like those others. But when were we given the office of judge? An examination of our own hearts before God will show us more and more plainly how much work we have to do in ourselves. Little time will be left to pay much attention to the defects of others.

While I disparage the exercise of “building one’s self-esteem” I indulge in it every time I imagine myself free from the defects I perceive in someone else. I am, in effect, thanking God that I am not like him or her. “O wretched [woman] that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?” (Romans 7:24).

We have an adversary called the Devil. He’s a malicious serpent, bent on destroying us, and he has quite a bag of tricks, beginning of course in the Garden of Eden when he convinced Eve that God meant to deprive her of the one thing she was determined to have. He whispered a delectable thought: *Hath God said?* thus persuading the woman that obedience was not required. She could have what she chose, and be the better for it. Thus the ruinous and all-pervasive sin of pride was born.

“To preserve thyself from this danger, choose for thy battle-field the safe and level ground of a true and deep conviction of thy own nothingness,” wrote Lorenzo Scupoli. Think about the time before we were born.

Throughout all that abyss of eternity we were nothing and could have done nothing whatever to bring ourselves into existence. Consider next that we received our being solely because God willed it and sustains us every moment of our lives. Of ourselves we are nothing. “What good or meritorious deed could thy nature perform by itself if deprived of divine assistance?”

J.I. Packer, in *Rediscovering Holiness*, says, “Sin is an ... allergic reaction to God’s law, an irrational anti-God syndrome that drives us to exalt ourselves and steels our hearts against devotion and obedience to our Maker.”

And another word from C.S. Lewis:

“The more we get what we call ‘ourselves’ out of the way and let Him take over, the more truly ourselves we become. In that sense our real selves are all waiting for us in Him. It is no good trying to ‘be myself’ without Him. The more I resist Him and try to live on my own, the more I become dominated by my own heredity and upbringing and surroundings and natural desires. I am not, in my natural state, nearly so much of a person as I like to believe: Most of what I call ‘me’ can be very easily explained. It is when I turn to Christ, when I give myself up to His Personality, that I first begin to have a real personality of my own.

“But there must be a real giving up of the self. You must throw it away ‘blindly’ so to speak. Christ will indeed give you a real personality: but you must not go to Him for the sake of that. As long as your own personality is what you are bothering about, you are not going to Him at all. The very first step is to try to forget about the self altogether. Lose your life and you will save it. Submit to death, death of your ambitions and favorite wishes every day and death of your body—in the end: submit with every fibre of your being, and you will find eternal life. Keep back nothing. Nothing in you that has not died will ever be raised from the dead. Look for yourself, and you will find in the long run only hatred, loneliness, despair, rage, ruin, and decay. But look for Christ and you will find Him, and with Him everything else thrown in” (from *Beyond Personality*).

Can’t Locate a Hard-to-Find Book?

www.Bibliofind.com—can find any book in the world, I am told (sounds apocryphal!). Gives price, condition, shipping, etc.

A Heart at Leisure From Itself

Father, I know that all my life is portioned out for me
And the changes that will surely come I do not fear to see.

But I ask Thee for a present mind intent on pleasing
Thee.

I ask Thee for a thoughtful love, through constant
watching wise

To meet the glad with joyful smiles, and to wipe the
weeping eyes;

And a *heart at leisure from itself* to soothe and sympathize.

I ask thee for the daily strength to none who ask
denied,

And a mind to blend with outward life while keeping
at Thy side,

Content to fill a little space if Thou be glorified.

And if some things I do not ask in my cup of blessing
be,

I would have my spirit filled the more with grateful
love to Thee—

And careful less to serve Thee *much* than to please
Thee perfectly.

In service which Thy love appoints there are no bonds
for me

For my inmost soul is taught the *truth* that makes Thy
children free;

And a life of self-renouncing love is a life of liberty.

Anna L. Waring, born 1820
(italics, E.E.)

A Husband’s Transformed Marriage

From a radio listener: “I have been struggling with behavior patterns that were destroying my wife and our marriage. All of the things that my wife had been saying to me for two years finally came alive when I heard your message. It seems that knowledge of how to be a

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godly husband has moved from my head to my heart. For the first time I know what love is and what it means to love. I understand that sacrifice is required—not giving of your excess but sharing of yourself. I thank you for your ministry. The Lord is leading me along this process. I still have a long way to go to heal the hurt I have caused my wife and to our marriage, but I can praise the Lord as I see His healing hand at work day by day.”

A Wife’s Transformed Marriage

In a Q & A period following a seminar someone asked, “What does a person do when they feel they have married the wrong person? I have made a wrong choice, caused great pain to my spouse, family, and myself. Where does one go from here?”

I received a letter from a woman who had heard my answer: “First of all, you don’t go anywhere. You trust God for your marriage. He may turn it into something beautiful.” This, she said, was exactly what *she* needed to hear. “I had resolved to give up on my difficult marriage and just leave. I had not trusted God in spite of what I felt about my choice. I was wrong. From that day forward I became fully committed and put the idea of leaving absolutely out of my mind. Such a tremendous relief! I have learned to trust God to turn my marriage into something wonderful. The week that followed was strained, but I played the tape from the conference over and over again. Things were going to change, and change they did! After I shared this experience with my husband, things became even better! I have also applied the principle of not being my husband’s moral custodian and, as you said, this is a blessing to both of us!”

Prayer

Searcher of hearts, Thou knowest us better than we know ourselves, and seest the sins which our sinfulness hides from us. Yet even our own conscience beareth witness against us, that we often slumber on our appointed watch; that we walk not always lovingly with each other, and humbly with Thee; and we withhold that entire sacrifice of ourselves to Thy perfect will, without which we are not crucified with Christ, or sharers in His redemption. O look upon our contri-

tion, and lift up our weakness, and let the dayspring yet arise within our hearts, and bring us healing, strength, and joy. Day by day may we grow in faith, in self-denial, in charity, in heavenly-mindedness. And then, mingle us at last with the mighty host of Thy redeemed for evermore—Amen.

James Martineau, born 1805

Letter From a Mother

“We come against many bumps in the road and I believe the unshakable faith that has been many years of a process has brought me to the point my family is at now.

“I’m sitting by my sweet little Ivana who just turned six. She is on her first full day of a 48-week regimen of chemo drugs. Just a short scenario that has brought us to this point: she was diagnosed with a malignant brain tumor in November, 1998. It was so hard to receive this news from my husband who had taken her to have the CAT scan in the morning... This is when that unshakable faith steps in. It has been a whirlwind ever since, but each day God has been our strength, along with prayers of family and friends. We no longer have our footprints showing in the sand, God is carrying us. His graciousness to our family through brain surgery, radiation, and chemo with many weeks ahead of us, has been a wonderful time to give Him thanks for all His blessings.

“A friend wondered if we might be angry at God. My husband and I talked about this and we both agreed this did not apply. Maybe frustration because of all the office visits and everyday radiation for six weeks. But anger? No. God does all things well. Psalm twenty-three has always been my comfort since I was a little girl. It was the first passage I memorized. It has been a promise all these years that God is always our Gentle Shepherd. Only God can give the peace that passes understanding. My own strength is empty. I have given my life to God. He gladly took over to work out all His purposes and plans.”

Is America Great?

The following is attributed to the French historian, Alexis de Tocqueville, who came to America in the 1800s to discover her secret strength:

"I sought for the greatness and genius of America in her fertile fields and boundless forest, and it was not there.

"I sought for the greatness and genius of America in her rich mines and her vast world commerce, and it was not there.

"I sought for the greatness and genius of America in her public school system and her institutions of learning, and it was not there.

"I sought for the greatness and genius of America in her democratic congress and her matchless constitution, and it was not there.

"Not until I went into the churches of America and heard her pulpits flame with righteousness did I understand the secret of her genius and power.

"America is great because America is good, and if America ever ceases to be good, America will cease to be great."

(What is our reply?)

A Lovely Day

I woke to a deep-throated foghorn in the early dark—a sound so full of nostalgia, adventure and mystery. No doubt it was only a great tanker somewhere out there, but I loved the battering rain that followed, the booming breakers and shuddering, slashing wind. My little study is a cozy haven, isolated and quiet, even when the sea is roaring. The lines have certainly fallen unto me in pleasant places (see Psalm 16:6). I have a "goodly heritage," for which I am unutterably thankful.

The Elisabeth Elliot Newsletter

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Travel Schedule September–November 1999

September 18 Nashua, N.H., Grace Fellowship, Sandy Berube, (603)883-8273, ext. 18.

September 25 Park Street Church, Boston, Mass., women's brunch, Elizabeth Shively, (617)523-3383 or 628-7241.

October 2 Jonesboro, Ga., First Baptist Church, 1st Ladies Brunch, Jane Barnard, (770)460-8802.

October 8 or 9 Bangor, Maine, Good News Radio, Michael Dalton, (207)947-2751.

October 16 Omaha, Neb., Omnipotence of Love Conference, 1-800-361-0210.

October 21-23 Mackinac Island, Mich., Win-Some Women retreat, P.O. Box 503, Petoskey, MI 49770.

November 6 Dallas, Tex., Dallas Theological Seminary Wives in Ministry, Debra Chisholm, (972)222-1780.

November 11 Thousand Oaks, Calif. Thousand Oaks Civic Arts Plaza, Simi Valley Calvary Chapel, Craig Brewer, (805)527-0199.

Lost a Pregnancy?

Gwen Kik will be glad to send a Bible study on this subject if you send \$2 to her at 114 Ayr Parkway, Madisonville KY 42431; phone 270/825-1299. Any additional gift will go directly to Door of Hope Pregnancy Care Center.

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How Much Is Enough?

Speaking of Israel's watchmen God says, "They are dogs with mighty appetites; they never have enough. They are shepherds who lack understanding; they all turn to their own way, each seeks his own gain. 'Come,' each one cries, 'let me get wine! Let us drink our fill of beer! And tomorrow will be like today, or even far better'" (Isaiah 56:12, NIV).

How much is enough? Thanksgiving and Christmas are traditional feast days, and feasting is by no means forbidden in Scripture. Rather, we are enjoined to rejoice and be glad. Who that know Jesus Christ have not great cause for celebrating? It is not my purpose to put a damper on Thanksgiving or Christmas feasts but to be reminded of Jesus' words to Martha, who was worried and troubled about many things when only *one* thing was needed. That one thing would have sufficed.

My husband and I were invited, along with six or eight others, to the home of a very wealthy lady in Texas. The menu? A large and delicious salad. Nothing else, as I recall, except perhaps coffee. She explained that she had been studying that passage in Luke 10. An unforgettable meal and an unforgettable lesson—it was enough.

Here in America most of us have far, far *more* than enough. Some families have agreed together to scale down gift-giving in order to be more generous to those who are in real need. The proliferation of garage sales indicates that people do eventually come to the realization that they have Too Much Stuff. They put it out for sale and along come folks who, although they are very likely in need of nothing, find something irresistible. They lug it home—but do they set about dealing with what they can now get rid of?

Hudson Taylor, missionary to China, took stock each year of all his possessions. Anything which he had not used for a year he felt duty-bound to give to someone who could make good use of it. If you haven't used it for a year, you don't need it! How many suits or dresses does a man or woman really need? Have you counted up the T-shirts or shoes you haven't worn for more than

a year? The pens that clutter the back of that drawer? The tapes and CDs you never listen to? The stuff in the hall closet, the basement, or the trunk of the car?

It took Lars and me a few years to wake up to the fact that we could travel much more lightly than most of the people we see in airports. Why, we asked, does anyone want to be burdened with so much stuff? It's enough to make you want to stay home! What, I wonder, would be my response if the Lord Jesus said to me what He said to those He sent out to the harvest field: "Do not take a purse or bag or sandals"?

As faithful stewards of what we have, ought we not to give earnest thought to our staggering surplus? Remember God's words, "If there is a poor man among your brothers. . . do not be hard-hearted or tightfisted towards your poor brother" (Deut. 15:7, NIV). The word *steward* is an interesting one, derived from the word *sty*, a pen for pigs, and *ward*, one who guards. 1 Peter 4:10 reminds us that "each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms" (NIV) "as good stewards of the manifold grace of God" (KJV).

A Note on Old Age

"(The righteous) will still bear fruit in old age, they will stay fresh and green, proclaiming, 'The Lord is upright; he is my Rock, and there is no wickedness in him'" (Psalm 92:12, 14, 15, NIV).

My oldest brother, Phil Howard, was a missionary to the Indians in Northwest Territory, Canada, for forty years or so. Now seventy-six, he lives in Edmonton, Alberta, but continues his linguistic work, now under the Canadian government. He sent me this poem, sure that it would speak to me as it has to him. It did.

When on my day of life the night is falling,
And in the winds from unsunned spaces blown,
I hear far voices out of darkness calling
My feet to paths unknown.

Thou who hast made my home of life so pleasant,
Leave not its tenant when its walls decay;
O Love Divine, O Helper ever present,
Be thou my strength and stay.

Be near me when all else is from me drifting—
Earth, sky, home's pictures, days of shade and shine,
And kindly faces to my own uplifting
The love which answers mine.

I have but Thee, my Father! let Thy Spirit
Be with me then to comfort and uphold;
No gate of pearl, no branch of palm I merit,
Nor street of shining gold.

Suffice it if—my good and ill unreckoned,
And both forgiven through Thy abounding grace—
I find myself by hands familiar beckoned
Unto my fitting place;

Some humble door among Thy many mansions,
Some sheltering shade where sin and striving cease,
And flows forever through heaven's green
expansions
The river of Thy peace.

There from the music round about me stealing
I fain would learn the new and holy song,
And find at last, beneath Thy trees of healing,
The life for which I long. Amen.

Moods

My daughter Valerie Shepard, on one of those days when she felt particularly inadequate as the mother of eight (four are still homeschooled), found help in these wise words from Oswald Chambers:

“There are certain things we must not pray about—moods, for instance. Moods never go by praying, moods go by kicking. A mood nearly always has its seat in the physical condition, not in the moral. It is a continual effort not to listen to the moods which arise from a physical condition, never submit to them for a second. We have to take ourselves by the scruff of the neck and shake ourselves, and we will find that we can do what we said we could not. The curse with most of us is that we won't. The Christian life is one of incarnate spiritual pluck” (*My Utmost for His Highest*).

Parents' Role

It was Job's regular custom, when his children had had a feast, to sacrifice a burnt offering for each of them, thinking, “Perhaps my children have sinned and cursed God in their hearts” (Job 1:5).

In my mother's Little Red Book (meditations from her quiet time) she wrote,

“When our children are adults what is the role of the parent? They seldom come to us for help or advice. It is wonderful if they do. Then out of our experience and perhaps the spiritual wisdom God may give us, we may be able to give wise counsel. Seldom, if ever, do they ask advice concerning the training of children. It is a blessing when they ask for prayer for themselves or their children, and this is usually the sole recourse of the grandparent, except for one tremendous duty: we can do as Job did. We have the one great sacrifice to plead—the Blood of Jesus Christ! May we be faithful in this duty and privilege for those we love!!”

Imagine how sorry I am that *I did not much more often seek my godly parents' counsel!*

Prayer

O my Father, I have moments of deep unrest—moments when I know not what to ask by reason of the very excess of my wants. I have in these hours no words for Thee, no conscious prayers for Thee. My cry seems purely worldly; I want only the wings of a dove that I may flee away. Yet all the time Thou hast accepted my unrest as a prayer. Thou hast interpreted its cry for a dove's wings as a cry for Thee, Thou hast received the nameless longings of my heart as the intercessions of Thy Spirit. They are not yet the intercessions of my spirit; I know not what I ask. But Thou knowest what I ask, O my God. Thou knowest the name of that need which lies beneath my speechless groan. Thou knowest that, because I am made in Thine image, I can find rest

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only in what gives rest to Thee; therefore Thou hast counted my unrest unto me for righteousness, and hast called my groaning Thy Spirit's prayer.—Amen.

—George Matheson, author of
“O Love That Will Not Let Me Go”

A Call to Matchmakers

For some years I have been watching with dismay the way young people are going about finding a mate. It's not working. It's a mess. Most of the world for most of human history has accepted matchmakers. That method worked. I'm trying it, without apology, for young people who are willing to have some help. Of course it is mostly women who ask me, but here's a letter from a man in Brisbane, Australia, who was heartbroken when he heard some tapes on which I had laid most of the blame on men, as though they were immature, uncommitted, stealers of virginity, brutal. Alas. Was I so insensitive? God help me. He writes:

“There are numerous men in my church who are going on forty and find the same problem. Our church teaches genuine biblical principles of discipline and the roles of women, yet we have hardly any single women in our church because of this. I can't tell you the heartache and pain that both those around me and I have faced in seeking a godly wife. It seems that in all the churches I have been in so far, it isn't the men who go out and lose their purity, it's the women.... God has made me more aware that as Christians we must surrender all to Him as in Matthew 10. As John MacArthur put it, 'As Christians we don't have rights, only duty.'”

A Single Woman Writes

“The Lord is filling my life with Himself, and providing unique and rewarding opportunities to be of service for Him. Through the avenues of students, overseas mission experiences, music ministry, Pregnancy Care Center counseling, etc. I am discovering the deep satisfaction of losing my life in Christ and thereby, truly, finding it. The dreams and longings of my heart have become 'material for sacrifice,' subservient to His high and holy purposes. I have released, relinquished and renounced my personal rights and have

placed my entire being in His all-wise and loving hands. My heart's cry is to be abandoned to my Master—to be emptied of all encumbering weights and residual holdings and be continually filled with the fullness of His Spirit. My supreme desire is to radiate His purity, presence and power.... I share one stanza of a hymn which has become my prayer:

“Take Thou myself, dear Lord, heart, mind, and will;

Through my surrendered soul, Thy plans fulfill.

I yield myself to Thee—time, talents, all—I hear,
and henceforth heed, Thy Sovereign call.”

—William Foulkes

Valerie's Recipe

On the night before, put two bagfuls of red kidney beans in deep pot, cover with water two inches above beans. In the morning, bring to a boil, turn heat down to *low* and cook all day, adding water if necessary. One hour or so before supper sauté onions, garlic, celery, and green peppers in skillet with a little olive oil. Remove vegetables, sauté sliced link sausage. Pour off fat. Add all to beanpot for the last hour. Then cook up lots of rice. Just before serving season beans with Worcestershire, Tabasco, and garlic salt. Walt loves this meal—terrific for a crowd of 12–14. Serve with rice, French bread, and an enormous salad.

An Interview With Mother Teresa

Dan Rather once asked Mother Teresa, “What do you say to God when you pray?” Her reply: “I listen.” “Well, then,” said Rather, somewhat puzzled, “what does God say?” She smiled. “He listens.”

What Is Worship?

In many churches today, the word *worship* means exclusively *music*, often led by women on a platform holding microphones. The word means a great deal more. It is a noun meaning reverence. Chaucer spoke of “a man of worship,” meaning excellence of character, dignity, and worth. Shakespeare used it as a title of honor, as in “my father desires your worship's

company." Milton used it as something held as sacred with a reputed connection to God.

Worship is also a verb meaning to revere, to reverence with supreme respect, to adore, to pay divine honors to. It takes many forms. When we wake up in the morning we might immediately worship God in silence for giving us a new, unsullied day—a solitary act of worship which pleases Him. As we begin our praying we might sing, "When Morning Gilds the Skies," or "New every morning is the love our waking and uprising prove." Perhaps we offer ourselves again, "Behold, the handmaiden of the Lord. Be it unto me according to Thy word." Hence we have *worshipped* by praying, singing, and by once more surrendering ourselves completely to God for whatever the day may hold, even if we have only a small amount of time at our disposal. We may worship while driving a truck or by doing the laundry as we offer our ordinary tasks to God.

In church we may worship by simply being there, hearing instrumental music and listening to the choir, and by joining in congregational singing, by listening to the Word of God as it is read and expounded, by praying, giving tithes and offerings, by receiving the Bread of God, by greeting one another in peace, and in other ways.

May we always remember that Jesus did *not* say, "If you love Me, sing about it, pray about it, write a poem about it, talk about it." He said, "If you love me, you will obey what I command.... If anyone loves me he will obey my teaching. My Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him"

Travel Schedule

November–December 1999

November 11 Thousand Oaks, Calif. Thousand Oaks Civic Arts Plaza, Simi Valley Calvary Chapel, Craig Brewer, (805)527-0199.

November 12 Torrance, Calif., Calvary Chapel South Bay, Susie Sullivan, (310)352-3333.

November 13 Diamond Bar, Calif., Calvary Chapel Diamond Bar, 22324 Golden Springs Dr., Linda Barela, (909)396-1884.

November 14 Laguna Beach, Calif., Calvary Chapel, Cindy Bond, (949)362-7475.

December 3 Costa Mesa, Calif., Calvary Chapel Christmas Coffee, Kathy Gilbert, (714)979-4422.

December 3 Moreno Valley, Calif., Calvary Chapel, Jeanne Edwards, (909)485-6080.

December 4 Riverside, Calif., Harvest Women's Ministries, Janis Vance, (909)687-6902.

(John 14:15, 23, NIV). In 2 John we find, "This is love: that we walk in obedience to His commands."

May we never forget that the highest form of *worship* is *OBEDIENCE*.

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The Elisabeth Elliot Newsletter

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How to Simplify Your Life

The more complicated life becomes, the more we need to quiet our souls before God. It is my prayer that the following simple (but not by any means easy) principles may be of help to many as they have been, and continue to be, to me. "The Lord God will help me. Therefore shall I not be confounded. Therefore have I set my face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed" (Isaiah 50:7, KJV).

1. *Go to God first.* Kneel in silence. Lift up your heart and hands. Listen. "I am ready; let him do to me whatever seems good to him" (2 Samuel 15:26).

2. *Receive the Givens and the Not-Givens.* "Lord, you have assigned me my portion and my cup, and have made my lot secure" (Psalm 16:5).

3. *In acceptance lies peace.* "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid" (John 14:27).

4. *It is always possible to do the will of God.* "If you love me, you will obey what I command" (John 14:15; 15:10). "Let the weakest, let the humblest remember, that in his daily course *he can if he will*, shed around him almost a heaven" (F.W. Robertson).

5. *Do it now.* "I will hasten and not delay to obey your commands" (Psalm 119:60). "You do not even know what will happen tomorrow" (James 4:14).

6. *Love means sacrifice.* "This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers" (1 John 3:16). Memorize 1 Corinthians 13:1-8.

7. *Choose your attitude.* "Your attitude should be that of Christ Jesus, who ... made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant.... He humbled himself" (Philippians 2:5, 7, 8).

8. *Analyze your struggle.* Is it merely delayed obedience? "For some it is 'Down crosses and up umbrellas!'" but I am persuaded that we must take heaven with the wind and the rain in our faces" (Samuel Rutherford). "I run in the path of your commands, for

you have set my heart free" (Psalm 119:32).

9. *Give it all to Jesus.* "Whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will find it" (Matthew 16:25). "I am willing to receive what You send, to do without what You withhold, to relinquish what You take, to suffer anything You inflict, to do what You command, to be what You ask me to be—at any cost, now and forever" (Anonymous).

10. *Do the next thing.* "In the evening my wife died. The next morning I did as I had been commanded" (Ezekiel 24:18). "Five minutes of drastic obedience would make things as clear as a sunbeam" (Oswald Chambers, *My Utmost for His Highest*).

11. *Give thanks always and for everything* (Ephesians 5:20). "Let a righteous man strike me—it is a kindness; let him rebuke me—it is oil on my head. My head will not refuse it" (Psalm 141:5).

The Present Moment

Although none of us are miracle-workers and none can say we do always those things that please the Father, yet the Lord Jesus, with perfect sympathy and kindness, invites us to follow Him. Most of the things He may ask us to do will be small, but F.W. Faber says, "Love's secret is to be always doing things for God, and not to mind because they are such very little ones."

My dear friend Jan Webb, crippled by polio long ago and finding herself growing weaker, sent me her favorite quotation from Jean-Pierre de Caussade:

Run, faithful souls, happy and tireless, keep up with your Beloved who marches with giant strides from one end of heaven to the other. Nothing is hidden from His eyes. He walks alike over the smallest blade of grass, the tallest cedars, grains of sand or rocky mountains. Where you go, He has gone before. Only follow Him and you will find Him everywhere.

De Caussade

The Sacrament of the Present Moment

Another Transformed Marriage

“I am ashamed to admit that your talks on *Me? Obey Him?* really convicted me. I had heard another Christian speaker say that she rarely had any conflict with her husband because he never forbade her to do things. So, in my thinking, if my husband didn’t forbid something, I was doing fine. But my marriage wasn’t growing together. We were going our own separate ways more and more. I have to admit that I didn’t really listen if he just disliked something or didn’t actually forbid it. After listening to your programs I decided to listen to my husband with more of my heart and see if I was missing anything. I wanted to honor God in my marriage also. I started *not* doing the things that bothered him and started accepting his authority when decisions had to be made. It wasn’t easy but with each small step God gave me the strength necessary to clamp my mouth shut or wait patiently for things to be done. We have a long way to go but for the first time in twenty-two years we are approaching life and marriage as a team. And now I even wait to do certain things until my husband can join me! Thank you for courageously speaking God’s Word into the darkness. Some of us are longing for light.”

Elizabeth Handford’s book, *Me? Obey Him?* can be obtained from Sword of the Lord Publishers, (800)247-9673.

No Need to Sin

“In my attempts to promote the comfort of my family, the quiet of my spirit has been disturbed. Some of this is doubtless owing to physical weakness; but, with every temptation, there is a way of escape; there is *never* any *need* to sin. Another thing I have suffered loss from—entering into the business of the day without seeking to have my spirit quieted and directed. So many things press upon me, this is sometimes neglected; shame to me that it should be so.

“This is of great importance, to watch carefully—now I am so weak—not to over-fatigue myself, because then I cannot contribute to the pleasure of others; and a placid face and a gentle tone will make my family more happy than anything else I can do for them. Our

own will gets sadly into the performance of our duties sometimes.”

Elizabeth T. King, in *Daily Strength for Daily Needs*, by Mary Wilder Tileston

Prayer

“O God, our true Life, in Whom and by Whom all things live, Thou commandest us to seek Thee, and art ready to be found; Thou biddest us knock, and openest when we do so. To know Thee is life, to serve Thee is freedom, to enjoy Thee is a kingdom, to praise Thee is the joy and happiness of the soul. I praise, and bless, and adore Thee, I worship Thee, I glorify Thee, I give thanks to Thee for Thy great glory. I humbly beseech Thee to abide with me, to reign in me, to make this heart of mine a holy temple, a fit habitation for Thy Divine Majesty. O Thou Maker and Preserver of all things, visible and invisible! Keep, I beseech Thee, the work of Thine own hands, who trust in Thy mercy alone for safety and protection. Guard me with the power of Thy grace, here and in all places, now and at all times, for evermore—Amen.

St. Augustine (A.D. 354-430)

Joy

Among the most joyful people I have known have been some who seem to have had no human reasons for joy. The sweet fragrance of Christ has shone through their lives. I have often spoken about dear old Mrs. Kershaw, a destitute widow who, somehow or other, began to work for my mother. She lived in a bleak old house, sparsely furnished, cold in winter and hot in summer. She had only one son. He rarely visited her. She was in her seventies, poor, humpbacked, and stone deaf. One of us would pick her up in the car each

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morning. On the door we would find a notice: "I AM HOME. COME IN." She was always sitting in her little rocking chair, black coat and hat on, black bag in her lap. She looked up with a seraphic smile: "Oh, it's the daughter!" she would say if it happened to be my turn to transport her. When she entered our home she had one thing on her mind: *How can I make the Howards happy?* She would set to work—washing dishes, doing laundry, making applesauce or brown sugar cookies, going upstairs to sit with our old, sad, deaf step-grandmother (can you imagine the exchanges in conversation?), and praying for our family. I've never seen a sweeter face, never met anyone who could have excelled her in lovingkindness and total self-forgetfulness.

"In that day shall the deaf hear the words of the book.... The meek also shall increase their joy in the Lord, and the poor among men shall rejoice in the Holy One of Israel" (Isaiah 29:18,19).

"Though you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy" (1 Peter 1:8).

C.S. Lewis wrote, "Joy is the serious business of heaven." I think Mrs. Kershaw lived in heaven on earth!

Three Days in a Castle

Last August we had the privilege of speaking in Aberystwith, Wales, and in Scotland, where my stepdaughter Katherine Scamman lives with her husband Tom and their four children. With friends from Mississippi, we took a train from Edinburgh to Inverness (no, the Loch Ness Monster made no appearance) where we had three idyllic days in Kilravock (pronounced *Kill-Rock*) Castle, the fascinating home of the Roses of Kilravock since 1460. Miss Elizabeth Rose, 25th Baroness, is the warm Christian hostess to tourists like the Grens. Everyone is welcome and there is a short Bible reading and comment at breakfast and dinner. The food was highest quality gourmet. Coffee was served in the drawing room following evening dinner.

Miss Rose gave us a full tour of the castle with its

dungeons, turrets, towers, and banquet rooms, regaling us with intriguing tales connected with the portraits of her countless ancestors.

Guests may choose a historic room in the castle or a country style bedroom in the wing. Lars and I had what surely must have been the baronial bedroom—beautifully furnished, private bath, the makings of tea, and below our windows a green sward where we watched tiny deer grazing. We wandered through the most magnificent ancient trees I have ever seen—one gigantic beech spread its huge branches to the very ground where they lay and then rose again. There are sports facilities, golf courses, fishing. Interested? Apply to the Secretary, Kilravock Castle, Croy, Inverness, IV2 7PJ, Scotland. Phone/FAX: (01667) 493258. Open from April 28 to October 2. You'll love it!

Books

Mountain Breezes: The Collected Poems of Amy Carmichael. Hardback: \$29.95; Paperback: \$15.95. Phone: 215/542-1240. I am delighted to recommend this book, since it contains hundreds more poems than were included in her very small book, *Toward Jerusalem.*

And now—a *much* smaller book—a booklet, really—something completely different from anything Amy Carmichael ever wrote. It's about sexual purity, and I wrote it for men and women 15 and up: *NOT Everybody's Doing It.* Price: \$.99. Call Back to the Bible at (800)759-2425.

Something From Lars

A line in a song by Tennessee Ernie Ford about loading #9 coal was, "Another day older and deeper in debt." We thank God that it is not the theme song of the Newsletter. Once again you have been generous in giving and in your response to our yearly premium offers. We all know that what you receive could be bought for a bit less at retail. So as we say in Norway "tusen takk," or *thousand thanks*. You may remember that *A Path Through Suffering* came out in large print, (for those whose arms are not quite long enough and who

are not willing to suffer glasses). *Keep a Quiet Heart* is now available also in large print. The publisher must be working out of debt 'cause it's priced at \$17, with no gold leaf edges. I get uncomfortable with numbers past \$15 so I'll mail it out for \$14 and that will include the postage and handling. The handling portion is free since I do it myself. Order from *me—not* from the Newsletter: Lars Gren, 10 Stawberry Cove, Magnolia Ma. 01930.

As to Y2K. Had about a month's worth of tuna fish and spaghetti along with cash for the month. You're reading this on who knows when, since the post office may have been or is still (?) inoperative. Or you lived in Detroit and on 12/31 decided that it will be a disaster—what to do?—drive to warmer climate but no gas to be had and now you're still stuck in a rest stop in Tennessee. Or it is January 3 and you are in a N.Y.C. elevator on the 36th floor, stuck, been there since 12:15 A.M. on the 1st.

God knew about Y2K since the beginning. We worried some, prepared some—perhaps too much or not enough. I may be saying, "Well, dahlin', we've got 16 strands of spaghetti and a can and a half of tuna left—all is not lost." "In his heart a man plans his course, but the Lord determines his steps" (Proverbs 16:9). Wherever we are at this time, God has brought us through, and may He bless this beginning of the new millennium.

The Elisabeth Elliot Newsletter

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ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

Travel Schedule January – March 2000

January 21, 22 Madagascar, Eveche Anglicava.

January 28 S. Hamilton, Mass., Christ Church Women's Ministry, Jo Ann Buccigrosso, (978)356-6948.

February 12 S. Hamilton, Mass., Gordon-Conwell Seminary, Ockenga Institute, David Horn, (978)468-7111.

February 18, 19 Visalia, Calif., Calvary Chapel, Kathie J. Smee, (209)687-0220.

February 22-28, Conference in Izmir, Turkey, Incirlik Air Force Base (U.S. Army), Protestant Women of Chapel.

March 5, Hopkinton, Mass., First Congregational Church, Richard A. Germaine, (508)435-9681.

March 11, El Paso, Tex., Cielo Vista Church, Mary Muller, (915)772-0288.

Correction: In the November-December Newsletter, the poem sent to me by my brother Phil ("When on my day of life the night is falling...") should have been attributed to John Greenleaf Whittier (1882).

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Whatever Happened to Courtship?

Two of my books, *Passion and Purity* and *Quest For Love*, have generated a gratifying response from readers. The first is our story—Jim Elliot's and mine—written with the hope of convincing young people that with God's help it is entirely possible to guard that priceless gift which can only be given away *once*: the gift of virginity. I have received piles of "Oh, if only somebody had told us!" letters, and much smaller piles of "So glad we found the book in time" letters.

How thankful I am that our parents were crystal-clear in teaching my sister and me to be ladies and my four brothers to be gentlemen. They loved each other—there was no doubt about that. It was obvious. We understood the hierarchy: the husband is the head of the wife, the wife submits to the husband, as Ephesians 5:22-25 clearly states.

Mother told me, when I was about thirteen, "Never chase boys! And always keep them at arm's length!" She assured me I would never find myself in a compromising position if I kept those simple rules. I kept them. Our father told my brothers, "Never tell a woman you love her until you are prepared to follow that statement immediately with 'Will you marry me?'" I believe all of them took his wise advice. All have stable marriages.

My grandfather, Philip E. Howard, wrote a beautiful book called *Father and Son* (in print again—1-800-292-2113). "In no realm of human mystery," he wrote, "is the growing boy more curious and sensitive than in all that pertains to sex. In nothing, I think it may be safely said, is the average father more reluctant, more remiss, more helpless and blind, than in dealing with his son's rightful desire to know the foundation sex facts, yet there is no subject touching our human relationships and God's plan for our lives, save the one supreme question of a boy's primary relation to Christ, that brings father and son into such an intimacy as that in which the father takes his son into his confidence on the sex problems that every boy must face."

If our parents had lived a few decades later they would certainly have told us to *keep our hands off, keep our clothes on, and stay out of bed!* I am spending a good deal of time in my old age saying just that to thousands of young people who, thank God, are beginning to listen. Amy A. Kass and Leon R. Kass of the University of Chicago wrote in the magazine *First Things* an article, "Proposing Courtship." What a breath of fresh air it was when I found it!

"It is no accident that the meaning of being a man or being a woman has been radically transformed in a society that celebrates freedom and equality, encourages individualism and autonomy, rejects tradition, practices contraception and abortion, sees marriage as a lifestyle, provides the same education and promotes the same careers for men and women, homogenizes fathers and mothers in the neutered work of 'parenting,' denies vulnerability and dependence, keeps mortality out of sight, and raises its children without any sense of duty or obligation to future generations. The roots of these cultural ideas and practices lie deeper than the sexual revolution, feminism, and the sixties. ... Even conservatives are looking for reform on the cheap, revival of good sense and decency in the relations between the sexes without sacrificing any of the privileges and luxuries of modern life. *We strongly suspect this is impossible...* [italics mine]."

"To explore the now lost practices of courtship, and to encourage the relevant sensibilities, we several years ago offered a seminar on the subject at the University of Chicago. We were moved to do so after two decades of observing, with growing sadness, the frustrations and disappointments of our students and former students as they passed through the decade of their twenties failing to find the life-partner they longed for or the private happiness that is based on lasting intimacy...."

"The process of courting provides the opportunity to enact the kind of attentiveness, dependability, care, exclusiveness, and fidelity that the couple will subsequently promise each other when they finally wed.... Courtship, a wisely instituted practice, is meant to substitute for any lack of personal wisdom...."

"The miraculous gift of new life, the astonishing

power of parental love for children, the humility one painfully learns in trying to rear them, and (especially) the desire to give them not just life but a good way of life, open a husband and wife to our most serious concern for the true, the good, and the holy. Parental love for children leads once wayward sheep back into the fold of church and synagogue. It holds out the possibility for the sanctification of everyday life, even in modern times....

“Our critics would like to believe that female chastity, or at least marked sexual self-restraint, is not necessary for sensible manners and mores regarding sex, marriage, and family. We suggest that the burden of proof lies with them to show how the important functions that courtship and modesty once performed can be accomplished in their absence.

“Classical courtship was, in fact, a manifestation of the true power of women as women, residing in their modesty. Men were the visible actors, but the serious woman was in command. This implies that the possibility of restoring sensible sexual mores, pointing toward marriage, lies mainly with women—to be sure, only if a majority of women reassert the powerful virtue of self-restraint. Their willingness to exercise their power of reform depends, of course, on whether they think that a fulfilling marriage and motherhood are of primary importance in their life. Everything depends on whether modern young women—including modern conservative women—will see things this way.” (Permission granted.)

Secret of Contentment

All of us, I suppose, have at times felt strangely displaced, wondering how on earth we landed in a situation so far removed from that of our choosing. In 1958 I was living with Auca Indians in the Ecuadorian jungle. They had provided Valerie and me with a house—“a gift of place,” bless their dear hearts! It was identical to their own houses—without walls, floor, or furniture. My hammock was swung, as theirs were, between two of the six poles that held up the roof. Valerie, who was three, slept happily in a blanket on split bamboo. Often in the intervals between sleeping and fanning the fire I found myself musing in the wee hours—what am I doing here? How am I to glorify the Lord in such a place?

Remember Psalm 16:5, “Lord, you have assigned me my portion and my cup; you have made my lot secure.” I realized that He was preparing *me* for what He was preparing *for me*. “I go to prepare a place for you,” He told His disciples.

Our heavenly Father knows how to place us to learn where we may learn lessons impossible anywhere else. He has neither misplaced nor displaced us. He assigns and designs according to His inscrutable wisdom—always for our blessing and conformity to the image of Christ.

The apostle Paul learned “to be content whatever the circumstances. I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. I can do everything through him who gives me strength” (Philippians 4:11-13, NIV).

I believe that in every time and place it is within our power to acquiesce in the will of God—and what peace it brings to do so.

A Disaster Aborted

A subscriber to the newsletter found herself pregnant. Devastated, she felt she could not possibly handle more than her three children. Her husband agreed. She had had difficult pregnancies and had needed hospitalization. “I knew that pregnancy would be a huge disruption and had many horrible thoughts about aborting the baby, and although I had been strongly pro-life I now felt that an exception had to be made. I called the clinic, scheduled an appointment, thinking I could keep it a secret and would have to keep it for the rest of my life. I knew I would have to answer for my sin, but felt so angry and desperate—I would be the only one to pay the price and I would be willing to live with it.

“On one of the dark days that followed I read your

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newsletter—an article called “Don’t Do It.” One line stabbed me to the heart. A woman had chosen to give away her virginity before she was married and now her daughter had done the same. I realized in an instant that that was a price I was not willing to pay—I would not have my children pay for my sin. I talked to my husband and we cried many tears but determined in our hearts to do what is right. I called the clinic, canceled the appointment. Sickness came as expected but I survived! My baby arrived and we put the verse from Jeremiah on her birth announcement, ‘You are loved with an everlasting love.’

“I hold her now and she looks at me with her little blue eyes and I love her in a way that I never thought I could. I have cried oceans of tears thinking about what I could have done in a rash moment and the unbearable pain I would have had to live with for the rest of my life. I have a new empathy for women who feel that they are in a ‘crisis’ pregnancy, but I also am more firmly convinced that if a person feels that pregnancy is a mistake, *killing the baby won’t fix it*. The pain and repercussions from that decision would go on forever—beyond my lifetime, to my children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren. I am so thankful to the Lord for His mercy in searing my heart with the truth and for keeping me from doing something I would have regretted forever. I thought you would want to know.”

Yes, dear lady, I am so glad. May the Lord make you an Instrument of His Peace to other fearful prospective mothers.

The Shepard Family

Readers have asked for an update. The Shepards live on thirteen acres in Greer, South Carolina—a far cry from crowded southern California. Walt is the pastor of Harrison Bridge Road Presbyterian Church in Simpsonville. Walter III, 22, is in his second year at St. John’s College in Annapolis. Elisabeth, 20, is a first-year student at Wheaton College in Illinois, studying voice in the conservatory. Christiana, 18, and Jim, 16, are for the first time in public school. Colleen, 14, is homeschooled (and has a horse named Joe). Evangeline, 11, Theo, 8, and Sarah, 6, are also homeschooled. Valerie receives invitations to speak but is very conscientious in deciding which to accept. Home and family

take priority. For all who feel inadequate to accomplish everything assigned, it will help to remember a word from a correspondent: “The only person who ever got everything done by Friday was Robinson Crusoe!”

Recommended Reading

Pathway to the Heart of God (published by Harvest House in Eugene Oregon) was written by Terry W. Glaspey, who was inspired to pray by the great Christian writers. I was convicted on every page, so aware of my own inadequacies and strongly tempted to despair. When I came to this one I realized that if even Donne experienced great difficulty in concentration it cannot be uncommon:

“I throw myself down in my Chamber, and I call in, and invite God, and His Angels thither. And when they are there, I neglect God and His Angels, for the noise of a fly, for the rattling of a Coach, for the whining of a door; I talk on, in the same posture of praying: eyes lifted up, knees bowed down; as though I prayed to God; and if God or His Angels should ask me when I last thought of God in that prayer, I cannot tell.... A memory of yesterday’s pleasures, a fear of tomorrow’s dangers, a straw under my knee, a noise in mine ear, a light in mine eye, an any thing, a nothing, a fancy, a chimera in my brain, troubles me in my prayer. So there is nothing, nothing in spiritual things, perfect in this world. I turn to hearty and earnest prayer to God, and I fix my thoughts strongly—as I think upon Him, and before I have perfected one petition ... the spirit of slumber closes mine eyes and I pray drowsily” (John Donne, 1573-1631).

Psalms 103:13-14 has brought me great comfort—“As a father has compassion on his children, so the Lord has compassion on those who fear him; for he knows how we are formed, he remembers that we are dust.”

A Letter to a Prospective Missionary

It cheers me to have a letter from one who is earnest about following the will of God. It is good to know you have a God-inspired hunger in your heart for missions, and are aware that He has been preparing you. His guidance involves making choices. He does not

give us pillars of fire, stars of Bethlehem, or hand-writing on the wall to guide us, but has ordained that we seek His will and also exercise our intelligence as well as our wills (see Psalm 32:9).

Jim Elliot corresponded with one missionary in India and one in Ecuador, seeking to determine which field he should go to. In view of the information he received, he simply made a choice: Ecuador. It was not "a shot in the dark." It was an act of faith in a God who promises to guide.

Must you have a "specific call"? A call is a combination of desire, concern, and commitment. "You can't steer a parked car," Jim used to say. It makes sense to move in the direction you believe God is leading, trusting Him as a faithful Shepherd to lead you in paths of righteousness for *His* (not your) name's sake. Will He make it hard for His obedient sheep? Of course not. And if you are "steering your car" in the wrong direction, you can count on Isaiah 30:21.

Yes, both moving and waiting are required. But you have waited. It's time to move. There may be more waiting, but God knows how to slow you down, quiet your heart, cause delays in order to accomplish His purposes. See Isaiah 41:10.

Great Things?

When I want to do only great things for You
Make me willing to do small, unnoticed things too.
When I want to do what the world will acclaim
Make me willing to do what will lift up Your name.

B.J. Hoff

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Travel Schedule March–May 2000

March 21, 22 Dallas, Tex., Council on Biblical Manhood and Womanhood, Timothy Bayly, (812)332-1334.

March 23, 24 Greenville, S.C., Miracle Hill Ministries, Carol Masters, (864)268-4357.

April 1 Durham, N.C., First Baptist Church, Alicia Baucom, (919)688-7308.

April 13 Boston, Mass., Baptist Bible College East, Sandra J. Wyllie, (617)364-3510.

April 15 Ipswich, Mass., First Presbyterian Church men's breakfast, Dan Oh, (978)927-9249.

May 6 Duluth, Minn., KDNW, Tina Korte, (218)772-6700.

May 17 Liberty Corner, N.J., Fellowship Deaconry, Inc., Sr. Rita Krohn, (908)647-1777.

May 18 New York, Walter Hoving Home, Beth Zielinski, (914)424-3674.

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Angry at God?

My faith has been challenged, there has been bitterness in my heart toward God, I have been angry at Him for withholding this blessing from me.”

The mail brings me many variations on this theme. Occasionally I am asked if I have ever been bitter or angry toward God because He took from me two much-loved husbands (He has mercifully given me yet a third—none of them sought after). Unless my memory completely forsakes me I believe I can honestly answer *no*. Our adversary the devil has tempted me in many ways, but I don't think anger at God is one of them. I will try to explain why.

1. God is my heavenly *Father*. He loves me with an everlasting love. The proof of that is the Cross. First John 3:16 says, “This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us.” As the hymn says, “Love so amazing, so divine, demands my soul, my life, my all.”

2. Our heavenly Father wants nothing but the best for any of us, and only *He* knows what that is, for He is the All-wise, the Omniscient. Even an earthly father wants the best for his child, but does not always know what that is.

3. God knows not only what we need but *when* we need it. When He withholds from us the one thing we feel sure would make us happy, it is well to remember His promise that He will meet *all* our needs, “according to his glorious riches in Christ Jesus” (Philippians 4:19). In other words, if we don't have it, we don't need it—*now*. Perhaps He will give it next week, but that does not indicate indifference, forgetfulness, or poor timing. His timing is always perfect.

4. Resentment makes us vulnerable to Satan, who is called the Destroyer. Think what a dangerous position we put ourselves in when we choose to be angry at God. Is there anywhere else for us to turn? In all the

vast span of heaven or earth *there is no other refuge*. “God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear” (Psalm 46:1,2). He is the Ruler of all. He's got the whole world in His hands. Shall we deliberately reject such a Refuge? Think of the danger in which we then place ourselves.

5. We have only this present moment. God does not usually give us previews of coming attractions. I can look back over many decades, remembering how worried I sometimes was, how bewildered at things God had permitted to happen, but now I see them all as a golden chain of mercies, gifts from a merciful Father who, like the father Jesus described, would never give his son a snake if he asked for a fish. What looks to us like a good thing might actually ruin us. How thankful I am for God's withholdings, for His unfailing faithfulness. Now, as I look forward to what may be left of my future, I think of John Greenleaf Whittier's beautiful lines:

“I know not what the future hath of marvel or
surprise,
Assured alone that life and death His mercy
underlies.
And if my heart and flesh are weak to bear the
untried pain,
The bruised reed He will not break, but strength-
en and sustain.
No offering of my own I have, nor works my faith
to prove;
I can but give the gifts He gave, and plead His love
for love.
And so beside the silent sea I wait the muffled oar;
No harm from Him can come to me on ocean or
on shore.
I know not where His islands lift their fronded
palms in air,
I only know I cannot drift beyond His love and
care.”

Surely I never want to miss “islands” whose beauty I never dreamed of in those anxious times. I want to be able honestly to say, *Father, I trust You. Forgive me for being so foolish as to imagine that You have made a mistake. Help me to receive grace to keep a quiet heart, sure that I am, in this very moment, held in the Everlasting Arms.*

Opportunities for Patience

“The exercise of patience involves a continual practice of the presence of God; for we may be come upon at any moment for an almost heroic display of good temper, and it is a short road to unselfishness, for nothing is left to self; all that seems to belong most intimately to self, to be self’s private property, such as time, home, and rest, are invaded by these continual trials of patience. The family is full of such opportunities.”

F.W. Faber

On Being Single

Several years ago at a convention I fell into conversation with a radiantly lovely single woman—clearly a woman of God. I asked her to jot down some thoughts on her life as a single.

“I am very rich. I often describe myself as a mouse sitting in the middle of a cheesecake. I don’t know where to bite next. I was very frightened about where I should live and what I would do. I had always imagined I would marry before college was over but that was not to be. When I expressed my concern to my father he had me sit down and list priorities for my life after college. It was a big decision to move to Minnesota while my parents were in Florida, but a very wise one as I have found a richer life than I could imagine. Now on being single:

“We should offer the Lord the sacrifice of Abel. Let it be a sacrifice of young, unblemished flesh, the best of the flock, of a healthy and holy flesh: a sacrifice of hearts that have one love alone: You, my God. Let it be a sacrifice of minds that have been shaped through deep study and will surrender to Your wisdom; of

childlike souls who will think only of pleasing You’ (*The Forge*, J. Escriva).

“As single people we must be willing to offer these younger years of ours to the Lord, not waiting for our life circumstances to change. We may be more free now than we will ever be in active service for God. If He chooses to have us married some day that is His business. Ours is to look to Him and serve Him now. He can use our youth to reach an increasingly more spiritually needy teenage and preteen world. We can give hope to the elderly who see very little evidence of faith around them. We can serve our family and friends by lightening their loads. The example we give of competent work will help others to improve their own work. Our profession will become a pedestal for Christ so that He can be seen even by those who are far away. We can also take this time to prepare ourselves to be brides—if not earthly brides, heavenly ones.

“When people ask if my biological clock is not ticking now that I am twenty-nine, I laugh. Four of my best friends have nineteen children collectively. I have four godchildren and many other children at church and in my neighborhood—many opportunities to ‘mother.’ Last Saturday I had twelve children overnight at my house. Between midnight, two a.m. and five a.m. feedings of the babies, and quieting and caring for the older ones, I couldn’t have heard any biological clock ticking even if there was one!

“My encouragement to singles who want to marry: Invest in the marriages of others. Lighten their load. Cook meals for new mothers. Take the children on special outings so parents can have time together. Serve and you won’t have time for discontent. Love and your heart will be filled with the love of others. ‘Give and it will be given to you, pressed down and running over.’ With great joy in Jesus, Michelle L. Chynoweth.”

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May God use Michelle's example to deliver others (not by any means necessarily singles) from self-pity, and to remind them of the words of the Lord Jesus in Matthew 25:40—"Inasmuch as you have done it for one of the least of these my brothers, you have done it for me." Ask Him. He will show you what to do.

Notes From the Jungle

From time to time I am asked about those years with the Auca (now called Waorani) Indians, the tribe who, in 1956, had killed my husband Jim Elliot and four other men. The first year is described in my book *The Savage My Kinsman*, but perhaps some readers would like a glimpse into the second year. One day in August of 1958 I settled down with my notebook to do some linguistic work with a woman named Dayuma who spoke Quichua and Auca. I could converse with her in Quichua, the tribe in which I had formerly lived, but my Auca was not fluent. Here's an excerpt from my journal:

"The work which goes into this sort of thing is just gigantic, for one so dull of hearing as I discover myself to be. Last week I made forty minutes' worth of tape. It took me from Monday afternoon till Friday night to transcribe without Dayuma's help. This morning I had a couple of hours with her. In that time we got through about five minutes of tape recording. Her attention is drawn to the fish that is smoking over the fire, or the stable fly that is biting Mintaka's derriere. So I play it again, make another stab at transcribing it. If the word I am trying to get happens to be one which Mintaka or Mankamu just said, I ask Dayuma what it means, but nine times out of ten, before she can give me a translation, she has to consult them. It goes something like this:

I: What does *uwiyeki* mean?

D.: (knitting her brow): *Uwiyeki. Uwiyeki.* Mintaka! There's a fly biting your ankle! Get it! No, there. Yes—oh, it got away . . . Uh, what did you say?

I: What does *uwiyeki* mean?

D.: *Uwiyeki.* Mankamu, what did you say about *uwiyeki*?

Mankam says nothing. Mintaka answers: "We were all in the yucca patch, hiding from Muipa and his bunch. It was raining and my sister was lying in a hammock with a leaf over the baby. The water was dripping *pita pita pita pita* under the hammock. Unime always said it was better to lie in a hammock, even if you got wet. Snakes couldn't bite you there at night. So while we were there in the yucca patch Dabu arrived. He said that he had come over the hill, and the others came by way of the river.

D.: (translates all of the above into Quichua for me, with a few interpolations of her own—none of it relevant to my question!)

I: Yes. Thank you. And what did you say *uwiyeki* means?

D.: *Uwiyeki. Uwiyeki.* Mintaka! Did you say Dabu came over the hill or went by the river?

M.: Nimonga and his bunch went by the river.

D.: It was Dabu who came over the hill.

I: Oh. And—*uwiyeki*? What does that mean?

D.: It means up and around and through the forest and over the hill, instead of through the river or by the beaches.

I: (groan, sigh) Oh.

So all *that* was what *uwiyeki* meant? To others was given the privilege over the following decades to translate the New Testament for that tribe. When Lars and I visited them in 1996 they were pleased to show us their copies.

Perfect Peace

Amy Carmichael gives a beautiful illustration from nature of perfect peace. The sun bird, one of the tiniest of birds, a native of India, builds a pendant nest, hanging it by four frail threads, generally from a spray of *valaris*. It is a delicate work of art, with its roof and tiny porch, which a splash of water or a child's touch might destroy. She tells how she saw a little sun bird building such a nest just before the monsoon season, and felt that for once bird wisdom had failed—for how could such a delicate structure, in such an exposed situation, weather the winds and the torrential rains? The monsoon broke, and from her window she

watched the nest swaying with the branches in the wind. Then she perceived that the nest had been so placed that the leaves immediately above it formed little gutters which carried the water away from the nest. There sat the sun bird, with its tiny head resting on her little porch, and whenever a drop of water fell on her long, curved beak, she sucked it in as if it were nectar. The storms raged furiously, but the sun bird sat, quiet and unafraid, hatching her tiny eggs.

“We have a more substantial rest for head and heart than the sun bird’s porch! We have the promises of God. They are enough, however terrifying the storm.”

Old Age

“An acrobat named Franks was beginning to feel or to fancy his strength and elasticity not quite what they had been. The first suspicion of the approach of old age, and the beginning of that weakness whose end is sure, may well be a startling one. The man has begun to be a nobody in the world’s race—is henceforth himself but the course of the race between age and death—a race in which the victor is known ere the start. Life with its self-discipline withdraws itself thenceforth more to the inside, and goes on with greater vigor. The man has now to trust and yield constantly. He is coming to know the fact that he was never his own strength, had never the smallest power in himself at his strongest. But he is learning also that he is as safe as ever in the time when he gloried in his might—yes, as safe as then he imagined himself on his false foun-

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May 17 Liberty Corner, N.J., Fellowship Deaconry Inc., Sr. Rita Krohn, (908)647-1777.

May 18 New York, Walter Hoving Home, Beth Zielinski, (914)424-3674.

June 26-30 Okinawa, Japan Evangelical Missionary Association, Tokyo. Don Wright, 3363-2-909 Sashiogi, Omiya City, 331-0047 JAPAN.

dation. He lays hold of the true strength, makes it his by laying hold of it. He trusts in the unchangeable thing at the root of all his strength, which gave it all the truth it had—a truth far deeper than he knew, a reality unfathomable, though not of the nature he then fancied. Strength has ever to be made perfect in weakness, and old age is one of the weaknesses in which it is perfected.”

George MacDonald, *Weighed and Wanting*

Now that I have reached seventy-three I echo the psalmist’s plea, “Show me, O Lord, my life’s end and the number of my days; let me know how fleeting is my life. You have made my days a mere handbreadth; the span of my years is as nothing before you. Each man’s life is but a breath” (Psalm 39:4, 5).

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As We Forgive Those

Two couples had gone together on vacation. What had been a happy friendship had somehow turned to bitterness. They had not spoken since. Several years later one of the women called me in distress, told me the sad story, and said she had now been asked to participate in the christening of her erstwhile friend's baby.

"Elisabeth!" she said, "Do I have to do that—after what she did to *me*?"

Of course I could not tell her that she must attend the christening, but I could tell her that she owed a long-belated apology for their estrangement. There was a pregnant pause on the phone.

"You mean *I'm* supposed to forgive *her*? She's not even sorry!"

"You know the prayer that begins with 'Our Father'?"

"Yes."

"Have you thought much about Jesus' words, 'Forgive us our trespasses *as we forgive those* who trespass against us'?"

My friend was silent. What measure of forgiveness would she be willing to offer? Who of us can plumb the depths of the Everlasting Love? We turn to the Cross, recognizing that it was our inborn sin and deliberate wickedness that put the Lord Jesus there. He bore all of our sins, carried all of our sorrows—"desperate tides of the whole world's anguish, forced through the channels of a single heart" is the way F.W.H. Meyers describes the sufferings of Christ in his beautiful poem "St. Paul."

"The true foundation of all spiritual life," wrote Fenelon, "is the knowledge of our own hopeless, incorrigible weakness, with unreserved confidence in God's power."

The prophet Isaiah wrote, "Surely he took up our infirmities and carried our sorrows, yet we considered him stricken by God, smitten by him, and afflicted. But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities: the punishment that brought us peace

was upon him and by his wounds we are healed.... Yet it was the Lord's will to crush him and cause him to suffer.... He poured out his life unto death and was numbered with the transgressors" (Isaiah 53:4-5,10,12b).

Think of the limitless measure of forgiveness that Jesus offers to us. Think of His lovingkindness and tender mercy. Shall we continue to stand on our "rights," refusing to forgive? "As God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity" (Colossians 3:12-14).

Baron Friedrich Von Hugel wrote, "The law of suffering and sacrifice is the one way to joy and possession."

Perhaps four things that have helped me when I have been hurt may be helpful to others:

1. Receive grace (see Matthew 18:1-35 and the passage above from Colossians).
2. Acknowledge the wrong. Make sure your judgment is based on the Word. Be straightforward with God (as Paul was: 2 Timothy 4:14).
3. Lay down all rights. Forgiveness is the unconditional laying down of the self (see 1 Corinthians 6). This includes the desire for vindication, pleasure at the other person's humiliation, keeping accounts of evil, the right to an apology, and bringing every thought under obedience to Christ (2 Corinthians 10:5).
4. What to do for the one who has wronged you:
 - a. If he asks forgiveness, forgive (Matthew 6:12).
 - b. If he doesn't, forgive in a private transaction with God.
 - c. Pray for him.
 - d. Ask for grace to treat him as if nothing had ever come between you (see Psalm 119:78) and stand *with Christ for him*.

Dear old Corrie ten Boom reminded us that when God casts all our sins into the depths of the sea (Micah 7:19), "He puts up a sign: NO FISHING!"

When the Music Stops

There are sometimes spaces in our lives which seem empty and silent. Things grind to a halt for one reason or another. Not long ago, in the space of a few days, the “music” in my life seemed to stop because of a rejection, a loss, and what seemed to me at the time a monumental failure. I was feeling rather desolate when I came across a paragraph written more than a hundred years ago by the artist John Ruskin:

“There is no music in a rest, but there is making of music in it. In our whole life-melody, the music is broken off here and there by ‘rests,’ and we foolishly think we have come to the end of time. God sends a time of forced leisure—sickness, disappointed plans, frustrated efforts—and makes a sudden pause in the choral hymn of our lives and we lament that our voices must be silent, and our part missing in the music which ever goes up to the ear of the Creator. How does the musician read the rest? See him beat time with unvarying count and catch up the next note true and steady, as if no breaking place had come between. Not without design does God write the music of our lives. But be it ours to learn the time and not be dismayed at the ‘rests.’ They are not to be slurred over, nor to be omitted, nor to destroy the melody, nor to change the keynote. If we look up, God Himself will beat time for us. With the eye on Him we shall strike the next note full and clear.”

So the Lord brought to me precisely the word I needed at the moment: there was ‘the making of music’ in what seemed a hollow emptiness. It’s His song, not mine, that I’m here to sing. It’s His will, not mine, that I’m here to do. Let me focus my vision unwaveringly on Him who alone knows the complete score, “and in the night His song shall be with me” (Psalm 42:8).

The following was given to me many years ago by my dear Aunt Anne Howard. I wish I knew the author:

Help me to live this day quietly, easily;
To lean upon Thy great strength trustfully, rest-
fully;
To meet others peacefully, joyously;
To face tomorrow confidently, courageously.

Letter From a Missionary

“I hate to admit it because altruistic missionary doctors shouldn’t be prejudiced. But the fact is my heart sank when I saw the tiny figure. At least her cataracts kept her from seeing the dismay my face must have registered at the appearance of yet another Little Old Quechua Lady that morning. As she stood in the doorway and clapped her hands to announce her presence, it wasn’t just my preference for pediatrics and obstetrics versus geriatrics that made me sigh. I dreaded the difficulty we would have communicating. She would not speak one word of Spanish and her Quechua words would be blurred by not having any teeth left. She would likely be deaf and my shouted replies would serve only to entertain the listeners in the waiting room. I guessed that whatever problem she had was not likely to be amenable to any therapy I could offer. Probably it was advanced osteo-arthritis of her knees from chasing goats over the mountains for seventy years; or loss of hearing and vision; or weakness from not being able to chew nutritious food for lack of teeth; or chronic constipation from Chagas’ disease and binding her abdomen with petticoats. Finally, if I did have some medicine to offer her, she was not likely to have any money to pay for it. Suppressing a fleeting thought of escape through the open window, I beckoned her in.

“She entered with a bent-over, painful gait, leaning on a stick. Over her shoulder was a blanket hand-woven of black wool, carrying a branch she had collected on the way for her evening cook fire. Her face was deeply seamed, the eyes rheumy, the fingers that grasped her stick were twisted sideways. Her fedora hat had years since lost its shape; her skirt announced that it had been lived and slept in for days unnumbered. Encased in rubber sandals her dusty feet were callused, the nails thickened. But she had not completely neglected her appearance: her two braids (which are a Quechua woman’s pride) were short,

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thin, and gray, but I noticed she had augmented them with black yarn.

“She didn’t know her age so I put it down as seventy-five. All my Little Quechua Ladies are recorded as seventy-five. She was a widow and lived alone as her children had long since left the mountains for the city. She had many aches and pains and as I cradled her knee in my hands I could feel the crepitations when she moved her leg. As I examined her I remembered how in the elderly, long after vision and hearing have been lost, the sense of touch is preserved, and I hoped that something of the love of God could flow through my palms to warm the worn-out joint beneath.

“I was right about her not having any money to pay for the analgesics I gave her, and she had many questions about what foods she should and shouldn’t eat and whether or not it was OK to touch water. I finally brought the interview to a close, anxious to get on to the next person waiting. She was not through, however, and I paced impatiently as she unspined the knot of the blanket on her back and began unfolding it, every movement painstakingly slow and deliberate. She reached into the depths and withdrew two small eggs, which she pressed into my hand—her widow’s mite. Then she made her way cautiously out, leaning on her stick, leaving me with an epiphany: ‘Pure and lasting religion in the sight of God our Father means that we must care for orphans and widows in their troubles’ (James 1:27).” (From Dr. Steve Hawthorne, of Potosi, Bolivia. [He is a nephew of Jim Elliot.]

Continue On

A woman once fretted over the usefulness of her life. She feared she was wasting her potential being a devoted wife and mother. She wondered if the time and energy she invested in her husband and children would make a difference. At times she got discouraged because so much of what she did seemed to go unnoticed and unappreciated. “Is it worth it?” she often wondered. “Is there something better that I could be doing with my time?”

It was during one of these moments of questioning that she heard the still small voice of her heavenly Father speak to her heart. “You are a wife and mother because that is what I have called you to be. Much of

what you do is hidden from the public eye. But I notice. Most of what you give is done without remuneration. But I am your reward. Your husband cannot be the man I have called him to be without your support. Your influence upon him is greater than you think and more powerful than you will ever know. I bless him through your service and honor him through your love. Your children are precious to Me. Even more precious than they are to you. I have entrusted them to your care to raise for Me. What you invest in them is an offering to Me. You may never be in the public spotlight. But your obedience shines as a bright light before me. Continue on. Remember you are My servant. Do all to please Me.” (Roy Lessin, author of *The Calvary Road*)

Prayer

I earnestly pray Thee, comfort those who have lost their children, giving mothers grace to be comforted though they are not; and grant us all faith to yield our dearest treasures unto Thee with joy and thanksgiving, that where with thee our treasure is, there our hearts may be also. Thus may we look for and hasten unto the day of union with Thee, and of reunion. Amen.

Great Souls at Prayer

Letter From a Radio Listener

“Hello. I often enjoy your show in Albuquerque.... I particularly enjoyed what I heard on your ‘Me? Obey Him?’ series. I am an unmarried man and many of the women I encounter seem so combative and competitive, it seems to me that marriage to one of them would be hell on earth. I’ve known several who have had the word ‘obey’ taken out of their marriage vows. I know several good men who have simply given up finding a woman willing to be a partner rather than a competitor and nag. Yours is a refreshing point of view and I hope God will show me a woman who shares it. Thanks.” (My advice: Pray. Keep your eyes open. Ask an old couple if they have a suggestion and would be willing to introduce you to a godly woman they know. That’s how my parents found each other. And remember, no matter how well you think you

know someone, there will be astonishing surprises *after* the wedding. I know: God has given me three very different husbands!)

Travels

Lars and I are given far more privileges and blessings than we could ever dream of, not the least of which are our travels overseas: Madagascar in January, thanks to a dear young American missionary couple, Todd and Patsy McGregor, who, with their two charming girls, entertained us in their home, arranged speaking engagements, and took us to a fascinating rain forest where we saw exotic flora and fauna, butterflies, insects, crocodiles, and—most charming and friendly—lemurs! In February it was Izmir, Turkey (I confess I was not sure just where Turkey was, alas—never did well in geography). Several hundred American women of the U.S. military called PWOC (Protestant Women of the Chapel) had gathered in a hotel eager, earnest, and—it seemed to me—hungry. Buses took us to Ephesus, not far from our hotel. I was totally unprepared to see how vast were the ruins and how marvelously well preserved. We stood in the street, imagining the tremendous riot caused by the apostle Paul when he “convinced and led astray large numbers of people in Ephesus and in practically the whole province of Asia,” infuriating the silversmiths by telling them that manmade gods are no gods at all. “The assembly was in confusion: Some were shouting one thing, some another. Most of the people did not even know why they were there,” according to Acts 19:32. We visited The Theatre, astonishingly

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September Book tour in Germany

October 5 Irvington, N.J., Gateway Pregnancy Centers, (973)399-8378.

October 7, 8 New York City, Times Square Church, Lisa McLaughlin, (212)541-6300.

well preserved, which accommodated 25,000 people. Asked to speak briefly, I stood at the bottom (the “stage,” as it were) and read a few verses about the apostle Paul’s godless background, and then his magnificent passage in Ephesians 1:3-10. Lars, at the very top of The Theatre, said he heard every word. Think of it! No sound engineers needed, no earsplitting decibel levels, no thundering beat!

A Note From Lars

Should anyone be thinking of a trip to Bermuda at the end of November, may I suggest Willowbank, a beautiful place, wonderful beach, nice accommodations, and very good food—run by Christians. For information: Phone: (441)234-1616; Fax: (441)234-3373, Address: P.O. Box MA 296 Sandys MA-BX, Bermuda. I am not trying to get up a tour group but we will be there November 25-December 2.

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September/October 2000

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The Grand Lesson

Give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus" (1 Thess. 5:18). It is the apostle Paul who speaks so unequivocally to us, no matter in what circumstances we find ourselves. His words are not empty. He had endured hard work, imprisonments, floggings, exposure to death again and again, five times had received forty lashes minus one. He was beaten with rods, stoned, shipwrecked three times, had spent a night and a day in the open sea and was constantly on the move. He knew dangers from rivers, bandits, his own countrymen and Gentiles, dangers in the country, at sea, and from false brothers. He had labored and toiled, gone without sleep, suffered hunger, thirst, scant food, cold, and nakedness.

He boasted of things that showed his weakness, and perhaps the most ignominious experience of all was his having to be lowered over a wall in a basket—of all things!

Paul was no stranger to suffering. "The God and Father of the Lord Jesus, who is to be praised forever," he said, "knows that I am not lying."

All of us have had some brush with suffering, at least if you accept my simple definition: *having what you don't want or wanting what you don't have*.

If you discover that the washing machine has just quit, you have what you don't want—a useless mechanism—but it is a mere "Oh no!" sort of thing which we would never dignify by using the word *suffering*.

If, however, you learn that someone has just filed a lawsuit against you, the "Oh no!" may be the beginning of many sorrows. You have what you don't want. Let us not fail to recognize that this is one of the many forms of suffering.

Suppose you have lost your job or your house. You suffer. If someone very dear to you has just died, you greatly miss what you no longer have.

Paul said, "I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us. The creation waits in eager expectation for the sons of God to be revealed. For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it" (Rom. 8:18-20).

The apostle had received mysterious revelations. He had known a man caught up to paradise, but was not allowed to talk about it. He wanted no one to think more of him than was warranted. But the supreme test, that which seemed most likely to stagger the faithful apostle, was a very small thing indeed—a mere thorn.

"To keep me from becoming conceited because of these surpassingly great revelations, there was *given* me a thorn in my flesh." What a gift!—a messenger of Satan himself, the archenemy of God, to torment the man. Three times Paul pleaded with the Lord to take it away. Had He done so, you and I would never have learned the grand lesson: *My grace is all you need, for power comes to its full strength in weakness* (2 Corinthians 12:9, New English Bible).

The Thorn

I stood a mendicant of God before His royal throne
And begged Him for one priceless gift that I could
call my own.

I took the gift from out His hand, but as I would
depart

I cried, 'But Lord! this is a thorn! and it has pierced
my heart.

This is a strange, a hurtful gift which Thou hast
given me.'

He said, 'My child, I give good gifts and gave My
best to thee.'

I took it home, and though at first the cruel thorn
hurt sore,

As long years passed I learned at last to love it more and more.

I learned He never gives a thorn without this added grace:

He takes the thorn to pin aside the veil that hides His face.

Martha Snell Nicholson

My Father's Remembrance of His Father

“When I was seven Father taught me to fish for bass in a beautiful lake in Maine. He gave me a hand line, and when I hooked a fish I got so excited that I tangled the line as I pulled it in. Finally, I handed it over to Father and he managed, as always, to straighten it out. Often since I have been reminded that, if I will only turn over my problems to my heavenly Father and trust Him fully, He can undo tangles.

“I remember how, when I was still a small boy and sometimes could not go to sleep at night, Father would sit beside me, stroking my hand, and singing softly, ‘Hide me, O my Savior, hide me.’ Once in camp when I tripped over a root and fell with my hand in the fire, Father sat up almost all night fanning and blowing on the blistered hand until we could get medical help in the morning.

“When we were Boy Scouts, Father sometimes would go camping with us. In the prime of life he was rugged and strong, and would gladly carry his own pack, sleep on a rough bed, and put up with the cold and poorly cooked food just in order to be with us in our recreation, He could stand more cold than most city men and would seldom wear an overcoat.

“We had many wonderful summers together at Gale Cottage in Franconia, New Hampshire. Father taught me to fly fish for trout in Profile Lake, just below the Great Stone Face (also known as The Old Man of the Mountain) and often we fished the lakes and streams together. Even here he was unselfish and a real sportsman. He would let me fish the pools first as we waded along the brooks, and always wanted to land his own trout with the net, taking his chances on losing it. While we were camping one night beside a mountain lake, after a downpour, some rough, swearing men came to spend the night at the same spot. Before going to bed, Father, as his custom was, wanted

to have brief Bible reading and prayer, and, to their surprise and chagrin, he invited these men to join us.

“Father rarely complained and was never cynical. He did not like to hear us say, ‘It’s too good to be true,’ but said, ‘It’s so good it must be true.’ When I failed in one course in high school, he talked seriously and kindly with me, and encouraged me to do better; with the result that I made a good record in the last two years of high school and at the university. He always told me that if I would prepare myself carefully, I should never lack opportunities for work.

“Father was debonair—genial, kind, cheerful, and with a keen sense of humor. He was the soul of tact and courtesy and most sympathetic. As I write, his smiling face looks down at me from one of his last photographs. He never ‘took a bad picture,’ and I think it was because his heart was right and his thoughts were on a high plane.

“Of many passages of Scripture that he gave me, two stand out in my memory. One night, as I was sitting on the edge of his bed, talking of my troubles and temptations, he laid his hand on mine and reminded me of the Lord’s words to Peter: ‘Simon, Simon—Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren’ (Luke 22:31,32).

“To encourage me in my Christian work, he referred more than once to the words of the Lord Jesus to His disciples: ‘Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit’ (John 15:16).”

[A postscript from Elisabeth: My dear Grandfather, Philip E. Howard, became blind in his old age. Whenever I would visit him he would ask me to play hymns on the piano. He would draw up a chair close beside me and lay his gnarled old hands very lightly on mine as I played. Usually I would find him quietly singing and sometimes weeping. He loved us all more than he could find words to express.)

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The Presence of the Holy Spirit

“In all places and at all times, we can have with us the Comforter. There may be through the day a constant interchange of private words, of little offerings, too small to have any name attached to them—by which the bonds of that familiar friendship grow closer and more real, until it comes to that special personal intimacy which we call sanctity.”

Janet Erskine Stuart

How to Be a Good Mother-in-Law

1. Thank God for this acquired son or daughter.
2. Treat this man and woman as adults with adult responsibility.
3. Remember your daughter or son now belongs to her/his spouse.
4. Allow them to form a new family—it's theirs, not yours now!
5. Expect this new entity to be different from you and your family.
6. Let the newly formed family do things its own way.
7. Do not dish out gratuitous advice (which is what I'm doing now!)
8. Pray for them daily.
9. Never criticize the “in-law” to his/her spouse.
10. Encourage them in every way you can think of.

Holy Confidence

“Go on in all simplicity; do not be so anxious to win a quiet mind, and it will be all the quieter. Do not examine so closely into the progress of your soul. Do not crave so much to be perfect, but let your spiritual life be formed by your duties, and by the actions which are called forth by circumstances. Do not take overmuch thought for tomorrow. God, who has led you safely on so far, will lead you on to the end. Be altogether at rest in the loving holy confidence which you ought to have in His heavenly Providence.”

St. Francis deSales

The Mossyfoot Project

Our friend Betty Wagner of Wayfarers Ministries, Inc. has alerted us to the great need for socks, new or used, any color, thick or thin, for patients in Ethiopia who are suffering from a disease called Mossyfoot, which comes from going barefoot. Pictures show hideously swollen feet, some with small warty nodules, others which remind one of elephants' feet. If socks are new, it is best to wash them. Shipping address: Dr. Kelemu Desta, P.O. Box 131, Sodda, Wolaitta, Ethiopia. Send by parcel post, surface, four pounds or less. On the little green customs label write “Socks for Patients.” Check the place “Gift” and “0” for Value.

So far sixteen patients have been taught to make shoes. They can carry on the trade in their villages. Each one needs a set of tools, which costs \$410. As possible, tools and leather are being supplied and subsidized. It is planned to have a rotating stock of leather. Surgery runs about \$100 per patient, and now all are being cured. Thank you for helping and praying.

Hymn for Grace at Table

(tune: Sun of My Soul)

We give Thee thanks with grateful hearts.
Grant that the strength this food imparts
Be only used to do Thy will;
Thy pleasure, Lord, in us fulfil.

A Visit to Turkey

Last February, Lars and I had the great privilege of going to Turkey to speak to a group of American women called PWOC, Protestant Women of the Chapel. Some were single women in the military, most were the wives of military men. Our hotel was not far from Ephesus, a vast and fascinating ruin which took us back to the tremendous riot that took place when the silversmiths discovered that “this fellow Paul” (see Acts 19:26) was leading away large numbers of people. Their trade was at stake, as was “the divine majesty” of the goddess Artemis. The whole city was in an uproar, everyone shouting

“Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!” They rushed into The Theatre, most of them not even knowing why they were there. Paul wanted to appear before the crowd but the disciples would not let him. When the mob discovered that Paul was a Jew they shouted in unison for about two hours.

The Theatre could accommodate twenty-five thousand people. Our group of two hundred or so asked me to speak briefly from the stone proscenium. I read a short part of Ephesians 1, “For (God) chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love he predestined us to be adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will—to the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One he loves. In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God’s grace that he lavished on us with all wisdom and understanding. . . . In him we were also chosen, having been predestined according to the plan of him who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of his will.” Lars had climbed to the top of The Theatre and reported that he was able to hear every word, though I had spoken in a normal voice.

The Ten Commandments in Verse

Above all else love God alone;
Bow down to neither wood nor stone.
God’s name refuse to take in vain;
The Sabbath rest with care maintain.
Respect your parents all your days;
Hold sacred human life always.
Be loyal to your chosen mate;

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Travel Schedule September–November 2000

September Book tour in Germany

October 5 Irvington, N.J., Gateway Pregnancy Centers, (973)399-8378.

October 7, 8 New York City, Times Square Church, Lisa McLaughlin, (212)541-6300.

November 3 Azusa, Calif., Azusa Pacific University, Daren Bachman, (626)969-3434.

November 3, 4 San Clemente, Calif., Pacific Coast Church, Carlynn Sabarez, (949)366-9423.

November 25–December 2 Willowbank, Bermuda, (441) 234-1616.

Steal nothing neither small nor great.
Report, with truth, your neighbor’s deed;
And rid your mind of selfish greed.

From a McGuffey *Reader*

Note from Lars—Greeting Cards

From September 1999 to September 2000, we offered sets of the Dayspring Elisabeth Elliot All-Occasion greeting cards to newsletter subscribers as a subscription renewal premium. I have more of them for those who want some. You may order directly from me (not from the Newsletter): Lars Gren, 10 Strawberry Cove, Magnolia, MA . If you order through me, a set of three cards costs \$6.00 (postage included). The retail price of these cards is \$8.75.

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An Assigned Portion

As we near the end of another year we may take heart, remembering the psalmist's words, "Lord, you have assigned me my portion and my cup; you have made my lot secure" (Psalm 16:5, NIV).

Nothing brings greater security and quietness to the soul than the assurance that *in everything* "God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose" (Romans 8:28). This is the indestructible foundation of our faith. No matter how monstrous an evil may have been perpetrated against us, both by intention and act (think of Joseph's brothers' treatment of him!) it is mysteriously transformable into great good by Him who is Lord of the Universe and my Redeemer. It took Joseph's suffering to accomplish God's will for Israel. The sufferer himself became the redeemer for his father and his hateful brothers. They meant it for evil. God meant it for good.

The portion assigned to me each day is precisely measured by God, not only for my good (although it may appear quite the contrary) but also—let me not forget—for the good of all the others whose portions He is allotting. We are not solitary individuals, but the children of a family, cherished and tenderly cared for by a perfect Father. He has *all* of us in mind.

My cup may have a bitter taste. Shall I suppose, then, that my Father either has had nothing to do with choosing my portion, or that He is not dealing with me in mercy and grace? Such thoughts are from our ancient foe who seeks to work us woe! It is the Lover of Souls who hands me the cup of suffering, giving me the priceless privilege of learning a fellowship with Him which can be learned in no other way.

The words of a chapel speaker when I was a student at Wheaton College have rung in my mind for fifty-two years: "If your life is broken when given to Jesus, it may be because pieces will feed a multitude, when a loaf would satisfy only a little lad."

What Sir Thomas Brown wrote in the seventeenth century I can attest to in the twentieth (and twenty-first): "When I survey the occurrences of my life, and call into account the finger of God, I can perceive nothing but an abyss and mass of mercies."

Not Angry at God

The May/June issue quoted a letter I had received from a reader who was angry at God. In response, Betty Jo Mathis, who reads this newsletter, wrote to me of a family named Yuill whose children were traveling in a school bus last January when a snow plow, loaded with sand, was making its way north through the hills of Wyoming. Neither driver, each with impeccable driving records, could swerve on the black ice to avoid the horrific collision that sheared off most of the passenger side of the bus. Two of the four Yuill children were killed.

Well-meaning friends suggested that the parents receive counseling "for their anger." Dear, simple, trusting folks as the Yuills are, they could not help being surprised that anyone should suggest such a thing. "Angry? How can we be angry?" they said. "Sure, we don't have our children, but we're not angry. *For this we have Jesus.*"

After the committal, the Yuills graciously greeted friends and family. They showed no bitterness, no angry lashing out at God, just quiet submission to the Father whose ways and thoughts are higher than ours. The world at large doesn't understand such submission; they don't know that God not only dwells in the high and holy place, but also with him who has a humble spirit; it is to them that God gives grace.

Life must go on. Relatives went home. Brenda Yuill set about the bitter-sweet task of putting away her

children's things. One older brother went back to school, another returned to his ship off the east coast. Carl Yuill drove his old red pickup into town as usual and helped pick up the town rubbish. Brenda resumed her job at the post office.

On Sundays, you find the Yuills driving forty miles on country roads as they have for thirteen years, to minister to a loving church family. On the wall of the tiny chapel the attendance record will now read 18 instead of 20. Things will never be the same—but *for this they have Jesus*.

Receive Affliction with Courtesy

Count each affliction, whether light or grave,
God's messenger sent down to thee; do thou
With courtesy receive him; rise and bow;
And, ere his shadow pass thy threshold, crave
Permission first his heavenly feet to lave;
Then lay before him all thou hast; allow
No cloud of passion to usurp thy brow,
Or mar thy hospitality; no wave
Of mortal tumult to obliterate
Thy soul's marmoreal calmness. Grief should be
Like joy, majestic, equable, sedate;
Confirming, cleansing, raising, making free;
Strong to consume small troubles; to commend
Great thoughts, grave thoughts, thoughts lasting to
the end.

Aubrey Thomas de Vere, 1814-1902

On Being Single, Part 2

In the May/June Newsletter you found an article about a contented single woman. I asked for more details, and she wrote, "I was courted by a wonderful young man during my college days. He possessed all of the qualities of the husband I wished for. All we needed was the go-ahead that this was God's plan for our lives. For three years we heard God saying *wait*. Then the answer was clear: *no*. It was not only clear, it was final. I knew I had to 'get a life.' God would help me but He would not drop it into my lap. I bought a house, opened a small business. I had a gift for homemaking, rented three extra

rooms to Christian single women who filled my home with life, prayer, and activity. Together we prayed, shared, gardened, and decorated 'our' home. When each married and moved on, my house became 'home' to a multitude of children, neighbors, and church friends. About every third weekend different friends' children come to stay while the parents get away for marriage renewal time.

"I have four godchildren now. They are the love of my life. Any ticking of a biological clock I might have had was silenced years ago by their love and affection. I am very glad now at age thirty that I did not wait around till I was married to 'get a life.' Life has been happening all around me these past years and many of my greatest experiences have been entering deeply into life with others. Here is a favorite quote: 'The pathway to holiness is located right where you are. In those circumstances, in those relationships, in that tiredness, in that challenge. The grace of God to make you holy is right there.'" (Michelle Chynoweth, 110 Crusader Ave. W., West St. Paul, MN 55118)

My Standard Is Too High?

Last June, Lars and I were in Japan and Okinawa for a large conference on Reconciliation and Forgiveness. Some of those who attended had harbored bitterness because of things which took place in World War II, which had never been adequately dealt with.

We were simply charmed by the loving reception we received in both places. Such kindness, such grace, such beautiful manners! (We were never quite sure just when to bow or how far to bend, but they were perfectly tactful to us!)

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Some young people had written to me in advance to ask questions about “relationships.” It seems that there is as much bewilderment in this matter in Japan as in the U.S. (Of course these were questions that required careful answers. I give short parts here).

“Your standard is too high for most of us to attain,” wrote one. “It can be discouraging, an obstacle to know God’s love, especially for weak Christians, or seekers and believers who failed their relationships in the past.”

My reply in part: “In Luke 8:11-15 Jesus made His standard very clear and very high. I dare not try to make it easier than He did.”

Question: “How can we, single or married, find healthy, balanced, biblical models of femininity, relating to partnership with men in general?”

“Read Genesis 24, noting the servant’s prayer and Rebekah’s graciousness. Study Mary the mother of Jesus. She put herself totally at God’s disposal. ‘Behold the handmaiden of the Lord. Be it unto me according to *Thy* word.’ Eve, on the other hand, said in effect, ‘Be it unto me according to *my* word.’ She proceeded to do what she wanted to do, regardless of God’s warnings.

“A woman is to be a responder, maintaining a certain distance, while the man is the initiator, accepting the possibility of being rejected. When a woman initiates by avowing her love she thereby casts forever away her ‘enhancing inaccessibility.’

Continue On

A woman once fretted over the usefulness of her life. She feared she was wasting her potential being a devoted wife and mother. She wondered if the time and energy she invested in her husband and children would make a difference. At times she got discouraged because so much of what she did seemed to go unnoticed and unappreciated. “Is it worth it?” she often wondered. “Is there something better that I could be doing with my time?”

It was during one of these moments of questioning that she heard the still small voice of her heavenly Father speak to her heart. “You are a wife and mother

because that is what I have called you to be. Much of what you do is hidden from the public eye. But I notice. Most of what you give is done without remuneration. But I am your reward. Your husband cannot be the man I have called him to be without your support. Your influence upon him is greater than you think and more powerful than you will ever know. I bless him through your service and honor him through your love. Your children are precious to Me. Even more precious than they are to you. I have entrusted them to your care to raise for me. What you invest in them is an offering to me. You may never be in the public spotlight. But your obedience shines as a bright light before me. Continue on. Remember you are My servant. Do all to please Me.”

Roy Lessin

Self-Offering

Take, O Lord, all my liberty. Receive my memory, my understanding, and my will. You have given me all that I am and all that I possess. I return it to You and surrender it to the guidance of Your will. Give me only Your love and grace. With these I am rich enough and ask nothing more. Amen.

St. Ignatius of Loyola

A Note From Lars

Over the years it has been fun to keep track of some of the different identities that Elisabeth and I have acquired. As most of you know, in everyday life Elisabeth Elliot is Elisabeth Gren. No hyphens. However, this has made it difficult for people to know what to call me. Some think Jim is still around, so I get called Mr. Elliot.

Elisabeth’s second husband was Addison Leitch. Once a letter came to Lars Leitch. (Had that been my last name, Lars in all probability would not have been the first one.) Then I get variations on my own name such as Lary Grun, Lars Bryn, Larry Grinn, Mr. Lois Gren. One confused soul began his letter with “Dear Person.” At least he couldn’t be mistaken.

The Elisabeth Elliot Newsletter is mailed from Ann Arbor, Michigan. A letter once arrived that began, "Dear Mrs. Arbor." Another time, I overheard one woman telling another that Elisabeth had been married to Hudson Taylor. (No, I did not try to correct it. I was pretty sure it would go no further.) The best one came from an editor of a British publishing house who gave notice that two of Elisabeth's books were out of print. He followed with, "It appears that we have allowed too long a time to elapse with regard to other titles by your late wife." This was back in '94. I wonder if I should send a note saying E. is back.

Lately we've done a few marriage seminars. I find that I am far from what I should be and wonder if Elisabeth does not long wistfully for the easygoing Addison Leitch. If so, then I must echo Winston Churchill who said, "My most brilliant achievement was my ability to be able to persuade my wife to marry me."

It's fun to remember the light moments but what is uppermost in our memories is our privilege of being with so many of you. We haven't met all of you, but we've met some of you readers at least once and others more often. We have received from you beyond measure of hospitality and kindness. May the Lord in turn bless you.



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Travel Schedule November 2000–February 2001

November 25- December 2 Willowbank,
Bermuda, (441) 234-1616.

January 25-28 Birmingham, Ala., Briarwood
Presbyterian Church, (205) 978-1322.

February 1-3 Vision New England, Stephen A.
Macchia, (978) 929-9800.

February 10 Moody Founders' Week, Chicago,
(313) 329-4000.

February 16-17 Aiken, S.C., First Baptist
Church, (803) 648-5476.

Recommended Reading

The Innkeeper. "So quickly do we pass over the Christmas words, 'Herod ... slew all the male children two years old and under.' You'll be stunned, as I was, at John Piper's story (Crossway Books, 1300 Crescent St., Wheaton, IL 60187).

The Christmas Miracle of Mr. Jonathan Toomey— A beautiful story for children by Susan Wojciechowski (Candlewick Press, 2067 Massachusetts Ave., Cambridge, MA 02140).

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The Sovereignty of God

Perhaps it seems that I'm "biting off more than I can chew" by beginning this small newsletter with such an awesome subject. Sovereignty means, among other things, supremacy—such as the power held by kings and presidents. But God's sovereignty is infinitely greater than any other. How wonderful it is to know that "He's got the whole world in His hands"!

In my old age I think a great deal about my Heavenly Father's lovingkindness throughout my life. There have been what seemed to be at the time obstacles to achievement, frustrations of the real purpose, mysteries beyond my ken. Yet, in retrospect, I have no doubt whatsoever that all is a part of His mysterious and eternal purpose.

Look at Psalm 40:5—"Many, O Lord my God, are the wonders you have done. The things you planned for us no one can recount to you; were I to speak and tell of them, they would be too many to declare."

Isaiah 30:15—"In repentance and rest is your salvation, in quietness and trust is your strength."

2 Corinthians 4:16-18—"Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal."

Although I was born in Belgium where my parents were missionaries for five years, my earliest memories in the U.S. seem to be during the Great Depression when my father was editor of a weekly called *The Sunday School Times*, which was specifically designed for Sunday school teachers. He drew a salary of perhaps ten or twelve dollars per week with which to pay bills and feed

the three children he had begotten so far.

My entrance to first grade was terrifying. I was sure I would flunk arithmetic. I almost did (I still count on my fingers). There were forty-two boys in our neighborhood and one girl besides myself. I was shy, had the usual childhood illnesses, and my dearest friend was Essie, who died when we were both nine. Our favorite hymn, "Out of the Ivory Palaces," was played at her funeral. Both words and music were composed by Essie's church organist.

I was blessed to have parents who set an example of godliness, self-discipline, and love for each other and for us. Although their expectations for their children were, I suppose, high, they were taken for granted. We had very little of the type of conversation that is nowadays called *sharing*. A rigorous program? We didn't know that. Following a talk I gave describing my growing up years a man came to me to say, "Wow! I'm sure glad I didn't have to grow up under such rigorous, regimented rules and regulations!" But I can't be thankful enough that I did.

Missionaries were my heroes. We watched hundreds of missionary slides, heard missionary stories firsthand at our dinner table (Mother heeded the scriptural injunction to "use hospitality without grudging" so we had countless missionaries, as her guest book proves; 42 different countries are represented there), read missionary books (there were few books recommended for Sunday afternoon reading). I began to pray that God would let me be one of those fascinating characters.

In the mysteriously wonderful *sovereignty of God*, following Wheaton College and Prairie Bible Institute, I was given a summer's work in an out-of-the-way place called Patience (of all things), in Alberta, Canada. It was good preparation for the

foreign field. My colleague Fay and I had a terrible time trying to get along with each other. We got to the point of wanting to pack in the whole enterprise, so back we went to headquarters (the Canadian Sunday School Mission) and asked for separate assignments. Nothing doing. We were told that we had no choice but to learn what it means to love one another. We learned.

“In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. These have come so that your faith—of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire—may be proved genuine and may result in praise, glory, and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed” (1 Peter 1:6-7).

“The Lord himself goes before you and will be with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged” (Deuteronomy 31:8).

The sovereignty of God is not fate but a dynamic unfolding of a design which includes all of our circumstances, conditions, heredity, and environment; the time in which we live, the things beyond our control—and *our* decisions, every willed choice. God knows how to make even the wrath of man to praise Him. “I was found by those who did not seek me; I revealed myself to those who did not ask for me” (Romans 10:20).

Thanks be to God for the power that determines and administers the government of His world. “Will not the Judge of all the earth do right?” (Genesis 18:25).

What to Do About Feelings

Do not debunk feelings *as such*. Remember they are given to us as part of our humanity. Do not try to fortify yourself *against* emotions. Recognize them; name them, if that helps; and then lay them open before the Lord for His training of your responses. The discipline of emotions is the training of responses.

No argument for discipline will furnish the power to discipline. He who summons is He who empowers. He is Master. As we give ourselves to His rule, He gives us grace to rule.

St. Francis de Sales put it this way: “We are not masters of our own feeling but we are by God’s grace masters of our consent.”

Try it. When, in the face of powerful temptation to do wrong, there is the swift, hard renunciation—*I will not*—it will be followed by the sudden loosening of the bonds of self, the yes to God that lets in sunlight, sets us singing and all freedom’s bells clanging for joy.

From my book *Discipline: The Glad Surrender*

From Despair to Peace

A woman wrote to say that she had read Elizabeth Rice Handford’s little book, *Me? Obey Him? She* asked God to speak to her. She felt that her husband wanted her out, so she left, wounded in spirit. She went to her parents’ for two months but was not comfortable there. Realizing that she was in rebellion and disobedience toward her husband, and had cut herself off from the Lord, she repented.

“What do I do next, Lord?”

“Ask your husband for forgiveness, since you hurt him, rebelled, and disobeyed.”

She asked for words and the opportunity to “walk out” what she had learned. God’s response was immediate. She talked with her husband from the heart, with God’s help. She did not ask to come home, but he invited her home, having missed her, and forgave her.

“God had met me and prepared my husband to be receptive to me,” she wrote. “I am blessed beyond measure. I feel complete again with my husband. As you said, men do not always do as they should according to God’s word (nor do we), but that was none of my business. I was to love him as Christ does, laying all my desires, expecta-

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tions, disappointments, etc. at the foot of the cross.

“I have a new love for my husband that I have not known for some time, and am trying to focus on his good qualities.”

Prayer for Our Children

Father, hear us, we are praying,
Hear the words our hearts are saying,
We are praying for our children.

Keep them from the powers of evil,
From the secret, hidden peril,
From the whirlpool that would suck them,
From the treacherous quicksand, pluck them.

From the worldling's hollow gladness,
From the sting of faithless sadness,
Holy Father, save our children.

Through life's troubled waters steer them,
Through life's bitter battle cheer them,
Father, Father, be Thou near them.
Read the language of our longing,
Read the wordless pleadings thronging,
Holy Father, for our children.

*And wherever they may bide,
Lead them Home at eventide.*

**From *Toward Jerusalem*,
by Amy Carmichael**

A Great Woman Has Gone From Us

My dear Lois (and the rest of your family):

It was no shock to hear of the homegoing of your wonderful mother, my dear Katherine Morgan, who had such a powerful influence in my life from the moment when Jim Elliot had insisted that I should make a point of meeting her as soon as possible. I often worked with her in downtown New York City where, on furlough from her mission work in Colombia, she helped with the production of a missionary newsletter. Then of course your

mother would often take me to your home in New Jersey for the weekend (I was living in Brooklyn) and we would have a hilarious time together with you four sisters. You'll remember the *hat show* we once had—"hand-me-downs" from dear Plymouth Brethren ladies. We laughed so hard we choked!

When, a few years later, five young American men were killed in Ecuador, your mother got into her old beat-up red truck and drove through the night from Pasto, Colombia, to Shell Mera, Ecuador. She was a godsend to all of us five wives there, helping with laundry, dishes, feeding three babies ("I've stuffed Valerie with green Jello till it's coming out of her EARS," she said), making us laugh, singing with us around the piano, and then, when it was clear that all five men were dead, she flew with me to my station in Shandia, slept in the bed with me, kept me on an even keel, made me laugh and let me cry until it was time for her to return to her own amazing work in Colombia.

I keep trying to visualize the tremendous welcome she has received in the Father's house! What singing, what joy, what laughter and glory! Miss her? Of course you do. Of course you *will*. But you would not ask her to come back. You will carry on as she taught you four, and you will bless many because of her. I bless her. I thank God for her. I loved her, loved her compassion, loved her total surrender to Christ, loved her boundless love for her people and all who beat a path to her door. Carry on, dear Lois and your three sisters and their spouses. You are in my prayers today, and so, unceasingly, is your mother, I believe.

With love,
Elisabeth

A Word From Lars

It is a beauty of a day. Sunny, bright blue skies, temperature a mild 65 degrees—just the kind of a day to enjoy in January or February, especially in Boston. But of course you need to know that this is being put together in the end of August. I'll try to recall this in four months or so.

In last year's issue, you will remember my Y2K recipe for keeping hunger pangs away during the

disaster via tuna fish and spaghetti: skip breakfast, 1/2 can tuna for lunch, and spaghetti for supper. Well, the tuna is now gone but as of August 22 we still had 12 pounds of spaghetti left on our shelf. Just got a bargain on 6 jars of sauce to aid in the depletion of our horde. Good thing it lasts. Made no plans to stock up for Y-01-K.

So as not to waste too much of E's space, I want to get right to the point and give our appreciation and thanksgiving to all of you who have so generously supported the newsletter with donations and who responded to the offers such as the greeting card offer last year. The response was so good that we ran out of cards. We hope this didn't present a problem for those of you who received the *Gateway to Joy* book instead. If you've had any problem with the greeting card premiums please contact me (Lars Gren, 10 Strawberry Cove, Magnolia, MA 01930).

We surely appreciate all the years the newsletter has been running in the black. Your generous gifts make it possible for us to send the newsletter to subscribers in 74 foreign countries.

We're in that age bracket now where, when we meet someone, they often ask, "Are you feeling well?" or, "You must be tired." Should some of you wonder the same—as far as I know we are well. This in spite of two reports of my demise and the letter to me from a publisher in the U.K. who was sorry that he waited too long to get a

Travel Schedule January 2001–March 2001

January 25-28 Birmingham, Ala., Briarwood Presbyterian Church, (205)978-1322.

February 1-3 Vision New England, Stephen A. Macchia, (978)929-9800.

February 10 Moody Founders' Week, Chicago, Ill., (312)329-4000.

February 16-17 Aiken, S.C., First Baptist Church, (803)648-5476.

March 3-5 Denver, Colo., Calvary Chapel, Jennifer Stipe, (303)421-3800.

March 10 Norfolk, Mass., Emmanuel Baptist Church, Kathy Bridge, (508)528-5862.

March 16-17 Raleigh, N.C., Emmanuel Baptist Church, (919)834-3417.

March 24 Marlboro, Mass., Greater Grace Christian Fellowship, Sarah Daigle, (508)845-2327.

book from E now that she is gone. Also for those who have asked and prayed about my glaucoma condition—I'm thankful to the Lord that I still see well and bump my head enough to remind me of the blind spots that I do have. So thank you for the support, prayers, and friendship of so many of you we've had the privilege of meeting on the road.

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The Elisabeth Elliot Newsletter

March/April 2001

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What Price Contentment?

Nothing so hinders us," said St. Francis de Sales, "as to be longing after something else." And that longing, that discontent, can be a contagious disease.

When my granddaughter Elisabeth was eleven years old she came to visit us in Massachusetts. Since she was being homeschooled at that time, her mother sent math lessons that I was to help her complete. I had promised to take her to the beach, and of course that was all she could think of that morning.

"Granny, can we go now?" she asked eagerly.

"No, we'll do the math lesson first and we'll have the afternoon free."

"Oh, but it's really nice outside," she suggested, "I can do my math this afternoon."

"Elisabeth, I want you to think about this," I said firmly, well aware of her ability to reason. "Wouldn't you be happier at the beach if your math were finished?"

She shrugged her shoulders. "Yeah, I guess so," whereupon she sat down and completed that day's lesson and half of the next, muttering, "I don't see why I have to do this. What good is it going to do me?"

Complaining can have grave consequences. The Lord provided manna for the Israelites, and though it was free for the taking and tasted like butter-cakes, they were not satisfied. They wanted meat.

Remembering what others were enjoying, they pined for the good old days in Egypt—leeks and onions, garlic and fish. Finally the Lord tired of them and said they could have meat. Where was it to come from? Was the Lord's power limited?

"You will see this very day if my words come true," He said, and sent a wind to drive in quails,

enough to cover the ground for a full day's journey.

Eagerly the people gathered quails all day, all night, and all the next day. The man who got the least gathered about sixty bushels. Discontent and greed go hand in hand.

Life becomes boring. Nothing could be more boring than moaning about how boring everything is. Next comes self-pity, one of Satan's most powerful weapons.

A.W. Tozer said that the yearning after happiness, found so widely among Christians professing a superior degree of sanctity, is sufficient proof that such sanctity is not indeed present. The truly spiritual man knows that God will give abundance of joy after we have become able to receive it without injury to our souls, but he does not demand it at once (from *That Incredible Christian*, Christian Publications, Inc., Harrisburg, Pa.).

The Lord sent Isaiah "to comfort all who mourn, to provide for those who grieve, to bestow on them a crown of beauty instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, and a garment of praise instead of a spirit of despair" (Isaiah 61:2-3).

The Thread of Life

"I sometimes feel the thread of life is slender,
And soon with me the labor will be wrought;
Then grows my heart to other hearts more tender.
The time is short."

D.M. Craik

A Soul's Probation

Anyone who will try each day to live for the sake of others will grow more and more gracious in thought and bearing, however dull and even squalid may be the outward circumstances of his soul's probation.

Francis Paget (1851)

Amy Beth Larson

She is a remarkable single woman who daily lays down her life for the sake of disadvantaged children in Denver, Colorado. I have been receiving her unique and heartrending letters, *West Side Stories*:

"Consider Sarah, a third-grader. She is right in the middle of nine children, half of whom live with mom, the other four having been farmed out to relatives. Sarah is one of ours who truly lives in poverty. Many of our families struggle to put food on the table but still have big screen TV's, pagers, \$80 shoes and gold jewelry ... but not Sarah. She wears sandals that are at least three sizes too big, and her mom asked me last week if I could get them some underwear. The crumbling plaster walls in her home are held together with duct tape, and her front window is a piece of cardboard. I knocked on the door, and her drunk father nearly ran into me. Carefully moving past him I found Sarah's mom holding a baby in one hand and trying to cook with the other. She was frantic and agitated. Her movements were quick and careless. Words stumbled out of her mouth. She was angry, but still careful to apologize after every curse word.

"'God . . . I'm sorry. I know you're church people. It's just that this is who I am.

"I nodded, It's OK, be who you are.

"I'm just going crazy. He's drunk again . . again!"

"I sat down on a mismatched kitchen chair that was covered with a pile of laundry.

"Now, don't get me wrong, I'm no stranger to

the bottle. But when I drink, I just get loaded and pass out on the couch. I don't hurt nobody.'

"I listened, thinking about her four kids under the age of nine.

"'I don't hurt a soul ... unless I'm provoked. And that's really not the same thing.' She handed one of her young sons a cup of Jell-O, "'Baby, go find your dad and tell him to eat this.'" She had some strange notion that Jell-O reversed the effects of alcohol.

"'I can't talk about this no more. It just works me up. I'm a wreck. Why are you here?'

"I smiled and picked up her baby girl. 'To see if your kids want to go to summer club.'

"'Oh, they do, I'm sure. Let me get Sarah.' She turned around and yelled towards the back of the apartment. And then out of the back room came eight-year-old Sarah, dressed in a beautiful sundress..."

[Gifts for the work of Amy Beth Larson may be sent to The Third Story, Box 9575, Denver, CO 80209.]

Prayer

"O my Lord, in Thine arms I am safe; keep me, and I have nothing to fear; give me up, and I have nothing to hope for. I know nothing about the future, but I rely upon Thee. I pray Thee to give me what is good for me; I pray Thee to take from me whatever may imperil my salvation. I leave it all to Thee, because Thou knowest and I do not. If Thou bringest pain or sorrow on me, give me grace to bear it well, keep me from fretfulness and selfishness. If Thou givest me health and strength and success in this world, keep me ever on my guard

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lest these great gifts carry me away from Thee. Give me to know thee, to believe on Thee, to love Thee, to serve Thee, to live to and for Thee. Give me to die just at that time and in that way which is most for Thy glory. Amen.

John Henry Newman

A Poor Scottish Farmer

His name was Fleming. One day, while trying to make a living for his family, he heard a cry for help coming from a nearby bog. He dropped his tools and ran to the bog. There, mired to his waist in black mulch, was a terrified boy, screaming and struggling to free himself. Farmer Fleming saved the lad from what could have been a slow and terrifying death.

The next day a fancy carriage pulled up to the Scotsman's sparse surroundings. An elegantly dressed nobleman stepped out and introduced himself as the father of the boy Farmer Fleming had saved. "I want to repay you," said the nobleman. "You saved my son's life."

"No, I can't accept payment for what I did," the Scottish farmer replied, waving off the offer.

At that moment, the farmer's own son came to the door of the family hovel.

"Is that your son?" the nobleman asked.

"Yes," the farmer replied proudly.

"I'll make you a deal. Let me take him and give him a good education. If the lad is anything like his father, he'll grow to be a man you can be proud of."

And that he did. In time, Fleming's son graduated from St. Mary's Hospital Medical School in London, and went on to become known throughout the world as the noted Sir Alexander Fleming, the discoverer of penicillin.

Years afterward, the nobleman's son was stricken with pneumonia. What saved him? Penicillin. The name of the nobleman? Lord Randolph Churchill. His son's name? Sir Winston Churchill.

Grow Old Along With Me

My father often quoted Robert Browning's poem to my mother, who lived many more years than he did. I have to remind myself repeatedly that I am one of the Old Folks. If there happens to be a mirror nearby, the truth cannot be ignored!

"Grow old along with me! The best is yet to be,
The last of life, for which the first was made.
Our times are in His hand Who saith, 'A whole I
planned,
Youth shows but half; trust God; see all, nor be
afraid!'"

Holy Children

"Let those parents that desire Holy Children learn to make them possessors of Heaven and Earth betimes," wrote Traherne, "to remove silly objects from before them, to magnify nothing but what is great indeed, and to talk of God to them, and of His works and ways before they can either speak or go [walk]."

Holy Children. That describes what Amy Carmichael desired as a mother from the very beginning of the children's work. Many of those children are old women now, living quietly in the red brick bungalows of Dohnavur after years of self-giving. "Be the first," their Amma had told them, "wherever there is a sacrifice to be made, a self-denial practiced, or an impetus to be given." It was no empty pedantry. Her own life made the truth visible to her children. The word became flesh and lived with them.

Excerpt from my book *A Chance to Die*

Greeting Cards

Through 2001, Lars will have a supply of the Dayspring Elisabeth Elliot All-Occasion greeting cards available in sets of three for \$6.00 (retail \$8.75). Order from Lars Green, 10 Strawberry Cove, Magnolia, MA 01930.

Broken Nests

A farmer who saw a bird building its nest in a heap of branches reluctantly destroyed the work of the industrious bird. The next day the bird tried hard to build again, and for the second time the farmer broke it up. On the third day, the bird built her nest on a limb near the kitchen door, and the farmer smiled and let it remain.

Long before the eggs were hatched the pile of branches from which the bird had twice been driven was burned. Like the lowly bird, we may sometimes wonder why God would break up our nest. Were we able to see as God does, we would know that our heavenly Father has kept us from destruction that will burn the nests of all who abide not in Christ.

Author unknown

Spiritual Growth

It is when the death of winter has done its work that the sun can draw out in each plant its own individuality, and make its existence full and fragrant. Spiritual growth means something more than the sweeping away of the old leaves of sin—it means the life of the Lord Jesus developed in us.

Lilias Trotter

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March 24 Marlboro, Mass., Greater Grace Christian Fellowship, Sarah Daigle, (508)845-2327.

April 6-8 Asheville, N.C., The Cove, Scott Holmquist, (828)298-2092.

April 20-21 Vista, Calif., Calvary Chapel, Denise Salvato, (760)726-4224.

April 21 Murrieta, Calif., Calvary Chapel, Kelly Dall, (909)677-5667.

April 22 Fallbrook, Calif., Calvary Chapel., Ruby Phillips, (760)728-9138.

The Joy of Music

Last year I was amazed when Diane Bish, world renowned organist, asked me to join her at Coral Ridge Presbyterian Church in Ft. Lauderdale. She played some of my favorite hymns on the magnificent organ and then asked me to talk about what hymns had meant in my life. She even persuaded me to play a hymn or two. A one-hour video tape is \$30 plus shipping and handling. Call Donna at the Joy of Music, 1-800-933-4844.

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A Strange Peace

Shortly before my daughter Valerie, my only child, went off to college as a freshman, a “sudden tide” came over me one morning as I was working in the kitchen. She had been the great joy of my life for seventeen years. When she was about eleven or twelve, friends heard me speak of what seemed to me a near-perfect mother-daughter relationship.

“Oh, but wait till she’s a teenager!” they warned, “then you’ll have some rough times.” I was still waiting. I could not conceive of life without her.

“She has grown up,” I told myself. “My job is finished, the job I loved more than anything else I have ever done. The nest is about to empty.”

Overcome with sadness, I sat down at the wicker table, picked up the phone, and dialed Van, who is the sort of friend you don’t have to explain things to. Tears came as soon as I tried to talk.

“It’s O.K., Bet,” she said quietly. “It’ll be O.K.”

She did not need to explain to me what she meant. She knew I understood. We believe the same things—things like Julian of Norwich’s “All shall be well, and all shall be well, and all manner of thing shall be well.” But I needed to hear her say it. I needed to have the Word made flesh for me in her voice. Van’s simple word, “It’ll be O.K.,” encouraged me to trust and obey. I learned that in this renunciation I had what the seed has that falls into the ground—a new potential for life-giving. I would be lonely, but I now had something precious to offer in love to my Lord, which in turn would make something quite different out of my loneliness. In some mysterious way which I could not predict, that offering would bring forth

fruit. It would make a difference to the wholeness of the Body of which I was but a single member.

The way we respond to the “givens” in our daily experience determines our growth in holiness. When we pray, “Give us this day our daily bread,” God answers that prayer, measuring out just what we need for spiritual as well as physical growth.

Enough That Christ Knows All

Lord, it belongs not to my care
Whether I die or live;
To love and serve Thee is my share,
And this Thy grace must give.

If life be long, I will be glad
That I may long obey;
If short, why should I then be sad
To end my toilsome day?

Christ leads me through no darker rooms
Than He went through before;
He that unto God’s kingdom comes
Must enter by this door.

Come, Lord, when grace hath made me meet
Thy blessed face to see;
For if Thy work on earth be sweet
What will Thy glory be!

My knowledge of that life is small,
The eye of faith is dim;
But ‘tis enough that Christ knows all
And I shall be with Him.

Richard Baxter, 1681

A Christian on the Beach

It has been a good many years since I went to a public beach to swim and sun, but I have had glimpses from a distance of what goes on there. Honestly, I'm appalled. What ever happened to modesty—masculine or feminine? The Bible is crystal-clear regarding this crucial matter. Hear the Word of God, spoken through 1 Timothy 2:8-10:

“I want men everywhere to lift up holy hands in prayer, without anger or disputing. I also want women to dress modestly, with decency and propriety, not with braided hair or gold or pearls or expensive clothes, but with good deeds, appropriate for women who profess to worship God.”

A brother in Christ writes, “Many men are wicked, and will lust after you in spite of anything you can do to prevent it. They have ‘eyes full of adultery,’ and ‘they never stop sinning’ (2 Peter 2:14). Should you therefore help them to sin? Should you put further temptation in their way? Will God excuse you if you do?”

“Other men, godly men, are not wicked but only weak. David was not wicked. He was a man after God's own heart. But in the presence of an unclothed woman, he was weak—and it would be a rare man who was not.”

This is a touchy subject. The newsletter has not room for more than these few lines. Men, put yourselves at God's disposal. Ask Him to show you His holy will. Women, examine your wardrobe. Ponder the effects of what you “innocently” display on the beach. The aforementioned brother reminds men that there is nothing wrong or evil about physical beauty. “It is the creation of God, and is therefore very good, designed by God for a specific purpose. The woman was made ‘for man’ (1 Corinthians 11:9). The perfectly obvious design of her beauty is to ravish and satisfy the heart of a man, but a man, not every man. If God has joined you to that one man, then by all means give that beauty to him with all your heart (see Song of

Solomon 8:14). Thus satisfied, he will be less susceptible to the beauty and charms of other women.”

Most earnestly I ask my readers to take these knotty questions to the foot of the Cross. Jim Elliot said, “Crucify doubt. It shall be shown thee what thou must do.”

What to Expect From Prayer

“We should pray by fixing our mind upon some pressing need, desiring it with all earnestness, and then exercise faith and confidence toward God in the matter, never doubting that we have been heard. St. Bernard said, ‘Dear brothers, you should never doubt your prayer, thinking that it might have been in vain, for I tell you truly that before you have the words, the prayer is already recorded in heaven. Therefore you should confidently expect from God one of two things: either that your prayer will be granted, or, that if it is not granted, the granting of it would not be good for you.’”

Martin Luther

Boredom

In the book *A Sort of Life*, Graham Greene tells how he struggled, ever since he was very young, to fend off boredom. He once had a dentist extract (“but with ether”) a perfectly good tooth for no better reason than that he was bored and this seemed

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like an interesting diversion. He tried several times to commit suicide and six times played Russian roulette, using a revolver with six chambers—a dangerous game indeed, but certainly not boring.

A woman named Gert Behanna, very wealthy and very bored, came to know Christ late in life. The new Gert was totally changed. She believed that it is a sin to bore people. A riveting speaker, traveling widely to tell all who would listen, she proclaimed the message: GOD ISN'T DEAD! I almost memorized the recordings of her story, and one day, to my great joy, I actually received a phone call from her. "This is the gravelly voice of Gert Behanna!" We had a lovely chat. Not long after that she died, but thousands heard her far-from-boring message—Jesus is alive! He brought me out of the pit! He loves you!

What Will People Say?

Is there one of us who is not often troubled by that whisper, who is not tempted to allow it to control our decisions? It is a snare and a delusion. I do not mean that we should be heedless of the impression we may make on others who look to us as examples, or oblivious to godly warnings or advice. But when we have honestly sought to obey God and carefully searched His word for our cues, then we must not fear the consequences to our "image" or reputation. Turn all of that over to the only One "unto whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid."

It is not the judgment of this world that finally counts. These words from Hebrews steady me: "Remember where you stand. You stand before Mt. Zion and the city of the living God, heavenly Jerusalem, before myriads of angels, the full concourse and assembly of the first-born citizens of heaven, and God the judge of all, and the spirits of good men made perfect, and Jesus the mediator.... The kingdom we are given is unshakable; let us

therefore give thanks to God, and so worship him as he would be worshipped, with reverence and awe; for our God is a devouring fire" (Hebrews 12:18, 22-24, 28, 29).

Strength and Weakness

"The realization that my Lord has enabled me to be a worker keeps me strong enough never to be weak. Conscious obtrusive weakness is natural unthankful strength, it means I refuse to be made strong by Him. When I say I am too weak it means I am too strong; and whenever I say 'I can't,' it means 'I won't.' When Jesus Christ enables me, I am omnipotently strong all the time."

Oswald Chambers

Carry Some Sunshine

"You don't get much sunshine in here, do you?" said a lady as she entered an elevator (in the long-gone days before automation). "Only what you folks bring in, ma'am," said the operator. "Some people carry enough sunshine with them to light others up a bit."

This reminded me of a song we sang in the beginners' class in Sunday school:

Jesus bids us shine with a clear, pure light,
Like a little candle, burning in the night.

Or, words I learned later in life from the hymn by Elizabeth Clephane:

Beneath the cross of Jesus I fain would take
my stand,
The shadow of a mighty rock within a weary
land;
A home within the wilderness, a rest upon
the way,

From the burning of the noontide heat, and
the burden of the day

I take, O Cross, thy shadow for my abiding
place.

I ask no other sunshine than the sunshine of
His face,

Content to let the world go by, to know no
gain or loss,

My sinful self, my only shame; my glory all
the Cross.

Matthew 13:34; "The good will shine out like the
sun in their Father's kingdom."

Recommended Resources

Stepping Heavenward, a lovely book by Elizabeth
Prentiss, has been put on tape by my daughter
Valerie Shepard. It is available through Calvary
Press Publishing, 1-800-789-8175.

"Dating, Mating, or Waiting," a 16-page booklet
by Clay Sterrett, is available from CFC Literature,
P.O. Box 245, Staunton, VA 24402, \$1.50 each plus
20% for postage. A list of other booklets is avail-
able upon request.

The Elisabeth Elliot Newsletter

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Ann Arbor, Michigan 48107-7711

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Travel Schedule May 2001–August 2001

May 12 Arlington Baptist Church Women's
Seminar, Baltimore, Md., (410)655-0991.

May 25-26 Biltmore Baptist Church,
Arden, N.C., JoAnne Lord, Women's Team,
(826)687-1111.

June 23 Southwest Women's Festival,
Albuquerque, N.M., Brenda Hughes,
(505)338-3664.

August 19 Christian Conference Center,
Alton Bay, N.H., (603)875-6161.

August 25-29 Family Reunion

The Joy of Music

The March/April newsletter mentioned a world
renowned organist, Diane Bish, who asked me to
talk about what hymns had meant in my life. She
played magnificently, chatted with me, then asked
me to play a hymn on the piano. The second video
is now available—\$30 plus shipping and handling.
Call Donna at the Joy of Music, 1-800-933-4844.

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The Elisabeth Elliot Newsletter

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July/August 2001

Anarchy or Discipline?

A Houston high school principal described the new educational system as a "cross-graded, multi-ethnic, individualized, open-ended learning program with the main objective being to learn respect for the uniqueness of a person."

Perhaps that is what the parents of most children nowadays accept as education. I am sure that my parents would have considered such a program absolute nonsense -- each little individual permitted to do what he or she chooses? The result is chaos, if not downright anarchy.

A short lesson, emphasized in the hall or vestibule with a narrow "board of education," i.e. a rod, might do wonders to teach small individuals respect for the persons around them, who were there not to provide an audience for their antics but to be educated.

The trouble starts, of course, not when the kids tumble out of the mini-van and charge into the school. It starts at home, before they can walk, with parents who believe that love means giving them what they want and letting them do what they choose. They don't like ordinary food. They blow it out when they're babies and throw it on the floor or down the garbage grinder later on. They scream for other foods, and the screams are rewarded.

On a talk show, the mother of a seven-year-old was asked about her son's diet.

"Oh, he won't eat anything but store-bought white bread and jam, ever since he was about three."

"Have you tried anything else?"

"No. He won't eat anything else."

Training children, like corralling calves and

lambs, is a great deal of trouble. It takes sacrifice. It's much easier to let them go. But you can't do that if you care about them. Only the one who cares will go to the trouble of bringing them under control. "The good shepherd gives his life for the sheep." The sheep don't take kindly to the crook he uses, to the dogs who herd them where they don't want to go, or to the disinfectant baths into which they must be plunged in order to be cleansed. It is the shepherd's sole purpose to take care of them, to see to their well-being according to his wisdom, not according to their whims.

My parents loved us enough to make us wear galoshes when "nobody else had to wear them" (those awful rubber boots in the 1930s with black metal clasps, so hard for little fingers to fasten); to see to it that we got five meals a day (three for the body and two for the soul, the latter including hymns, Bible reading, and prayer); to say no to things like candy and coming in when we felt like it, or skipping piano lessons and church; to give us chores to do around the house and to make it clear that if we didn't do them they wouldn't get done and there would be consequences; to give us an allowance even during the Depression and teach us that some of it belonged to God; to stick by what they had said-line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little.

They drew lines. We knew where they were drawn. They were not moveable. They knew more about life than we did, and had a fairly clear picture of what was good for us. Like other kids we complained that they didn't love us or else they

would do such-and-such. "When you have children of your own," Mother would say (smiling), "you can let them do that if you want to." She knew we wouldn't want to-if we loved them.

We've got it backwards-love says don't restrain, hate says restrain. God puts it the other way: "The Lord disciplines him whom he loves, and chastises every son whom he receives.... If you are left without discipline ... then you are illegitimate children and not sons" (Hebrews 12:6, 8, RSV). "When we fall under the Lord's judgment, he is disciplining us to save us from being condemned with the rest of the world" (I Corinthians 11:32, NEB).

It is not difficult for adults to see what's wrong with other parents and other people's children. But how blind we are in our childish reactions to the dealings of a kind Heavenly Father! The motive for discipline is love. Its purpose is salvation.

The people of Israel muttered treason against Him and said, "It was because the Lord hated us that he brought us out of Egypt" (Deuteronomy 1:27, NEB). Freed from slavery, they missed onions. Led by the Lord of Hosts Himself with His angels and a pillar of cloud and fire, they were terrified of the Amorites. "You saw how the Lord your God carried you all the way to this place as a father carries his son. In spite of this you did not trust the Lord your God" (v. 32).

Discipline or "chastening" can be a painful thing for us poor mortals. We think of the "rod" itself--the hard experience, the prayer that was answered with a No, the shattered hope, the misunderstanding, the blow to pride--forgetting the loving Hand that administers the lesson and the Savior who like a shepherd leads us. We forget how much we need His tender care!

As parents, let us faithfully remember that the keeping of order sometimes requires the use of the rod. As children of the Father and sheep of his pasture, let us remember humbly to accept His discipline, praying:

We are Thine, do Thou befriend us, be the
Guardian of our way;
Keep Thy flock, from sin defend us, seek us
when we go astray.

**From the hymn
"Savior Like a Shepherd Lead Us"**

Letter From a Radio Listener

"Your study on [Elizabeth Rice Handford's book] *Me? Obey Him?* changed my life. Last year your study on obedience changed me drastically. It made me realize why my husband wanted no part of Jesus!

"We were both miserable and ready for a divorce. But after hearing this lesson, I realized it was me who needed to change the most. I started praying for God to change me and to give me the strength to be the obedient wife I was supposed to be. (Let me add that I was a women's libber.)

"Well, God more than answered my prayers. After a few months of truly 'selling out/ my husband was noticing the changes. He didn't say anything to me about it, but he said plenty to other people. The anger he had always had started to change. Because God changed me to be the obedient wife I am supposed to be, my husband is not only now saved, he is a big worker in our church. Your teaching guided me to the correct path to being a true witness to my Savior."

Thanks be to God!

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The Purpose of Trouble

"Whatever else trouble is in the world for, it is here for this good purpose: to develop strength. For trouble is a moral and spiritual task. It is something which is hard to do. And it is in the spiritual world as in the physical, strength is increased by encounter with the difficult. A world without any trouble in it would be, to people of our kind, a place of spiritual enervation and moral laziness. Fortunately, every day is crowded with care. Every day to every one of us brings its questions, its worries, and its tasks, brings its sufficiency of trouble. Thus we get our daily spiritual exercise. Every day we are blessed with new opportunities for the development of strength of soul."

George Hodges

No Hour Without Guidance

"Whatever bad times may come, or whatever perplexity, there is almost always close at hand, waiting for one, some plain thing to be done. It may be a mere matter of routine, an item in the day's regular business; it may be the exercise of some consideration for another, it may be only silent patience; but it is always something. And always one has the choice to do it or decline it. One can go through his work well or shirk it. One can consider his neighbor or neglect him. One can repress the fever-fit of impatience or give it wild way. And the perpetual presence of such a choice leaves no hour without guidance."

George S. Merriam,
from *Mary Wilder Tileston's devotional, Joy and Strength*

I Have Been Wronged

by Eugene Howard

I have been wronged, Lord, I who seek the right,
I cannot love this one who without cause
Has, out of hatred, selfishness or spite
Brought me injustice, I who seek your laws.

I have my rights, Lord, I who seek your name,
I cannot give to him who takes my share-
Who bends and breaks the rules that make the
game
Equitable, so all is just and fair.

I'm willing, Lord, to pardon and forgive
If only he who wronged me will relent.
It's only fair that if I have to give,
The one responsible should yield, repent.

My child, I suffered evil, shame and wrong
And yet I love all those who brought me pain.
I have not sinned, yet for a murderous throng I
gave my rights, and for their sins was slain.

My child, my love was spurned by hateful men
And yet I gave, expecting no return.
They mocked and beat me, adding to their sin,
Yet I forgave; from my example learn.

My child, my law-my first command I give,
Love me, your Lord, with all your strength and
soul,
Then love your neighbour-when he's wrong,
forgive.
Forgive again, let love thus be your goal.

My child, come follow me, my words obey,
One thing only, seek my will to do.
And give your love when wronged by men,
for they
Will answer me, and I've forgiven you.

My Dear Aunt Anne

My father, Philip E. Howard Jr., was the eldest of four children. His youngest sister was our dear Aunt Anne who never married, but gave herself, in quiet, hidden ways, unstintingly to others. She cared for her parents until they died. How I loved her! She called me "Betsy Bubble," and when we were vacationing in our beautiful Gale Cottage in Franconia, New Hampshire, one summer she took me into the woods and taught me the names of flowers and ferns and helped me press them in a book. What a thrill it was to find one day, in a deep and soggy place near "our" river, just a single wild orchid, too beautiful to cut. I went back again and again to look and marvel at this exquisite flower, planted there by the Lord Himself who surely must have gazed with perfect satisfaction at His precious handiwork. Do we take time to look and listen and adore?

Aunt Anne is over ninety now, totally deaf, living in a Christian retirement home in Pennsylvania, able to steer her walker and smile, hoping always to cheer others-who, alas, may not always wish to be cheered! God bless her-a quiet, gracious, loving soul-she will have her great reward in heaven.

Travel Schedule August 2001-October 2001

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August 25-29 Family Reunion.

September 19-29 Romania & Hungary.

October 5-7 Ridgehaven Conference Center, North Carolina, with Valerie.

October 11 Reno, Nevada, Crisis Pregnancy Center, (775) 826-5144.

October 12, 13 Reno, Nevada, Christian Fellowship Women's Ministry, (775) 853-4234 or e-mail ref@refministries.org

October 20 Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, David Horn, (978) 468-7111 x 4142.

October 27 Marblehead, Massachusetts, First Baptist Church, Pam Derringer, (781) 631-5386.

When a Loved One Has Died

"It maketh not much what way we go to heaven; the happy home is all, where the roughness of the way shall be forgotten. He is gone home to a friend's house, and made welcome and the race is ended."

Samuel Rutherford (1600-1661)

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Service to God

There has often been a tendency to think of service to God as necessarily entailing physical hardship and sacrifice. Although this is not really a scriptural idea, it has gained wide acceptance. It is easy to recall the saints who “climbed the steep ascent of heaven through peril, toil, and pain,” but the Bible also makes mention of Dorcas whose service to God was the making of little coats. (And who can tell what pain she knew that is not recorded? It is God who keeps tears in His bottle.)

When I lived with the Auca (now called Waorani) people of the eastern jungle of Ecuador (who had killed five missionaries, including my husband, thinking they were about to be eaten!) there were some who, from a long distance and with little idea of the actual situation, commended me for my “wonderful work, “ probably because they thought of it as difficult, isolated, dangerous, or even sacrificial (the truth is that I loved the two years I had with those dear people!). There were others who for the very same reason condemned me, for I had the audacity to take a three-year-old child into that setting. Some envied me, some pitied me. Some admired, some criticized. I could not help asking myself if perhaps I had been mistaken. Was I really obeying God, or had I merely obeyed some misguided impulse, some lust for distinction, some masochistic urge to bury myself in that forsaken place? There was no way of being sure what was in the murky reaches of my subconscious, but I was sure I had committed myself to God for His service, and I knew no other motivation. The opinions of others—whether they commended or condemned—

could not alter my duty, but their very diversity caused me to ponder carefully what that duty was.

And then, by contrast, I watched the Indians, doing things they understood, untroubled by questions of “service” to God or fellow-men (although they had served me in countless ways—and I thought of the King saying to them, “Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these . . . ye have done it unto Me,” and of how surprised they would be if they knew), free of the pressures of competition or comparison. There was for me here a lesson in simplicity and acceptance of one’s place in life, which I, because I was a Christian, could take from the hand of God.

My duty was one thing, theirs another. My responsibility lay here, but the responsibility of some of my correspondents who gazed starry-eyed at my role lay perhaps in an office or a kitchen or the cockpit of an airplane. Who was to say which served on God’s right hand?

Children

“Take no heavier lift of our children than your Lord alloweth. Give them room beside your heart, but not in the yoke of your heart, where Christ should be; for then they are your idols, not your bairns . . . Let Christ have a commanding power and King-throne in you.”

Samuel Rutherford (1600-1661)

Deliver Me, Jesus

—from the desire to be praised, honored, glorified, preferred, consulted, or approved. Deliver me, Jesus, from the fear of being humiliated, criticized, forgotten, ridiculed, maltreated, and from the fear of what others will think. O Jesus, give me the grace to desire: that others would be loved and esteemed ahead of me, that in the eyes of the world they would increase while I decrease, and praised while I pass by unnoticed; that others would be preferred in all situations; that others would become more than myself—in order that I would be as holy as You want me to be.

Charles de Foucauld

The Complaint

“At thirty a man suspects himself a fool;
Knows it at forty, and reforms his plan;
At fifty chides his infamous delay,
Pushes his prudent purpose to resolve;
In all the magnanimity of thought
Resolves; and re-resolves; then dies the same.”

Edward Young (1742-1745)

The Complaint: of Night Thoughts

God's Unchanging Word

For feelings come and feelings go,
And feelings are deceiving;
My warrant is the Word of God,
Naught else is worth believing.

Though all my heart should feel condemned
For want of some sweet token,
There is One greater than my heart
Whose word cannot be broken.
I'll trust in God's unchanging word
Till soul and body sever;
For, though all things shall pass away,
His word shall stand forever.

The Ten Commandments in Verse
Above all else love God alone;
Bow down to neither wood or stone.
God's name refuse to take in vain;
The Sabbath rest with care maintain.
Respect your parents all your days;
Hold sacred human life always.
Be loyal to your chosen mate;
Steal nothing neither small nor great.
Report, with truth, your neighbor's deed;
And rid your mind of selfish greed.”
from the McGuffey Reader

Misunderstandings

“Love is more effective than words. The only thing to do is to go on loving, to be patient, to suffer the misunderstanding. Explanations even of what can be explained seldom heal—and there is so much that cannot be explained. Even the presence of Christ in us does not do away with our own clumsiness, blindness, stupidity; indeed, sometimes because of our limitations, His light is a blinding light to us and we become, for a time, more dense than before. We shall be irritable, still make mistakes, and still very likely be unaware of how exasperating we are.

“Explanations, words, at this stage, may only wound, but love will be a bridge over which at last, in God's time, we shall cross to a better understanding.”

The Reed of God, Caryll Houslander,
Christian Classics,
Westminster, Maryland, 1990

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A Grateful Wife

She had written to say that she had read Elizabeth Rice Handford's little book, *Me, Obey Him?*, and asked God to speak to her. She felt that her husband wanted her out, so she left for two months, wounded in spirit. Realizing she was in rebellion and disobedience toward her husband, and had cut herself off from the Lord, she repented.

“What do I do now, Lord?”

“Ask your husband for forgiveness, since you had hurt him, rebelled, and disobeyed.”

She asked for words and the opportunity to “walk out” what she had learned. God's response was immediate. She talked with her husband from the heart, with God's help. She did not ask to come home, but he invited her home, missed her, forgave her. “God had met me and prepared my husband to be receptive to me,” she wrote. “I am blessed beyond measure. I feel complete again with my husband. As you said, men do not always do as they should according to God's word, but that was none of my business. I was to love him as Christ does, laying all my desires, expectations, disappointments, etc. at the foot of the cross.

“I have a new love for my husband that I have not known for some time, and am trying to focus on his good qualities.”

Nothing Between

“How many things there are in our daily life that often come between the soul and God! . . . It may be care or anxiety. It may be our business or even the work of the Lord itself . . . or we may let some form of Christian experience, which we are seeking to realize, come between our souls and God. Whatever it is it must GO, so that there may be nothing between our souls and the Glory of God.”

from Broken Bread, Oct. 4

Martin Luther To One Who Has Just Had an Operation

“I seemed to spend all night writing to you. The loving Lord rest you now, and refresh and strengthen you. I shut the doors of my mind when thoughts came about what the days just after the operation must have been. I can't bear to think of them. I have never had a major operation in my life, but have often nursed those who have had one, so I know what these days can be. I shall not be easy till I hear the next news.

“These may be very tired days. It isn't easy to pick up after such doings. But take the resting verses such as Zephaniah 3:17 and John 15 ('continue ye in My love,' abide there, like a child at home) and those psalms and verses in the Gospels which show that side of life. 'Return unto thy rest, O my soul.' 'come unto Me and I will give you rest.' 'My God shall supply all your need.' There are hundreds such; take them as yours in a special way just now, and don't tire your spirit and retard your recovery by pressing against the limitations which for the present are your fence of feathers. 'With His feathers has He made a fence for thee' is a lovely rendering of Psalm 91:4. Nestle under those feathers (He shall cover thee with His feathers), and when you are tempted to press against the fence of feathers—soft and down, and yet strong as the feathers of great birds are. May those feathers be very comforting to you through these days.”

Amy Carmichael, *Candles in the Dark*
(a Dohnavur book, SPCK, 1981)

Note from Lars

Some folks would call this “a long shot” or a “shot in the dark” and it is. In the month of May, a letter was sent to Elisabeth from a lady whom I believe lived near New York city. She

wrote to her about the end of Gateway to Joy, also mentioning her husband's work with websites, things which are as great a mystery to me as is the identity of the letter-writer. If in reading this you exclaim "ah, it was I" then please drop a card to: Lars Gren, 10 Strawberry Cove, Magnolia, MA 01930. All this would not be necessary had I not let the letter vanish traveling from my office to Elisabeth's study—a mere distance of 252 inches.

The Shaping of a Christian Family

We six Howard children were very greatly blessed in having parents who loved us enough to have "family prayers," as they called them. Every morning after breakfast we were herded into the living room where either father or mother sat down to the piano and we would all join in the singing of a hymn (not a song or chorus, but a true hymn). We sang all the verses, skipping none. In this way we learned theology quite painlessly. Then our father read the Bible, usually Hurlbut's Story of the Bible for the benefit of the younger ones (I was number two of six). Probably we often paid little attention, but it is amazing how much sinks in by osmosis! Following the reading, we knelt by our chairs as

Travel Schedule September-November 2001

September 19-29 Romania & Hungary.

October 5-7 Ridgehaven, N.C. with Valerie, Trig Penland, (803)648-2232.

October 11 Reno, Nevada, Crisis Pregnancy Center, (775)826-5144.

October 12, 13 Reno Christian Fellowship Women's Ministry, Bonnie Harry and Sue Hunter, (775)825-0718, (775)853-4234.

October 20 Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, David Horn, (978)468-7111.

October 27 Marblehead, Mass., First Baptist Church, Pam Derringer, (781)631-5386.

November 2 New Haven, Conn., Teen Challenge, Rev. Floyd Miles III, (203)789-6172.

Daddy prayed for us, each one by name, and then led us in reciting The Lord's Prayer.

How we thank God for such an upbringing!

My book called *The Shaping of a Christian Family* has been reprinted by Revell. We will be offering it starting in this month for subscribers who renew with a donation of \$20 or more.

It is my hope that this book will be useful for many Christian families.

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Called to Act

Among the treasures in a box of old family papers, I found a series of letters from a great-aunt who was serving as a hostess in a rest house in Virginia during World War I. She was a lady unused to working for a living, but her husband had dropped dead one day at the bank where he worked, and she had to find a way to support herself. She had opened a home for soldiers and sailors, many of whom were terribly homesick, some of them just back from the front with permanent disabilities. The wives and mothers of men who had been killed sometimes arrived at the door in the middle of the night, having just received the sorrowful news. My great-aunt Alice Sparhawk took care of them all.

Her letters to her brother "Chigsie" (Charles Gallaudet Trumbull) are full of cheerfulness and compassion. She was busy helping others every minute of the day and often deep into the night. As I read her vivid and often humorous accounts of the daily routine, I remember the background of suffering against which she wrote—her own suffering (she could hardly bear to think of returning to the cheerful home where she and her husband Jack had lived) and that of so many others. But doing everyday duties for the sake of others saved her.

People who have themselves experienced both grief and fear know how alike those two things are. They know the restlessness and loss of appetite, the inability to concentrate, the inner silent wail that cannot be muffled, the feeling of being in a great lonely wilderness. Grief and fear are equally disabling, distracting, and destructive.

One may cry out in prayer and hear no answer. The heavens are brass. One may search Scripture in vain for some word of release and hope. There

are many such words, but how frequently they seem only to mock us, and a voice whispers: "That's not meant for you. You're taking it out of context!" and no comforting word seems to reach us.

Faith, we know perfectly well, is what we need. We've simply got to exercise faith. But how to do that? How to exercise anything at such a time?

"Pull yourself together!" With what?

"Cheer up!" How?

"Think positively!" But that is a neater trick than we are up to at the moment. We are paralyzed. Fear grips us tightly, grief disables us entirely. We have no heart.

At such a time I have been wonderfully calmed and strengthened by doing some simple duty. Nothing valiant or meritorious or spiritual at all—just something that needed to be done, like a bed to be freshly made or a kitchen floor to be scrubbed, one of those things that will never be noticed if you do it but will most certainly be noticed if you don't! Sometimes it takes everything you have to tackle the job, but it is surprising how strength comes.

Ezekiel was a man who witnessed many strange things and prophesied great cataclysms and splendors. He tells us little about himself, but in the twenty-fourth chapter of his book there is a powerful parenthesis: "The word of the Lord came to me: 'Son of man, behold, I am about to take the delight of your eyes away from you at a stroke; yet you shall not mourn or weep nor shall your tears run down. Sigh, but not aloud; make no mourning for the dead. Bind on your turban, and put your shoes on your feet; do not cover your lips nor eat the bread of mourners.'

So I spoke to the people in the morning, and at evening my wife died. And on the next morning I did as I was commanded” (Ezekiel 24:18).

Ponder those heartrending words: “On the next morning I did as I was commanded”! God asked more of Ezekiel than any human being would dare to ask, but he knew his man. He was asking him to “put on a front,” to act normally, not as a mourner, but to put on turban and shoes and eat his usual food. What extraordinary requirements to make of a man who had just lost the delight of his eyes! But Ezekiel had had plenty of practice in obedience, and it was not his habit to bridle.

It sounds simple. But not easy. It was heroic, certainly. There are other incidents in the Bible where the doing of very ordinary things helped people out of deep trouble. When Paul was sailing as a prisoner to Italy and was about to be wrecked in the Adriatic Sea, everyone on board was terror-stricken. Sailors were trying to escape, the soldiers and centurion and captain were all sure they were doomed, and no one paid attention to Paul’s assurances of faith in God. But when he suggested that they eat, and actually took bread himself and gave thanks for it, “they were all encouraged and ate some food themselves... and when they had eaten as much as they wanted, they lightened the ship by throwing the grain into the sea” (Acts 27:36, 38).

Terror had disabled and disoriented them. In their panic they thought only of desperate measures which might have saved a few. But where Paul’s faith had had no effect on them, his common sense—“Let’s eat”—restored them to their senses. Then they were able to see clearly what the next thing was to be done.

Emmi Bonhoeffer writes in *The Auschwitz Trials*, “From the very moment one feels called to act is born the strength to bear whatever horror one will feel or see. In some inexplicable way, terror loses its overwhelming power when it becomes a task that must be faced.”

Thomas Carlyl said, “Doubt of any sort cannot be removed except by action.” There is wonderful therapy in taking oneself by the scruff of the

neck, getting up, and doing something. While you are doing, time passes quickly. Time itself will in some measure heal, and “light arises in the darkness”—slowly, it seems, but certainly.

I myself have been hauled out of the Slough of Despond by following the advice of the simple Saxon legend inscribed in an old English parsonage: “Doe the nexte thyng.”

Many a questioning, many a fear,
Many a doubt hath its quieting here.
Moment by moment, let down from heaven,
Time, opportunity, guidance are given.
Fear not tomorrows, child of the King—
Trust them with Jesus. Do the next thing!

A Silver Star in a Cave

One does not have to ride a donkey or walk, as Mary and Joseph did, to get to Bethlehem. I took a taxi from Damascus Gate in Jerusalem. But Bethlehem is still a little town—a cluster of stone houses on a hillside surrounded by olive groves and vineyards.

I didn’t want to be shown around by a tourist guide, nor to be told what I was supposed to think about what I saw, not this time. I wanted to go alone into the cave where Jesus is believed to have been born.

I had done some reading and learned that the church had been built during the reign of Constantine over “a certain cave near the village,” according to Justin Martyr. Origen said it was “well known even by those who were not Christians.” Surely a cave that had been used as a

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stable by the local inn would not have been forgotten, if there a baby had been born whom shepherds, bearing an astounding piece of information, had come from the fields to see.

Saint Jerome did not question that this was the very place, but he expressed regret that the mud cradle had been replaced by a silver one and that the whole thing—by the fourth century!—was much too commercialized. Since his day there has been plenty more to see—silver, gold, silks, jewels, candelabra, altar screens—not the sorts of things one associates with a barn.

I went down the staircase into the dim grotto. There the place of Jesus' birth was marked by a silver star inscribed *Hic de Virgine Maria Jesus Christus natus est*—"Here Jesus Christ was born of the Virgin Mary."

Perhaps the unbelieving tourist can shuffle through the sunshine unchanged, hurriedly checking off another tourist attraction—"done." But the visitor who believes the Latin words *Christus natus est* (even if he cannot accept the word *hic*, which means "here") cannot be the same.

In spite of the destruction and bitterness and commercialization and religious disputes and modern war, the overwhelming truth remains: The thing happened! It happened here in Bethlehem. "God became a human being and lived among us. We saw His splendor.... There is a grace in our lives because of His grace" (John 1:14, 16, PHILLIPS).

God's Sturdy Faithfulness

The indwelling Spirit of God is never a source of trouble and scruple but a stabilizing power, a constant. "If I go up to the heavens, you are there; if I make my bed in the depths, you are there" (Psalm 139:8)—when I am exultant and when I am depressed. Light and dark to Him are alike. The friendship of God is like that and He asks the same faithfulness from us in return. It takes a brave and loving soul to understand and respond to His sturdy faithfulness, for there is nothing sentimental about it. "I know, O Lord,

that your laws are righteous, and in faithfulness you have afflicted me" (Psalm 119:75).

The trusting father or teacher does what is needed, not necessarily what is nice. He will even risk losing the child's affection rather than neglect the child's real needs. He will give stern tests when tests are required, withdraw apparent support so that courage and initiative may be learned, assign the distasteful duty, withdraw the dangerous joy—bit by bit producing in the child's soul a fidelity that shall answer to his own.

A Great Encouragement

Many of you know that I was asked to step down at the end of August from my daily radio program, *Gateway to Joy*, which had been broadcast for thirteen years by Back to the Bible. I asked the Lord what He wanted me to do next. No blueprint of the future was offered, but the following poem (alas—I have not been able to locate the author) has wonderfully calmed and fortified me. I will turn seventy-five on December 21. I am simply to trust, taking one day at a time from my Heavenly Father's quieting word: "As thou goest step by step, I will open up the way before thee" (Proverbs 4:12, Hebrew translation).

Child of my love, fear not the unknown morrow,
Dread not the new demand life makes of thee;
Thy ignorance doth hold no cause for sorrow
Since what thou knowest not is known to Me.

Thou canst not see today the hidden meaning
Of my command, but thou the light shalt gain;
Walk on in faith, upon My promise leaning,
And as thou goest all shall be made plain.

One step thou seest—then go forward boldly,
One step is far enough for faith to see;
Take that, and thy next duty shall be told thee,
For step by step thy Lord is leading thee.

Stand not in fear, thy adversaries counting,
Dare every peril, save to disobey;

Thou shalt march on, all obstacles surmounting,
For I, the Strong, will open up the way.

Wherefore go gladly to the task assigned thee,
Having my promise, needing nothing more
Than just to know, where'er the future find thee,
In all thy journeyings, I go before.

Thoughts From Lars

I am writing this on September 13, and Elisabeth and I are due to leave for Hungary in a few hours. There is only one problem—no planes are flying. I've never been accused of being a thinking man, but this week, whether I'm a thinking man or not, certainly will stick in my head...the replay of buildings being rammed, then slowly sinking to the ground like a vertical, 100-plus-story pile of dominoes, followed by the pandemonium of vehicles, sirens, bystanders in shock, reporters with answerable questions. Those of us who are alive ten years from now will all remember where we were on 9/11 at about 9:00 a.m.

Some may have found out about the disaster in strange ways, as I did. I had just returned on Monday, September 10, from Norway, where I had had a delightful time with cousin Björg and

her husband Sigurd. It had been a short week of feasting on Björg's cooking—shrimp, fried mackerel, wild salmon, wonderful potatoes, topped off with creamed cakes, puddings, and sauces. Tuesday morning I decided to call a bit after 9:00 a.m., instead of waiting some days to do so. Björg's first words were, "Oh, I'm so glad you're home. You're watching the same as we are on CNN? It's terrible." "No, what you watching?" Thus I found out.

Originally I was to have returned on Tuesday but had decided to return Monday due to our supposed departure today. For me it would have meant a delay in getting back home, but for thousands in New York and Washington, it meant not returning home at all. We often remark, "We do not know what a day will hold." But we do know Who holds the day.

Newsletter Will Continue

Because of the termination of the *Gateway to Joy* broadcast and its accompanying newsletter, *The Gatekeeper*, some of you have wondered if this newsletter was being retired as well. Not yet! Readers of *The Elisabeth Elliot Newsletter* may rest assured of its continuation.

The Elisabeth Elliot Newsletter

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The Elisabeth Elliot Newsletter

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Struggling in Prayer

People who ski happen to enjoy skiing; they have time for skiing, can afford to ski, and are good at skiing. I have found that I often treat prayer as though it were a sport like skiing—something you do if you like it, something you do in your spare time, something you do if you can afford the trouble, something you do if you're good at it. Otherwise, you do without it most of the time. When you get in a pinch you try it, and then you call an expert.

But prayer isn't a sport. It's work. Prayer is work because a Christian simply can't "make a living" without it. The apostle Paul said we "wrestle" in prayer. In the wrestling of a Christian in prayer, "our fight is not against any physical enemy; it is against organizations and powers that are spiritual. We are up against the unseen powers that control this dark world, and spiritual agents from the very headquarters of evil" (Ephesians 6:12, PHILLIPS). Seldom do we consider the nature of our opponent, and that is to his advantage. When we do recognize him for what he is, however, we have an inkling as to why prayer is never easy. It's the weapon that Unseen Power dreads most, and if he can get us to treat it as casually as we treat a pair of skis or a tennis racquet, he can keep his hold.

As I grow old I find that I am more conscious than ever of my need to pray, but it seems at the same time to become more of a struggle. It is harder to concentrate, for one thing. I was greatly helped by some private notes Amy Carmichael

wrote to her "Family" (hundreds of children and their helpers, both Indian and European) in Dohnavur, South India, to help them prepare for a special day of prayer. She quoted Paul's letter to the Colossians (2:1): "I would that ye knew what great conflict I have for you." He is referring at least in part to the conflict of prayer. The same verse is translated "how greatly I strive" in the Revised Version; "how deep is my anxiety" in J.B. Phillips; and, in the Jerusalem Bible, "Yes, I want you to know that I do have to struggle hard for you ... to bind you together in love and to stir your minds, so that your understanding may come to full development, until you really know God's secret in which all the jewels of wisdom and knowledge are hidden."

Here are Amy's notes:

"With what do I struggle?"

"1. I struggle with all that says to me, 'What is the use of your praying? So many others, who know more of prayer than you do, are praying. What difference does it make whether you pray or not? Are you sure that your Lord is listening? Of course He is listening to the other prayers, but yours are of such small account, are you really sure He is "bending His ear" to you?'

"2. I struggle with all that suggests that we are asked to give too much time to prayer. There is so much to do. Why set aside so much time just to pray?

"3. I struggle with all that discourages me personally—perhaps the remembrance of past

sin, perhaps spiritual or physical tiredness; with anything and everything that keeps me back from what occupied St. Paul so often—vital prayer.

“What will help me most in this wrestle?”

“1. The certain knowledge that our insignificance does not matter at all, for we do not come to the Father in our own name but in the Name of His beloved Son. His ear is always open to that Name. Of this we can be certain.

“2. The certain knowledge that this is Satan’s lie; he is much more afraid of our prayer than our work. (This is proved by the immense difficulties we always find when we set ourselves to pray. They are much greater than those we meet when we set ourselves to work.)

“3. Isaiah 44:22 and kindred words, with 1 John 1:9, meet all distress about sin. Isaiah 40:29-31 with 2 Corinthians 12:9,10 meet everything that spiritual or physical weariness can do to hinder. Psalm 27:8 with Isaiah 45:19 meets all other difficulties. And the moment we say to our God, ‘Thy face, Lord, will I seek,’ His mighty energies come to the rescue. (See Colossians 1:2, 9.) Greater, far greater, is He that is in us than he that is against us. Count on the greatness of God.

“But are we to go on wrestling to the end? No, there is a point to which we come, when, utterly trusting the promise of our Father, we rest our hearts upon Him. It is then we are given what St. Paul calls access with confidence (Ephesians 3:12). But don’t forget that this access is by faith, not by feeling, faith in Him our living Lord; He who says, ‘Come unto Me’ does not push us away when we come. As we go on, led by the Holy Spirit who so kindly helps us in our infirmities, we find ourselves in 1 John 5:14, 15 and lastly in Philippians 4:6, 7. It is good to remember that immediate answer to

prayer is not always something seen, but it is always inward peace.

“And if the day ends otherwise and we are discouraged? Then tell Him so, ‘nothing ashamed of tears upon His feet’ [here Amy is quoting from F.W.H. Meyers’ poem, ‘St. Paul’]. Lord, Thou knowest all things. Thou knowest that I love Thee. ‘Yes, my child, I know.’ But don’t settle down into an ‘it will never be different’ attitude. It *will* be different if only we earnestly follow on to know the Lord.”

Q

Power in Weakness

“Prayer that has a vital background and is a fit channel of power is always a hard and humiliating business. Its strength resides, not in its exuberance, but in its restraints. We sometimes plead that we are temperamentally unfitted for the life of prayer; and it may well be that our natural disposition and makeup are incompatible with one type of devotion or another. But prayer...is not a matter of temperament at all. What hinders us from achieving it is simply our share...in the common human fear of the cross. Once we are willing to take up the cross and follow Jesus, we have already begun to pray.”

Elizabeth Herman, *Creative Prayer*

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Favorite Hymns

We used to have hymn sings for some of the old-timers on Sunday evenings when we were at our family cottage in Franconia, New Hampshire. There was a little pump organ, and we had enough hymnbooks for everybody. We invited our neighbors, including one old lady who always declined a hymnbook with the words, “I can’t sing half’s good’s a crow.”

All my life, whether sung in solitude, in family prayers, or in mighty congregations—whether by crows or by white-throated sparrows—wonderful hymns have sustained my faith. Here are some of my favorites:

All Hail the Power of Jesus’ Name
A Mighty Fortress Is Our God
And Can It Be That I Should Gain
Beneath the Cross of Jesus
Be Still My Soul
Crown Him With Many Crowns
Dear Lord and Father of Mankind
Eternal Light!
Glorious Things of Thee Are Spoken
God Moves in a Mysterious Way
Great Is Thy Faithfulness
He Leadeth Me
Holy, Holy, Holy
How Firm a Foundation
How Great Thou Art
If Thou But Suffer God to Guide Thee
In Heavenly Love Abiding
It Is Well With My Soul
I Take Thy Promise, Lord
Jesus, What a Friend for Sinners
Jesus, Thou Joy of Loving Hearts
Join All the Glorious Names
Loved With Everlasting Love
Marvelous Grace of Our Loving Lord

O Love That Wilt Not Let Me Go
O Sacred Head, Now Wounded
O Worship the King
Speak, Lord, in the Stillness
Spirit of God, Descend Upon My Heart
The Day Thou Gavest, Lord, Is Ended
There’s a Wideness in God’s Mercy
Trust and Obey
When I Survey the Wondrous Cross
When Morning Gilds the Skies

A Dozen Ways to Make Yourself (and quite a few others) Miserable

Here we are at the beginning of another new year, and perhaps some of us made a few New Year’s resolutions. Planting tongue firmly in cheek, may I suggest the following pledges for the year of our Lord 2002:

1. Count your troubles, name them one by one—at the breakfast table, if anybody will listen, or as soon as possible thereafter.
2. Worry every day about something. Don’t let yourself get out of practice. It won’t add a cubit to your stature, but it might burn a few calories.
3. Pity yourself. If you do enough of this, nobody else will have to do it for you.
4. Devise clever but decent ways to serve God and mammon. After all, you’ve got a life to live.
5. Make it your business to find out what the Joneses are buying this year and where they’re going. Try to do them at least one better even if you have to take out another loan to do it.
6. Stay away from absolutes. It’s what’s right for *you* that matters. Be your own person,

and don't allow yourself to get hung up on what others expect of you.

7. Make sure you get your rights. Never mind other people's. You have your life to live, they have theirs.
8. Don't fall into any compassion traps—the sort of situation where people can walk all over you. If you get too involved in other people's troubles, you may neglect your own.
9. Don't let Bible reading and prayer get in the way of what's really relevant—things like TV and newspapers. Invisible things are eternal. You want to stick with the visible ones—they're where it's at *now*.
10. Be right, and be sure to let folks know it. If you catch yourself in the wrong, don't breathe it to a soul.
11. Review daily the names of people who have hurt, wronged, or insulted you. Keep those lists up-to-date, and think of ways to get even without being thought of as unreasonable, uncivilized, or unchristian.
12. Never forgive a wrong. Clutch it forever, and you'll never be unemployed. Resentment is a full-time job.

Books and Resources

Books in Spanish by Elisabeth Elliot

Portales de Esplendor
(*Through Gates of Splendor*) \$10.00 postpaid

Pasión y Pureza
(*Passion and Purity*) \$10.00 postpaid

Order from:
Lars Gren
10 Strawberry Cove
Magnolia, MA 01930

Prayer

“Not only lay Thy Commands on us, O Lord, but be pleased to enable us for the performance of every duty required of us. And so engage our hearts to Thyself that we may make it our meat and drink to do Thy will, and, with enlarged hearts, run the way of Thy commands. Be merciful to us, and bless us, and keep us this day in all our ways. Let Thy love abound in our hearts, and sweetly and powerfully constrain us to all faithful and cheerful obedience.”

Benjamin Jenks (1646-1724)

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Exulting in Suffering

So often people make remarks such as, “Isn’t it strange how God allows such awful things to happen—and she’s such a *good* person.” It isn’t all mystery, though of course God’s permission of evil in the world is fathomless to us mortals. He has told us the most important reasons why we must suffer if we belong to Him.

The apostle Peter writes, “My friends, do not be bewildered by the fiery ordeal that is upon you, as though it were something extraordinary. It gives you a share in Christ’s sufferings, and that is cause for joy” (1 Peter 4:12-13, NEB). When we remember that Peter was writing his letter to exiles, we can try to imagine all the various kinds of suffering that were involved for them. They had been banished from their homes, separated from their loved ones, and cut off from their livelihoods, all through no fault of their own. Their children had forgotten the homelands cherished in their parents’ memories. Some had died.

Peter had been through a few mills himself, and understood deeply how they were feeling and the quite natural human tendency to be bewildered when you’re in the middle of trouble. Don’t be, he says.

He does not deny that it is “fiery.” He calls it an ordeal. That’s honest. But he tells them it’s nothing out of the ordinary. It is what all of us ought to expect in one form or another, as long as we’re following Jesus. What else should we expect? Jesus said we would have to give up the right to ourselves, take up His cross, and follow. He said we would have to enter the Kingdom of God “through much tribulation.” We bargained for a steep and narrow road—why should we be

bewildered to find it steep and narrow? The thrilling, heart-lifting truth that Peter speaks of is that in this very ordeal, whatever it is, we are being granted an unspeakably high privilege: a share in Christ’s sufferings, and that, Peter says, is cause for joy.

Sometimes people wonder how on earth *their* kind of trouble can possibly have anything to do with Christ’s sufferings. Ours are certainly nothing in comparison with His. We are not being crucified. Our burden is certainly not the weight of the sins of the world. No. But in all our afflictions He is afflicted. We are together in them. If we receive them in faith—faith that they are permitted by a Father who loves us, faith that He has an eternal purpose in them—we can offer them back to Him so that He can transform them. If, like Paul, we want to know Him and the power of His resurrection, we must also know the fellowship of His sufferings. The only way to enter that fellowship is to suffer. Can we say, *Yes, Lord*—even to that?

Suffering is the Christian’s boot camp. Those who are preparing to be soldiers must give evidence that they’ve got what it takes. A grueling course of endurance tests is set for them. Some survive and some don’t. Some decide early in the game that it’s not really worth it, and they drop out.

In his wonderful chapter about grace, Romans 5, Paul tells us that we’ve entered the sphere of God’s grace and can therefore exult in the hope of the divine splendor that is to be ours. “More than this, let us even exult in our present sufferings, because we know that suffering trains us to endure” (v. 3).

No normal person enjoys suffering. To “exult,” however, is an action verb. It means to leap for joy, to be jubilant. It is said that when St. Francis of Assisi was persecuted, he literally danced in the street for joy. He was simply being obedient to Jesus’ command to rejoice when men revile you and persecute you. You can only rejoice if you take the long view, however—the view that sees the great reward in heaven. You certainly can’t rejoice if all you can see is the persecution.

“Endurance brings proof that we have stood the test, and this proof is the ground of hope. Such a hope is no mockery, because God’s love has flooded our inmost heart through the Holy Spirit he has given us” (Romans 5:4-5, NEB).

I’ve never been in an army boot camp. I’ve seen pictures, and it looks awful. I can’t imagine anybody enjoying some of the endurance tests that are required, *except* as the goal is kept in mind: “I’m going to be a soldier. I’m going to prove myself. I’ll lick this thing if it kills me.”

My father took us mountain-climbing when we were growing up; we were thrilled with the chance to stand the test. My brothers were certainly not going to let me beat them at it, nor would I dream of making them slow down just for me. There is an exhilaration in endurance. Often I see it on the face of small boys in airports. They’ve just met Daddy at the plane, and insist on lugging his attaché case or even his suitcase. “Sure I can, Dad!” they say, and their faces shine.

We are under the mercy of an infinitely loving Father. He will never allow us to suffer beyond what He knows is the proper measure. In the middle of it, the suffering is *real*, not to be compared, of course, to the small boy with the suitcase. I think of those, for example, who are tortured because of their faith, or tortured by cancer. At such a time one desperately needs the Everlasting Word to fall back on—the Word, which stands forever and which nothing on earth or in heaven can ever change. Divine splendor *is* to be ours.

The soldier thinks of pleasing his commanding officer, receiving a commission, perhaps, and some day winning a victory. “Such a hope is no mockery” for the Christian who suffers. He can be absolutely sure that there is a reason and purpose behind it all. Phillips’ translation of the passage has *steadfastness, soundness, and hope* as the reasons. In that, the soldier can legitimately exult.

A Double Cross

“Sufferings arising from anxiety, in which the soul adds to the cross imposed by the hand of God an agitated resistance and a sort of unwillingness to suffer—such troubles arise only because we live to ourselves. A cross wholly inflicted by God, and fully accepted without any uneasy hesitation, is full of peace as well as of pain. On the contrary, a cross not fully and simply accepted, but resisted by the love of self, even slightly, is a double cross; it is even more a cross, owing to this useless resistance.”

François de la Mothe Fénelon

Joy

Joy is not the absence of suffering
But the presence of God.

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At Our Best

“We are not at our best when we are most exuberant, most impetuous, most abounding, most enthusiastic, most eager, but when we are pulling most gravely, steadily, courageously in our appointed duties, when we are almost swamped by difficulties, weariness, seeming impossibilities, but all the time our face bravely turned towards Eternity, our heart lovingly towards God and our will determined to fight and fight to death.”

Janet Erskine Stuart

Is God on Our Side?

“Now when Joshua was near Jericho, he looked up and saw a man standing in front of him with a drawn sword in his hand. Joshua went up to him and asked, ‘Are you for us or for our enemies?’ ‘Neither,’ he replied, ‘but as commander of the army of the Lord I have now come.’ Then Joshua fell face-down to the ground in reverence, and asked him, ‘What message does my Lord have for his servant?’” (Joshua 5:13-14, NIV).

Confronted by the warrior angel, Joshua wanted to know whose side he was on. “Are you for us or for our enemies?” The answer—“Neither.” In other words, God has no “sides” in our sense of the word. God *is* a side. He has a plan that we can obey—or rebel against. Joshua fell on his face in worship and humility, asking, “What does my Lord bid his servant?” That was the right question, spoken from the right position (face down in the dirt). The only answer from God given at that time was, “Take off your sandals, for the place where you are standing is holy.” He did that.

Then if you keep reading in Joshua 6, you see the astonishing story of the collapse of the walls of Jericho. Whether it is for national affairs or the minor conflicts of our daily lives, God’s word of direction is the *only* side of the question to consider.

Letter to a Reader

My dear friend:

Thank you for entrusting me with your extremely difficult situation. It is, alas, an all-too-familiar one since I have received so many letters like yours.

I agree with the counselors to whom you have gone that you may divorce your recalcitrant husband. Scripture allows it—but Scripture does not *require* it. You have a choice. If you choose to stay with your husband, you can count on the help of your Heavenly Father to give you a quiet and gentle spirit.

As you mentioned, you will not know whether he is continuing to carry on his illicit practices. You know that *he* knows and *God* knows, and you can simply leave it there. You can, by God’s grace, continue to pursue sanctification within your marriage. No one can obstruct that choice. It might be wise to make clear to your husband that you will no longer pry into his activities. Any further investigation will be solely by his own conscience and, of course, by the all-seeing eye of God Himself, to whom he will one day have to answer.

You ask if you should “take the out and run.” I would urge you not to. The Lord will, I believe, enable you to leave your frustrations, anger, and pain. As for those who “think you are nuts to continue in his home,” commit them to God. Memorize Isaiah 43:1-2 and 50:7-10. As you have done for all these years, continue to honor Christ in all that you do.

Talk to God About Everything

If the frightened chirp of a falling sparrow reaches the Throne Room of the Lord of the Universe as the Bible says it does, we can be sure He is not too high to pay attention to our smallest prayer.

Learn to talk to God about *everything*. It saves

so much energy to obey Paul's word in Philippians 4:6—"Have no anxiety, but in everything make your requests known to God in prayer and petition with thanksgiving. Then the peace of God, which is beyond our utmost understanding, will keep guard over your hearts and your thoughts, in Christ Jesus" (NEB).

Spread before Him in the morning all that you have to do that day, all the decisions that hang over your head for the next week or next year, the shopping, the interviews, the children, the boss, the lawn and garden, the car, the neighbors, schoolwork, boyfriends, money—you name it. But be sure to name it to Him. Peace will be the result, if you name it with thanksgiving, trusting that the One to whom you are naming it cares for you.

Q

*If thou but suffer God to guide thee,
And hope in Him through all thy ways,
He'll give thee strength, whate'er betide thee,
And bear thee through the evil days.
Who trusts in God's unchanging love
Builds on the rock that naught can move.*

"If Thou But Suffer God to Guide Thee," (verse one)

Georg Neumark

Notes From Lars

This newsletter is unique in not coming to the end of the fiscal year clothed in red ink. We are grateful, and we thank the Lord and all of you who so generously responded in 2001 to our renewal offers. Your donations make it possible for us to send the newsletter overseas to over seventy countries.

On a personal note, we are grateful for a wedding. In December, namesake granddaughter Elisabeth was married at Wheaton College to Mat Martin, a very fine British physicist who deals with all those tiny little particles that make up things. After Elisabeth graduates from Wheaton, they plan to move to the U.K.

In the last issue I neglected to mention that the documentary video *Through Gates of Splendor* is available in Spanish as well as English. Either can be had from other sources for about \$20, or directly from me at \$15—"whatever makes you feel good," as some folks say.

May the Lord bless you.

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Amy Carmichael, God's Missionary

As an old woman I find myself often in a quiet reverie, pondering the countless blessings of my long life, and marveling at the way the Lord God has led me. I think very often of my lovely mother, who sang to us—"Jesus, tender Shepherd hear me," and "I went to visit a friend one day—," and of my earnest father, who taught us the great hymns of the faith such as "Great Is Thy Faithfulness" and "It Is Well With My Soul."

We six Howard children were well acquainted with missionaries. My little brother once noted that "suitcases are forever bumping up and down the stairs," as our parents managed to keep an open home even during the Great Depression. We were often held spellbound at the dinner table, listening to missionary stories. I remember Mr. L.L. Legters telling of his years in Mexico, translating the Bible for illiterate Indians, and Miss Helen Yost, a delightful redhead who worked for years alone with American Indians in Arizona and New Mexico. We loved the thrilling and scary stories—Sir Alexander Clark (knighted by Queen Elizabeth) told of his being treed by a Cape buffalo, said to be the fiercest animal in Africa. For hours he sat in the tree as the buffalo circled the trunk, looking balefully at his prey, and seeming to say, "Come down!" I've forgotten how long the missionary had to cling until the animal sauntered away.

When I was fourteen I learned of an Irish missionary named Amy Carmichael whom I never met—a down-to-earth mystic whose beautiful writings captivated my imagination. She had gone first to Japan, where in her room she had two words written on the wall: *Yes, Lord.*

In the providence of God she went then to South India, where, as an itinerant evangelist, she soon discovered the evils of the Hindu temples where little girls and boys were used in unspeakably wicked ways. At first she could not believe such treatment of innocent children but soon discovered that things were far worse than she had imagined. She prayed earnestly for their deliverance and was able, over some fifty years, to make a home for many of these children.

She wrote, "I would never urge one to come to the heathen unless he felt the burden for souls and the Master's call, but oh! I wonder so few do. It does cost something. Satan is tenfold more of a reality to me today than he was in England, and very keenly that awful home-longing cuts through and through one sometimes—but there is a strange deep joy in being here with Jesus.

"Praising helps more than anything. Sometimes the temptation is to give way and go in for a regular spell of homesickness and be of no good to anybody. Then you feel the home prayers, and they help you to begin straight off and sing, 'Glory, glory, Hallelujah,' and you find your cup is ready to overflow again after all."

She wrote fifty or more books and stayed in India without a furlough until she died.

In my study here at home I have nearly two shelves full of Amy Carmichael's books, most of them bound in blue cloth with beautiful sepia-toned photographs of the picturesque Dohnavur compounds and the happy little children—few of whom can have any notion of what would have been their fate had the Lord not sent them to this place of safety, quietness, and overflowing love.

“There was a time when a gift of healing was given. Soon there was a buzz of talk, and colored stories flew all over the countryside—A place of healing! Miracles! Come, let us see! For still the multitude loves a spectacle. . . . There was a day when we asked Him, if He willed it so, to give us the gift, the charism, that had been in apostolic times. Would it not glorify His Name? Though we did see a putting forth of power, there was not anything comparable to the healing of the first century. The charism was not given. Why was that most blessed gift not given in its fullness?

“We know not what we should pray for as we ought. Not our poor thoughts, but the counsels of the Holy One be our guide.”

Amy Carmichael (Amma to her children) has been with the Lord for many years, but her work goes on, reaching little children who without her vision would surely have perished. My husband Lars and I had the privilege of visiting Dohnavur some years ago—a lovely place of order, quietness and, of course, much joy and laughter among the children. The single women who care for them in the bungalows are called Accals. They have given themselves unreservedly for the care of the children.

A letter I received from Dohnavur a year or so ago made me think of the mountains to the west of a place called Three Pavilions, a constant reminder of Isaiah 54:10, “‘Though the mountains be shaken and the hills be removed, yet my unfailing love for you will not be shaken nor my covenant of peace be removed,’ says the Lord, who has compassion on you.” The practical truth of those words has been seen as God meets all physical needs and Dohnavur experiences His loving-kindness in countless ways. This was their testimony as they entered into the 100th year of the mission. I am sure Amma and all her colleagues now in glory (as well as some still with us on earth) would echo the

words of David found in 2 Samuel 7:22, “How great you are, O Sovereign Lord! There is no one like you, and there is no God but you.”

Lean Hard

“Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and he shall sustain thee” (Psalm 55:22).

Child of My love, lean hard,
And let Me feel the pressure of thy care;
I know thy burden, child, I shaped it;
Poised it in My own hand, made no proportion
in its weight to thine unaided strength;
For even as I laid it on, I said
I shall be near, and while he leans on Me,
This burden shall be Mine, not his;
So shall I keep My child within the circling
arms of My own love.
Here lay it down, nor fear to impose it on a
shoulder which upholds the government of
worlds.
Yet closer come; thou art not near enough;
I would embrace thy care so I might feel My
child reposing on My breast.
Thou lovest Me? I know it. Doubt not then;
But, loving Me, Lean Hard.”

May Prentiss Smith

“Casting all your care upon Him; for He careth for you” (1 Peter 5:7).

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The Presence of God

“A sense of the presence of God is a rare gift. If given and then withdrawn, we examine ourselves, seeking the reason within. This numbness sets alight a longing for His felt presence. This is how faith is established! Believe what cannot be seen or felt. Rely on what can't be grasped. The realization of faults, inadequacy, inferiority to others, is God's way of forcing our dependence on Him. He planned it that way.

“We wish for ‘pure’ religion, feeling near to God, praying without distractions, enjoying quiet time—but it doesn't always work that way for long. Action clears and deepens spiritual affections.

“Don't strain to summon holy thoughts or feelings. Don't tell yourself you could be much more spiritual if you were somewhere else!

“Stay home, set your house in order, do the next thing.

“The taking up of the cross of Christ is no great action done once for all; it consists in the continual practice of small duties which are distasteful to us.”

John Henry Newman

If Only

Over the years I have heard from women a good many “if only's”—“If only I weren't married to him”; “If only I were married to him!” “If only I'd had a husband like hers!” “If only he would try to understand me!” “If only he would talk to me!” “If only he'd help me with the children—I've been beside myself all day, but what does he do when he gets home? Flops down in front of the TV, picks up the newspaper, doesn't talk to the children, asks me to bring him a drink,” etc.

I was glad to receive this letter: “I've learned to handle my marriage and my husband by pray-

ing instead of filing complaints that fall on defensive (if not deaf) ears. The Lord is more than able and willing to meet the needs I wrongly thought my husband should fulfill, and while I was never a nagger, I have learned how effective it is to pray and tell the Lord about my ‘husband troubles,’ and let Him intercede for me.”

A Word From the Book of James

“Dear brothers, is your life full of difficulties and temptations? Then be happy, for when the way is rough your patience has a chance to grow. So let it grow, and don't try to squirm out of your problems. For when your patience is finally in full bloom, then you will be ready for anything, strong in character, full and complete.

“If you want to know what God wants you to do, ask him and he will gladly tell you, for he is always ready to give a bountiful supply of wisdom to all who ask him; he will not resent it. But when you ask him, be sure that you really expect him to tell you, for a doubtful mind will be as unsettled as a wave of the sea that is driven and tossed by the wind; and every decision you then make will be uncertain, as you turn first this way, and then that. If you don't ask in faith, don't expect the Lord to give you any solid answer.

“A Christian who doesn't amount to much in this world should be glad, for he is great in the Lord's sight. But a rich man should be glad that his riches mean nothing to the Lord, for he will soon be gone, like a flower that has lost its beauty and fades away, withered—killed by the scorching summer sun. So it is with rich men. They will soon die and leave behind all their busy activities.”

James 1:2-11
The Living Bible

The Comforter, the Holy Spirit

“In all places and at all times, we can have that familiar friendship, we can have Him with us; and there may be through the day a constant interchange of private words, of little offerings, too small to have any name attached to them—by which the bonds of that familiar friendship grow closer and more real, until it comes to that special personal intimacy, which we call sanctity.”

Janet Erskine Stuart, 1857-1914

Just and Unjust

It is true that God seems to bless all sorts of ministry, whether or not it was conducted in His way. Many receive Christ under the ministry of someone who is far from holy. When Moses was told to speak to the rock, he struck the rock instead. He disobeyed God (and paid a high price for that later) *but* he got the desired *results*—the water gushed from the rock. God did not deprive His people of the water they needed just because it was gotten in the wrong way.

Nevertheless, results do not validate the method. It's just that “He causes his sun to rise on

the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous” (Matthew 5:45). And “upon whom does his light not rise?” (Job 25:3).

“Because he is kind to the ungrateful and wicked . . . be merciful, just as your Father is merciful” (Luke 6:35b-36).

Orthodox Prayer

O Lord, grant me to greet the coming day in peace.

Help me in all things to rely upon Your Holy will.

In every hour of the day reveal Your will to me.

Bless my dealings with all who surround me.

Teach me to treat all that comes to me with peace of soul and with firm conviction that Your will governs all.

Grant me strength in unforeseen events. Let me not forget that all are sent by You.

Teach me to act lovingly, firmly, and wisely, without embittering or embarrassing others.

Grant me strength to bear the fatigues of the coming day with all that it shall bring.

Direct my will. Teach me to pray. Pray You Yourself in me.

Amen.

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Response Is What Matters

What do we really want in life? I am surprised at how few of us have a ready answer. Oh, we can come up with quite a long list of things, but is there one thing above all others that we desire? "One thing I have desired of the Lord," said David, "that will I seek after: that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life..." (Psalm 27:4, NKJV). To the rich young man who wanted eternal life Jesus said, "One thing you lack. Go, sell everything" (Mark 10:21, NIV). In the Parable of the Sower, Jesus tells us that the seed that is choked by thorns has fallen into a heart full of the worries of this life, the deceitfulness of riches, and the desire for other things. The apostle Paul said, "One thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 3:13-14, NIV).

A quiet heart is content with what God gives. It is enough. All is grace. One morning my computer simply would not obey me. What a nuisance. I had my work laid out, my timing figured, my mind all set. My work was delayed, my timing thrown off, my thinking interrupted. Then I remembered. It was not for nothing. This was part of the Plan (not mine, His). "Lord, You have assigned me my portion and my cup."

Now if the interruption had been a human being instead of an infuriating mechanism, it would not have been so hard to see it as the most important part of the work of the day. But *all* is under my Father's control: yes, recalcitrant computers, faulty transmissions, drawbridges that happen to be *up* when I am in a hurry. My portion. My cup. My lot is secure. My heart can be at

peace. My Father is in charge. How simple!

My assignment entails my willing acceptance of my portion in matters far beyond comparison with the trivialities just mentioned, such as the death of a precious baby. A mother wrote to me of losing her son when he was just one month old. A widow wrote of the long agony of watching her husband die. The number of years given them in marriage seemed too few. We can know only that Eternal Love is wiser than we, and we bow in adoration of that loving wisdom.

Response is what matters. Remember that our forefathers all were guided by the pillar of cloud, all passed through the sea, all ate and drank the same spiritual food and drink, but God was not pleased with most of them. Their response was all wrong. Bitter about the portions allotted to them, they indulged in idolatry, gluttony, and sexual sin. And God killed them by snakes and by a destroying angel.

The same almighty God apportioned their experiences. All events serve His will. Some responded in faith. Most did not.

Think of that promise and keep a quiet heart! Our enemy delights in disquieting us. Our Savior and Helper delights in quieting us. "As a mother comforts her child, so will I comfort you" is His promise (Isaiah 66:13, NIV). The choice is ours. It depends on our willingness to see everything in God, receive all from His hand, accept with gratitude just the portion and the cup He offers. Shall I charge Him with a mistake in His measurements or with misjudging the sphere in which I can best learn to trust Him? Has He misplaced me? Is He ignorant of things or people which, in my view, hinder my doing His will?

God came down and lived in this same world as a man. He showed us how to live in this world, subject to its vicissitudes and necessities, that we might be changed, not into angels or storybook princesses, not wafted into another world, but changed into saints in this world. The secret is *Christ in me*, not me in a different set of circumstances.

Peace of Mind

“The basis of all peace of mind, and what must be obtained before we get that peace, is a cessation of the conflict of two wills—His and ours.”

Charles G. Gordon

Nothing Is Lost

A pastor’s wife asked, “When one witnesses a work he has poured his whole life into ‘go up in flames’ (especially if he is not culpable), is it the work of Satan or the hand of God?”

Often it is the former, always it is under the control of the latter. In the biographies of the Bible we find men whose work for God seemed to be a flop at the time—Moses’ repeated efforts to persuade Pharaoh, Jeremiah’s pleas for repentance, the good king Josiah’s reforms, rewarded in the end by his being slain by a pagan king. Sin had plenty to do with the seeming failures, but God was then, as He is now, the “Blessed Controller of All Things” (1 Timothy 6:15, PHILLIPS). He has granted to us human beings responsibility to make choices and to live with the consequences. This means that everybody suffers—sometimes for his own sins, sometimes for those of others.

There are paradoxes here that we cannot plumb. But we can always look at the experiences of our own lives in the light of the life of our Lord Jesus. How shall we learn to “abide” (live our lives) in Christ, enter into the fellowship of His sufferings, let Him transform our own? There is only one way. It is by living each event, including having

things “go up in flames,” as Christ lived: in the peace of the Father’s will. Did His earthly work appear to be a thundering success? He met with argument, unbelief, scorn in Pharisees and others. Crowds followed Him—not because they wanted His truth but because they liked handouts such as bread and fish and physical healing. His own disciples were “fools and slow of heart to believe.” (Why didn’t Jesus *make* them believe? For the reason given above.) These men who had lived intimately with Him, heard His teaching for three years, watched His life and miracles, still had little idea what He was talking about on the evening before His death. Judas betrayed Him. The rest of them went to sleep when He asked them to stay awake. In the end, they all forsook Him and fled. Peter repented with tears and later saw clearly what had taken place. In his sermon to the Jews of Jerusalem (Acts 2:23-24, PHILLIPS), he said, “This man, who was put into your power by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God, you nailed up and murdered. . . . But God would not allow the bitter pains of death to touch him. He raised him to life again—and indeed there was nothing by which death could hold such a man.”

There is nothing by which death can hold any of His faithful servants, either. Settle it, once for all—**YOU CAN NEVER LOSE WHAT YOU HAVE OFFERED TO CHRIST.** It is the man who tries to save himself (or his reputation or his work or his dreams of success or fulfillment) who loses. Jesus gave us His word that if we’d lose our lives for His sake, we’d find them.

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Laying Down Our Rights

In society today, it's natural for people to demand their rights. But followers of Jesus surrender their rights to Him, enjoying only the privileges He, in loving sovereignty, allows. What are some of the rights Jesus' disciples must surrender?

- the right to take revenge (Romans 12:19-20)
- the right to have a comfortable, secure home (Luke 9:57-58)
- the right to a good reputation (Matthew 5:11)
- the right to spend money however we please (Matthew 6:19-21)
- the right to hate an enemy (Matthew 5:43-47)
- the right to be honored and served (Mark 10:42-47)
- the right to understand God's plan before we obey (Hebrews 11:8)
- the right to live by our own rules (John 14:23-24)
- the right to hold a grudge (Colossians 3:13)
- the right to "fit into" society (Romans 12:2; Galatians 1:10)
- the right to do whatever feels good (Galatians 5:16-17; 1 Peter 4:2)
- the right to complain (Philippians 2:14; 1 Thessalonians 5:18)
- the right to put self first (Philippians 2:3-4)
- the right to express one's sexuality freely (1 Corinthians 6:18-20)
- the right to rebel against authority (1 Peter 2:13-15)
- the right to sue another believer (1 Corinthians 6:1-8)
- the right to end a disappointing marriage (Matthew 5:31-32)

"Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness. And being found in human form, he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death—even death on a cross" (Philippians 2:5-8, NRSV).

"I Am Going to Escort You"

Miss Mabel Shaw, one of the first two women missionaries sent out to Rhodesia by the London Missionary Society in 1915, wrote:

"They told me a lion had been about.... At last I rose to go, and was just about to mount my bicycle when out of one of the little houses came the old leper headman. He held a spear between the stumps that once were hands, and he went hobbling along the path in front of me. I called to him, and he stopped and looked around.

"Where are you going?"

"I am going to escort you to Mbereshi village. You can't go alone with lions about."

"I smiled on him, 'but on my bicycle I'll be there in a minute.'

"He would not have it. It was not fitting for me to go alone. I looked at him, a feeble old man, handless, feet half-eaten, his whole body covered with marks of disease, and his face most pitiful. I said to him, half-banteringly, and with a smile, 'Now what could you do if a lion came?'

"He drew himself up, and with a quiet dignity said, 'Have I not a life to give?' I was silent, seeing a Cross. I followed him to the village, thanked him, and came home, having met with God face-to-face."

(from *God's Candlelight*, 1943,
as quoted by Neal and Carol Brinneman in
Keys of the Kingdom newsletter, March 2001)

Praise and Thankfulness

“Before you go out into the world, wash your face in the clear crystal of praise. Bury each yesterday in the fine linen and spices of thankfulness.”

Charles Spurgeon

Secretary of Thy Praise

Of all the creatures both in sea and land,
Only to man thou hast made known thy ways,
And put the pen alone into his hand,
And made him secretary of thy praise.

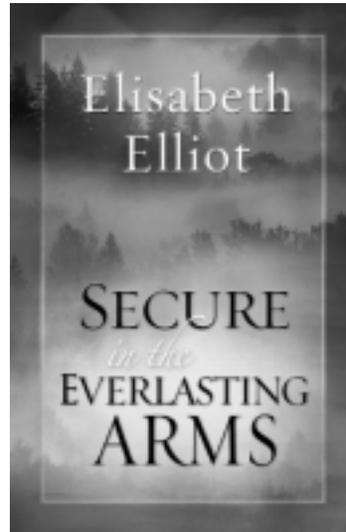
from “Providence,”
George Herbert (1593-1633)

New Book

Many of you have my book *Keep a Quiet Heart*, published in 1995, which is a collection of lead articles from this newsletter. Now it is being joined by a beautiful companion volume called *Secure in the Everlasting Arms*, comprised of newsletter articles that have appeared since 1995.

The little essays are grouped into categories such as “Daily Faith,” “Joy and Sorrow,” “Finding Contentment,” “Do the Next Thing,” “Marriage and Singleness,” and “Missionary Stories.” As you

can tell if you’ve been listening to my radio program or reading my books over the years, these are themes that have come to characterize the message of my life.



Note from Lars: The cover looks nice, and I hope you’ll enjoy the interior even more. *Secure in the Everlasting Arms* is available at your bookstore for \$11.99 (why they don’t make it an even \$12.00, I don’t understand)—or you can order it from me at \$9.00, which will include postage. For

the first two months, I’ll ask Elisabeth to sign each copy of the book. Order from me directly at 10 Strawberry Cove, Magnolia, MA 01930, and make checks payable to Lars Gren.

Women’s Conference

September 27, 28

Dauphin Way Baptist Church, Mobile, Alabama.
Call 251-342-3456.

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Deliver Us From Temptation

Is there a way of life, a manner of serving the Lord, that will deliver us from the temptations and distractions of the world? Life in a convent or monastery looks to many of us on the outside as though it would almost guarantee a degree of holiness that is far beyond the rest of us. But a letter from a friend who is a nun showed me that there is no such guarantee. For her, as for me, to walk with God is to walk by faith, to trust and obey one day at a time, recognizing our never-ending need for grace.

“Elisabeth, you know human nature well enough to understand some of the ‘occupational hazards’ that can only too easily compromise the totality of our commitment to the Lord. Because our way of life is known and recognized even by the building in which we live, those who do not know us personally can see us as a witness to the Transcendent, to the reality of faith, to the power of prayer, etc., while individually we can be failing miserably to live in the wholehearted surrender that they presume (or that we sometimes mistakenly presume ourselves).

“Every part of our ‘Rule’ has been chosen to free us for prayer. Centuries of experience have contributed to providing us with an atmosphere most conducive to freeing the mind and heart for prayer, and yet I’m afraid with all that has been given, one can settle for the shell, going through the motions only. We can compromise the spirit of freedom we have received from the Lord Jesus with the ersatz security and satisfaction of bondage to the letter of our Rule. We can still very easily get caught up in the busy-ness that makes our heart more a marketplace than a house of prayer.

“I was in high school when I began to consider giving my life to the Lord’s service. My parents are both teachers, and since my own inclinations were along the same lines, I thought naturally of joining the Sisters who had taught me for twelve years. As I learned more about the missions they staffed, especially in Africa, my attractions were kindled along mission lines.

“But my reading during those years convinced me that a life dedicated solely to prayer could reach even more people than could missions, so I applied to this order at the age of sixteen, and upon my graduation from college, I was accepted by the community.

“I’m afraid my decision was far from noble and generous. I didn’t realize it at the time, but it was pretty much pride that led me here, the desire to excel, to do the most, the best. My temperament tended to approach things ‘from the chin up,’ and this decision, as I came to see later, was much more one of my mind than of my heart. That’s where I was ‘at,’ and from that place the Lord drew me, in spite of my faults and imperfections. He was pursuing me long before I knew I needed to be pursued. I felt I was all His, not knowing that this was something I would have to learn, and keep on learning for a long time to come! It took a lot of shaking to wake me up.

“Several years later, after I had made my perpetual profession of vows, the crisis came. A series of circumstances knocked the bottom out of my life. After months of anguish, confusion, hurt, and loneliness, I had nowhere to turn but to the Lord. I suddenly realized that I had indeed been ‘squandering my heritage in a far country’ by being so preoccupied with myself, my reputation, etc. With freedom and joy, I realized that my Father did not mind being a last resort, and that He was waiting for me with open arms and a wide-open heart.

“It was only then that my heart was awakened, and I began to learn the meaning of prayer. This was the first time I asked the Lord what *He* wanted of me, and only then did I make my real commitment to Him, choosing to remain forever in the service of my Master, and begging Him to open my ears, that His Word might truly be my life.

“It is my abiding prayer that the Lord we seek will continue to refine and purify our hearts until our offering is as it should be, and the Sun of Justice shines unobstructed with its healing rays.”

God allows Himself to be found in many ways,

and the human tendency to ignore Him or resist Him crosses all cultural lines. Isn't it amazing that He cares so much that we reflect His image?

He wants us. He meets us. God takes us forward. The apostle Paul dealt with this situation in his First Letter to the Corinthians: "So, if you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don't fall! No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it" (1 Corinthians 10:12-13, NIV).

He chose us before we chose Him. He wants to bring us through every temptation and bring us safely home. He's our Savior!

Poem for a Dry Time

(written by this same nun, who wishes to remain anonymous)

Light of our world,
I stand before You blind,
 groping,
 self-deceived.
So often have I prayed
 that You would open my eyes
 to Your truth,
 that I might seek Your face in honesty.
"Lord, that I may see."
But now You have covered with mud
 my still-unseeing eyes.
Yes, Lord, I do believe;
 help Thou my unbelief.

Word of our God,
before You I am deaf,
 unheeding and confused.
So often have I prayed
 that You would open my ears
 to Your call,
 to Your voice in the needs of each heart,
"Lord, that I may hear."
But now You have put Your fingers in my ears
 that I might hear only Your silence.
Yes, Lord, I do believe;
 help Thou my unbelief.

Notes on Submission

"Submission"—what does it mean? The question, asked of me by women only, never seems to refer to submission to civil law, military officers, the boss, or the schoolteacher. It's submission to a *husband* that is the sticking point.

Instead of resorting to Webster this time, I'll give you Oswald Chambers' definition: "Etymologically [looking at the basic meaning of the word], submission means surrender to another, but in the evangelical sense it means that I conduct myself actually among men as the submissive child of my Father in heaven."

Let's look first at the Son of God, perfect in His submission to His Father. His whole life on earth demonstrated an unconditional surrender to that glorious will: "Here I am—it is written about me in the scroll—I have come to do your will, O God" (Hebrews 10:7, NIV).

Do we want to follow Him in this? "Yes," we say. But then, what if the will of the Father happens to be our submission to the will of a man? Nothing could be less to our liking. We search for every loophole.

"Wives, submit to your husbands as to the Lord" (Ephesians 5:22, NIV). Many are the discussions I've heard on this one, almost all of them directed to what it "can't possibly mean," rather than to the plain word of the Lord. The statement is simple. Not easy for women like me, but *simple*, that is, I understand it only too well. (As Mark Twain said, "I have far more trouble with the things I *do* understand in the Bible than things I don't understand.")

Worst-case scenarios are immediately put forward. "What if my husband asks me to do something immoral?" Heads nod vigorously. Cases are described. But the question was what submission

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means. Chambers has put it well—that I conduct myself as God’s child. The spirit of God’s Son was the spirit of submission, no questions asked as to His own safety or comfort, no effort to engineer things for Himself, but rather an utter handing over of all His powers to His Father, a perfect confidence that the consequences of this obedience lay in His Father’s hands.

“But my husband is fallible,” some say. So is mine. But my submission to him is obedience to God. How far am I prepared to trust myself into my Father’s hands? That’s the real question. We must learn to submit our “what ifs” and “yeah, buts.” To the humble and honest soul who does not proudly and arrogantly assume that God’s arrangement of things will not “work” in her case, the light of grace will always be given.

“But Elisabeth, you don’t seem to realize that *my case is an exception!*” Is it? Then it’s not my business. I try to stick to what the Bible does say, not to what it doesn’t say. He didn’t give us any footnotes. Take your special case to the foot of the cross. Have a long, honest look at it there. Let the light of Christ illuminate your situation.

Why should a wife submit to a husband rather than the reverse? Are we not equal? No, not equal in the sense of interchangeable. The heart of the matter is a mystery: the mystery of Christ and the Church. Try reading Ephesians 5:22-24, reversing the nouns. It’s nonsense. God arranged husbands and wives in different positions, each representing a tremendous verity: the husband represents Christ; the wife, the Church, His Bride. This is a divine assignment, not chosen, earned, or deserved by either husband or wife, not conferred by either on the other, but designated by God Himself. I am thankful for this arrangement because I know it is a revelation of divine wisdom and love, given for our freedom and peace.

I have been thinking, talking, writing about this for years. I confess that I am not Exhibit A of the submissive woman, but in my old age the Lord in His wonderful patience and mercy is showing me how simple it is just to keep my mouth shut. That’s what it comes down to most of the time. Sometimes, of course, my responsibility as a helper for my husband requires my calling to his attention something he has overlooked. Even if he ignores my advice, do I fall in with it graciously? Most of my testings come in the little things, when I automatically want to put forward my own preferences, arguments, logic, clarifications.

Relinquishing those has meant a new freedom from stress and a new thankfulness for my husband, Lars Gren.

And what about the husbands? They’ve been given a far tougher assignment: Love your wives as Christ loved the church. Give yourselves up for her to make her holy. Love your wives as your own bodies (see Ephesians 5:25-28). Who could balk at submission to a man like that? All of us, I guess, for we balk at submission to Christ Himself, who loves us perfectly!

But surely the glad surrender of both husband and wife to our respective positions in God’s kingdom makes for the world’s happiest marriages.

Pasted on the flyleaf of one of my Bibles

Instead of the word *submission*, I should write *acceptance*, for more and more, as life goes on, that word opens doors into rooms of infinite peace, and the heart that accepts asks nothing, for it is at rest, and the pilgrim of love does not need a map or chart. “I know my road, it leadeth to His heart.”

Amy Carmichael

80/20 Vision

It is always possible to be thankful for what is given rather than to complain about what is not given. One or the other becomes a habit of life. There are, of course, complaints that are legitimate—as, for example, when services have been paid for which have not been rendered—but the gifts of God are in an altogether different category.

My second husband once said that a wife, if she is very generous, may allow that her husband lives up to eighty percent of her expectations. There is always the other twenty percent that she would like to change, and she may chip away at it for the whole of their married life without reducing it very much. She may, on the other hand, simply decide to enjoy the eighty percent, and both of them will be happy. It’s a down-to-earth illustration of a principle: *Accept, positively and actively, what is given to you.* Let thanksgiving be the habit of your life.

from my book, *Love Has a Price Tag*

“It is only disguised pride that makes us fret over what we can’t understand.”

Evelyn Underhill, *Letters*

Odds and Ends From Lars

As I write this, we are about to depart for a trip to Hungary (postponed from last year when planes were grounded after 9/11). Elisabeth’s 2002 speaking engagements were put together in a short span of time and couldn’t get into the newsletters. But I wanted you to know a bit of what we did in the early part of the year:

One of the main speaking events was at a Christian school, the dedication of a gymnasium that was being named for Jim Elliot. I suggested they call it the Jim Gym. I’m not sure they took me up on it.

Between speaking engagements in Oklahoma City, I got the opportunity to try my hand at skeet-shooting. I pulled the trigger about fifty times, wounding only about five of those little clay pigeons, some so slightly that I think in a recession they could have been reused. If they

had been real birds, they would have had more than a sporting chance to continue flying, minus only a feather or two.

Elisabeth went to see Valerie and her family for a week, prior to which I had been in Florida for five days. We had just one day together before parting, and someone said, “You weren’t together long enough to have a fuss.” Anyway, while she was gone, it was close to being oatmeal three times a day. I was happy to see her return, not only for her cooking, but just to have her back to relieve the echoing emptiness of the house.

This year, I want to thank you prior to the first of January for your generous support, which has kept this bit of (I trust) helpful screed in the black again for another year.

However, I should mention that my offer in the July newsletter—of offering autographed copies of Elisabeth’s new book, *Secure in the Everlasting Arms*—was made without enough thought. So many of you have requested books that her fingers are now worn down to the half moons. Elisabeth said, “I should have been named Sue.” If you’re wondering where your order is, I can only say that with the response we’ve had, we hope we’ll finish sending them out by Thanksgiving.

We give thanks for all of you and may you have peace and joy in the Lord.

The Elisabeth Elliot Newsletter

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Christmas on a Bed of Pain

It is nearly Christmastime. We don't usually think of suffering during this glad season if we can help it. "It's Jesus' birthday!" we tell tiny tots, and we set about making cookies and gifts and trimming the house and the tree.

The very joyfulness of Christmas makes it especially hard for those who suffer. Jesus' birthday, the Feast of the Incarnation, the Word made flesh—the happy morning when the myths about gods coming to earth in the form of men actually came true. This was "glorious news of great joy," not only for poor shepherds but also for all people. Can it be *that* for someone two thousand years later who is nailed to a bed by pain, or who has lost something most precious, or who has been humiliated to the very dust?

Perhaps it can if we think of what that glorious news entailed for the baby Himself. Richard Crashaw (1613-149) described it far more beautifully than I can:

That the Great Angel-blinding Light should
shrink
His blaze to shine in a poor Shepherd's eye;
That the unmeasured God so low should
sinke,
As Pris'ner in a few poor rags to lye;
That from his Mother's Breast he milk should
drinke,
Who feeds with Nectar Heaven's faire family,
That a vile Manger his low Bed should prove
Who in a Throne of stars thunders above;
That He whom the Sun serves, should faintly
peepe
Through clouds of Infant Flesh! That He,
the old
Eternall Word should be a Child, and weepe;
That He who made the fire, should fear
the cold,

That Heaven's high Majesty His Court
should keepe
In a clay cottage, by each blast control'd;
That Glories' self should serve our Griefs and
feares,
And free Eternity submit to years,
Let our overwhelming wonder be.

Crashaw shows us a little of the relinquishment, the limitation, the humiliation that it meant for God to become a baby. "In Jesus we see one who for a short while was made lower than the angels, crowned now with glory and honor because he suffered death" (Hebrews 2:9). "We are God's heirs and Christ's fellow-heirs, if we share his sufferings now in order to share his splendor hereafter" (Romans 8:17). Let us measure our sufferings by the sufferings of the Son of Man. Let us think, then, of the glory and honor He received because He wailed as a newborn in the straw of a stable and was fixed with nails to a cross. Let us think of His glory and honor and remember the incredible promise that that glory will be ours too.

Ours? Yes, ours—we are fellow-heirs, if we share his sufferings. His splendor hereafter is what the sufferings are for. Let us think on these things, and have a very merry Christmas in the midst of whatever sufferings fall to us.

A Promotion

"If every call to Christ and His righteousness is a call to suffering, the converse is equally true—every call to suffering is a call to Christ, a promotion, an invitation to come up higher."

Charles Brent (1862-1929)

Little Mary

We see her first, that little Mary (may I say little? I think she was a teenager), as a simple village girl in a poor home in an out-of-the-way place. She is bending over her work when suddenly the light changes. She raises her eyes. A dazzling stranger stands before her with a puzzling greeting. He calls her “most favored one” and tells her the Lord is with her. She is stunned. I don’t believe her first thoughts are of herself. (“Am I ever lucky!”) No, Mary is troubled. She discerns at once that this has to do with things infinitely larger than herself, far beyond her understanding. What can this mean?

The angel does not weigh in immediately with the stupendous message he has been sent to deliver. He first comforts her. “Don’t be afraid, Mary.” *Mary*. She is not a stranger to him. He is assuring her that he has the right person. He explains what she has been chosen for—to be the mother of the Son of the Most High, a king whose reign will be forever. She has one question now—not about the Most High, not about an eternal king—those are things too high for her—but motherhood is another matter. She understands motherhood, has been looking forward to it with great happiness. Her question is about that: “How can this be? I am still a virgin.”

He does not really explain. He simply states a mystery: “The power of the Most High will overshadow you.” He goes on to tell her of another miraculous pregnancy, that of her old cousin Elisabeth, well past childbearing age. “God’s promises can never fail,” he says. They won’t fail for you, Mary. Rest assured.

How will the girl respond? She is at once totally at the disposal of her Lord; she sees that her visitor is from Him. Whatever the mystery, whatever the divine reasons for being chosen, whatever the inconveniences, even disasters (broken engagement? stoning to death—the punishment for a fornicator?) which she may be required to face, her answer is unequivocal and instant: “Here I am. I am the Lord’s servant; let it be as you have told me.” In other words, *Anything, Lord*.

Next, we see her with Elisabeth, who, by the manner of Mary’s greeting and by her own baby’s sudden movement in her womb, knows immedi-

ately that God has chosen Mary to be the mother of the Lord. They don’t sit down over coffee and natter about the gynecology or the practical logistics or what people are going to say. Mary sings her song of gladness, of thoroughgoing acceptance of the gift, of trust in the Mighty One.

Then we see her sweating in the cold of the stable, putting her own life on the line, as every mother must do, in order to give life to somebody else. We see her with the tough shepherds, breathlessly telling their story of the glory of the Lord and the singing of the angel choir. Everyone else is astonished (a word that comes from “thunderstruck”), but Mary does not join the excited babble. She is quiet, treasuring all these things, pondering them deep in her heart. We see her with the mysterious travelers from the East bringing their lavish gifts. She says nothing as they kneel before the baby she holds in her arms.

We see her in the temple handing over her baby to old Simeon, to whom the Holy Spirit has revealed the child’s amazing destiny: a revelation to the heathen, glory to Israel. But to Mary he gives the far deeper message of suffering, for there is no glory that is not bought by suffering. Her Son will suffer—He will be a sign that men reject. She, His mother, will suffer, will be pierced to the heart. No question or answer from her is recorded. Again we know only her silence.

We see her on the donkey again, on the roundabout journey to Egypt because her husband has been given a secret message in a dream. She does not balk, she does not argue.

We see nothing of her for twelve years—days and nights, weeks and months, years and years of caring for the infant, the toddler, the little boy, the adolescent. There is no mention of any of that. Mary has no witness, no limelight, no special

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recognition of any kind. She is not Mother of the Year. Hers is a life lived in the ordinary necessity of their poverty and their humanity, no one paying attention to her attention to Him. Whatever the level of her comprehension as to the nature of this boy, she knows He was given to her. She remembers how. She treasures all this. She ponders things in the silence of her heart. Did she share any of them with Joseph? Could she? Could he receive them? We know next to nothing of the dynamics between them. She was content to be silent before God.

The apostle Paul tells us we are “hidden with Christ in God.” There is mystery there, but when I think of the life of Mary, I see some facets of that mystery that I missed when I read the apostle. Hers was a hidden life, a faithful one, a holy one—holy in the context of a humble home in a small village where there was not very much diversion. She knew that the ordinary duties were ordained for her as much as the extraordinary way in which they became her assignment. She struck no poses. She was the mother of a baby, willing to be known simply as His mother for the rest of her life. He was an extraordinary baby, the Eternal Word, but his needs were very ordinary, very daily, to His mother. Did she see herself as fully qualified? Surely not. Surely not more than any other woman who finds herself endowed with the awesome gift of a child. It is the most humbling experience of a woman’s life, the most revealing of her own helplessness. Yet we know this mother, Mary, the humble virgin from Nazareth, as “Most Highly Exalted.”

This Christmas, thank God that unto us a Child was born. Thank Him also that there was a pure-hearted young woman prepared to receive that Child with daily dependence, daily obedience, daily trust.

I thank Him for her silence. That spirit is not in me at all, not naturally. I want to learn what she had learned so early: the deep guarding in her heart of each event, mulling over its meaning from God, waiting in silence for His word to her.

I want to learn, too, that extraordinary spirituality does not make one refuse to do ordinary work, that a wish to prove that one is not ordinary is a dead giveaway of spiritual conceit.

“Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.”

Little Things

“If you would advance in true holiness, you must aim steadily at perfection in little things.”

Abbé Guillore

Lars’ Highlights of 2002

One highlight of the year 2002 was a delightful tour of Romania and Hungary. It was the first time that Elisabeth had had the opportunity of speaking in Romania. Our eight days were spent in the Transylvania portion of the country. We were taken with the beautiful countryside of rolling fields and mountain areas. After Communism fell, the large government-run farms were broken up and the land reverted to the people. Now one can see small, very neatly separated sections where a man or a woman, and at times a small group, will be out with their hoes, weeding the rows of corn, onions, peppers, and other crops. It was interesting too to see the horse and plow still in good use.

The people received Elisabeth well. We were amazed at how many knew about Jim Elliot. We wonder if hospitality may have originated in that part of the world. Their houses may not be large, but there is always room for more, and every place we stayed included one or both of the grandparents in the house. There were six of us traveling together. When it was time for dessert, our hosts often set out a plate of small cakes. One time I counted the pieces: sixty for the six of us, neatly arranged on three plates. Those who have little give much.

In Hungary, most of our time was spent relaxing, with only one speaking engagement in Budapest. This was our sixth or seventh time being there. We enjoy the city and have made some good friends there. I remember our first visit, before “the Wall” came down, when we came down the Danube by boat to meet Anne-Marie Kool, who had invited Elisabeth to speak. As we neared Budapest, Elisabeth said, “How will we know this person?” It was a joy to see a young lady on the pier, smiling and holding, for identification, a copy of one of Elisabeth’s books, *Through Gates of Splendor*. Since that time we have enjoyed each other’s company often. This time,

we had a good few days with her again, seeing other parts of Budapest, including two evenings at the symphony. Just so you know—Anne-Marie is Dutch but has been in Hungary for fifteen years and has established a Missions Institute for Hungary, the first of its kind.

Each day of our two-and-a-half-week stay, Elisabeth exclaimed about another perfect day—just the right temperature and no rain. One day, we went to the market (a several-blocks-long indoor market) to get some strawberries. I left Elisabeth sitting on a bench by herself, and when I returned I saw a Hungarian lady talking to her. After she departed, I asked Elisabeth how she knew that lady. She said, “I didn’t. She came up to me to ask whether I was Elisabeth Elliot. She had heard me speak several years ago in Budapest.” Then as we were standing in line to go into the Resistance Museum, a man came along and identified us again. He turned out to be an American who is a missionary there. He had had Elisabeth come and speak to a group at M.I.T. some 18 years ago. He even remembered what she spoke on. We’ve aged, but I guess we are still recognizable.

After our return, we had a few days with Valerie’s family in South Carolina. Val, Walt, and all the grandchildren are doing well. In August, Jim, the “midnumber” in the family of eight, goes off to Clemson University. Walt and Valerie may suffer from an early empty nest syndrome, relatively speaking. But since Sarah, the youngest, is only eight years old, there will yet be a few more

years before the “old folks” will not hear the fall of footsteps and the closing of a door.

We are all thankful for God’s mercies.

Prayer of Surrender

Loving Lord and heavenly Father, I offer up today all that I am, all that I have, all that I do, and all that I suffer, to be Yours today and Yours forever. Give me grace, Lord, to do all that I know of Your holy will. Purify my heart, sanctify my thinking, correct my desires. Teach me, in all of today’s work and trouble and joy, to respond with honest praise, simple trust, and instant obedience, that my life may be in truth a living sacrifice, by the power of Your Holy Spirit and in the name of Your Son, Jesus Christ, my Master and my all. Amen.

November 2002 Travel Schedule

November 9 Denton, Texas, Denton Bible Church, “A Morning With Elisabeth,” 9:00 A.M. to 12:00 noon.

November 23 Anchorage, Alaska, Mayor’s Prayer Breakfast. For reservations, call (907) 562-1274.

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Hope as an Anchor

“I *hope* it doesn’t snow tomorrow,” we say, thinking of our plans to visit family or friends. Or, “We’re just *hoping* they finish the road repairs in front of the church before the wedding,” “I sure *hope* Susie calls after her plane lands.”

This kind of hope is wishful thinking, sometimes even foolish optimism, and it is not true hope. We’ve used the word this way so long that we’ve pretty much emptied it of meaning by the time we read Hebrews 6:19, “We have this *hope* as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure.”

Is your hope an anchor for your soul? Has your wishful hope been converted at the foot of the cross to true hope? Job’s well-tested hope was enlivened by true faith in God—“Though he slay me, yet will I hope in him.” That’s quite a lot different from merely hoping for the most comfortable outcome!

Could it be that our suffering, even that which we bring upon ourselves, provides us with the raw material for true hope? Hosea thought so. Speaking for God, he wrote, “I will make the Valley of Achor [which means “trouble”] a door of hope” (Hosea 2:15). I find it interesting that Achor and anchor are so similar in spelling.

The Valley of Achor, near Jericho, was named by Joshua after Achan brought sin into the camp. Achan’s name meant “trouble.” By stealing some of the spoils from the victory at Jericho, he had incurred the defeat in the battle of Ai. He and his family were stoned to death to purge the curse from the midst of the people. After his demise, the fighting men of Israel mounted a second attack and defeated Ai in a stroke. Joshua commemorated the day by naming the valley Achor, so the people would remember what had happened *before* the victory.

This is the same obscure valley that, six centuries later, the prophet Hosea declared God would make a “door of hope.”

“I will lead her [Israel] into the desert and speak tenderly to her. . . . I will betroth you to me forever; I will betroth you in righteousness and justice, in love and compassion. I will betroth you in faithfulness, and you will acknowledge the Lord” (Hosea 2:14, 19-20).

Today, twenty-seven centuries after Hosea prophesied those words of hope, we can look at them with the aid of the Light that has come into the world. Whatever our lot, He can do it. He can walk into our valley of trouble and convert all our false hope to true hope, where we can be anchored securely.

With His sustaining help, we can dwell in the reality of 1 Corinthians 13: “Faith, *hope*, love abide, these three.”

God’s Gifts

What we are is a gift, and, like other gifts, chosen by the Giver alone. We are not presented with an array of options. What would you like to be? How tall? What color? What temperament would you prefer? Which parents would you choose as forebears?

One lady in her sixties still declares that she does not have what Paul calls the gift of single life. She has lived these sixty years without it, for God has assured her, she assures me, that He has a husband for her somewhere. She has only to wait for him to appear. She may be right that God has a husband for her. I think she’s wrong in saying she hasn’t the gift of single life. She has had it all her life. God may yet give her the gift of marriage, for many of His gifts may be given for only a part of a lifetime. I know of three Christians who had for a short time the gift of healing other people and then it was

withdrawn. Why should He not give single life for most of a lifetime and then give marriage? Or may He not give marriage and then, sometimes early in life, widowhood? Single life may be only a stage of a life's journey, but even a stage is a gift. God may replace it with another gift, but the receiver accepts His gifts with thanksgiving.

**From chapters 9 and 10 of
my book *Let Me Be a Woman***

From the Cove: Our Neighbor

The clean Teflon pan sat on the kitchen counter after my afternoon walk until time to wash the supper dishes. Our neighbor had had it since the previous week, when Elisabeth had delivered a meatloaf in it. Now Elisabeth was out of town and had suggested I stop in and get it.

He had been in his usual spot, leaning on the kitchen sink, glancing at the newspaper spread across it. He didn't see me until I tapped on the window. Slowly he came away from the sink and made his way to the door. When he opened the door, he placed his hands on his knees and stood in his bowed way, trying to breathe easier. He was in treatment again for cancer and suffering from emphysema. We exchanged a few words—the normal pleasantries. He said the meatloaf was very good and that Elisabeth could do it again for him anytime.

A week before the meatloaf, the pan had held one of four loaves of bread that I had baked. I had wrapped one up in plastic and had given it to Tom.

As I finished the few dishes, I thought, *the pan looks clean, but I'll just make sure*. When I put it into the soapy water, I thought I could smell something and my eyes seemed to burn. As I rubbed the rag around, it became yellow, and I realized I was removing a coating of nicotine. Both Tom and his son are heavy smokers. *Well*, I said to myself, *when Elisabeth next prepares a meatloaf, we'll present it in foil, not in the pan*. Figuring the best would be an overnight soak in ammonia water, I left it on the counter and went to my evening work and then off to bed.

If I have a thought that's deeper than the surface it generally occurs, as it did that night, at 2:00 A.M. or thereabouts. Lying waiting for sleep to overtake me, I thought of Tom and our Teflon pan, which is used almost exclusively for bread making. Why is it easier to offer him a loaf of bread than to offer him the Bread of Life? Oh, I've mentioned prayer to him, that we remember him at times in that way. He thanked me. I said something about God's help. He uses the Deity as an oath sprinkled in his conversation.

In the stillness of the night so many good approaches pop in and out of mind, but my tongue is tied when standing beside a person. Then I look at myself—clean on the outside—but the inside is another matter. Like the pan, a true cleaning is needed. Not just from sins of the past, never forgotten and humanly speaking impossible to make amends for, but the very thoughts and deeds of today, the feelings offended, the unkind reply, the shading of the truth. God's grace is what I need and it is what Tom needs. There is a difference though—whereas Tom may only have heard of that need a time or two, I have heard and known of it all my life.

I desire to speak of the “grace that is greater than all our sin,” but what is the approach? Is it not, “Here is what the Word says and here is what it means for me”? Has grace entered my being or is it only in my head? Suffering will continue, but there can be comfort and a hope that is beyond understanding. “Taste and see.”

“He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.” “So let us know, let us press on to know the Lord. His going forth is as certain as the dawn, and He will come to us as the spring rain, watering the earth.” I've seen the truth of it in

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others. Is the reality in me? The question Jesus asked long ago is ever relevant: “Have I been so long a time with you and do you not yet know Me?”

What could be simpler than the offering of a loaf of bread and then “Let me mention to you a better bread, the Bread of Life”?

So often a comment can be an entry into a deeper spiritual realm, and I stand mute, as occurred recently on a trip south. The conversation got on to life, retirement or some such, and went to a Swedish proverb about three things a person needs to be happy. I can’t remember the first two, but the third was “something to look forward to.” Immediately my mind went to “if it is only of this world, then what?” I could have just said, “And after that, then what?” and it could have been a worthwhile coffee time. How does one bring the thought into the real situation?

Back to Tom. I think of him now, for he is no longer my neighbor. He died some weeks ago. It had to be the Lord that kept urging me to go and visit with him when he was in the rehab unit. Twice we chatted at length, he going over the old ground of difficult doctors who would not cooperate with each other, or the utter waste of being there instead of at home, especially since he was paying for the utilities for no one’s use. In between I spoke of a loving God in the midst of suffering and our need of Him. Tom had the all-too-common replies to that. He had lived a good life, been good to his family, and what about the bad folks who have it so good, etc.

The last time I saw him he was once again my neighbor. He had received the word that nothing more could be done. He sat hunched on the porch drawing in oxygen from the portable tank and said, “It’s just a bad roll of the dice. I thought we had it licked but not so.”

I said, “Tom, beyond the ‘dice’ there is a God who cares and to whom we can come in a time like this.” He appreciated our prayers for him but that’s where it stopped.

In two days we were leaving town. I had a constant urge to see him once more. By the time I was free it was evening and too late. *When I get back I’ll visit Tom at once.*

We returned in the late afternoon, and I noticed the nurse’s car was not there. I checked with my

other neighbor. “How are things at Tom’s?”

“The funeral was last Saturday. Family was with him the last few days. His son said that the last Tom said was about the mess the various doctors caused him.”

So here I sit, sensing failure and sadness for not having been able to lay before Tom the only hope for any of us: “He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.”

Why should I write about this? I can’t give a bunch of reasons other than I had the urge to do so, perhaps only to see for myself what a “day” brought or perhaps to help me in sharing God’s offer of Life to the next “Tom” in my path. Then again there may be some of you who have had similar experiences and now know that you’re not alone.

Humility

The stamp of the saint is not the metallic rapping out of a testimony to sanctification, but the true humility which shows the fierce purity of God in ordinary human flesh.

Amy Carmichael

Notes on Getting Organized

It’s depressing to live in a mess, and God surely does not mean for us to do so. He is not “the author of confusion,” the Bible says. Of course no one can organize somebody else, because only the owner knows what can be discarded. But for what they’re worth, here are a few suggestions:

- Start small. One bureau drawer, one closet, the trunk of the car.
- Anything you have not used for a year, you do not need to keep. Don’t think, “But I might need it later!” If you made it through last year without it, throw it away—or give it to the Salvation Army for somebody who needs it worse than you do.

- Use small boxes (stationery boxes, check book boxes) to organize drawers. Shoe boxes are great for socks and underwear. Don't use the lids.
- Make sure you assign a place for everything and put everything in its place—scotch tape in *one* place (or two if absolutely needed in two); rubber bands and paper clips in a tuna fish can; plastic containers in one section of the kitchen. (Throw away containers that have lost their lids.)
- When you've got one drawer under control go to the next one—aim to finish only one room at a time. It is hopeless when you get distracted and start working on another room before finishing the first. Finish the job.
- Have manila folders or hanging files for papers that must be kept. Clean out these files every year—80 percent of things filed never get used.
- Always put things in their places right away after you've used them.
- Shut cupboard doors, turn off lights, hang towels straight, put shoes away, throw away the magazines and newspapers.

If all of this is too much, try to accomplish it in one room only. Just having *one* room that is beautifully neat and orderly will do wonderful things for your psyche!

Jabez

In light of the current interest in the prayer of the obscure man Jabez, here, for your interest, is an excerpt from the December 3, 1950, entry in my husband Jim's journal, written when he was in the States praying for further guidance about going to Ecuador as a missionary.

"Jabez, the *more honorable*, conceived in sorrow, prayed a prayer I, too, have prayed this morning. 'He called on the God of Israel saying, Oh that thou wouldst bless me indeed, and enlarge my border, and that thy hand might be with me, and that thou wouldst keep me from evil, that it be not to my sorrow' (1 Chron. 4:10). 'And God granted him that which he requested' (v. 11).

"Bereans, *more noble* than the Thessalonians, showed their honor by searching the Scriptures to see if the things they heard were so (Acts 17:11). Grant me this *nobility*, Lord, to be as Jabez who *asked* and as Berea who *examined*."

February-March 2003 Travel Schedule

February 14-15 Paris, Tex., East Paris Baptist Church, Gency Fortenberry, (903) 785-1300.

March 14-15 Santa Clarita, Calif., Grace Baptist Church.

The Elisabeth Elliot Newsletter

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“Could You Not Wait?”

Olive trees are not much good for leaning against. Too knobby. I kick away a few stones and sit down on the ground, knees braced in my arms. The other two stand for a while, eyeing the one who has gone off alone.

“Might as well sit down,” I say. They don’t answer.

Long day. Tired. I look up through the trees. Ragged clouds, thin moon. Enough wind to move the olive leaves. My head’s too heavy to hold up. I stare at my old sandals, one of them with a loose thong. Then I notice my feet and remember—at supper—“altogether clean.” Dusty again now, but they were clean, all right. Never had them so clean. “Do you understand what I have done for you?” he asked. Maybe the rest understood. Not me. And what was all that about being *slaves*?

My two friends sit down a little way off. Can’t hear much of the conversation (they’re almost whispering). His body. His blood. (Strange things he said to us tonight at the table.) How he longed to eat with us, but would never do it again—until...something about a *kingdom*.

Yawn. Too tired to think now. I push away a few more stones and lie down in the grass. No pillow. Well, my arm will have to do.

What do I hear? Not my friends—they’re flat out on the ground now, like me. Some movement. Wind? An animal? No, over there, where *he* is. A sort of gasp, was it? I strain my ears. Can’t tell. Maybe they can, they’re nearer, but they don’t say anything. Silence now. Never mind. Have a little snooze.

“Asleep, Simon?” I jump. He did ask us to stay awake, now that I think of it. He’s standing over us and here we all are, snoring away. Poor show. “Pray that you may be spared the test.” Yes. Lord. (Test?)

He goes off again. We sit up, shake ourselves.

(It’s colder now, my tunic’s clammy with dew.) We pray. We can see, from the silhouette over by the rock, that something is very wrong. Wonder if we should do something? But he said stay here.

“You will all fall from you faith.” We talk about that. What could he mean? *All* of us? The other two lie down. I sit here, thinking of what he said to me—about Satan, sifting me like wheat. He said he prayed especially for me. My faith fail? I told him I’d even go to prison with him. Die, if it came to that. Judas now—that’s another story. Wonder what he’s up to? Left the table in an awful hurry. Never did trust him. Shifty-eyed. Slick.

Ah-oh. Must have fallen asleep again. I can sense his presence, standing close, but I’ll keep my eyes shut. What can I say? I wait. He says nothing, goes away.

“You awake?” I poke the others. I remember he told me I was to “lend strength to the brothers.” They pull themselves up, and again we talk. He said he was going away. Somewhere where we could not come. Peace . . . love . . . the Prince of this world . . . persecution . . . the breakdown of faith. Doesn’t sound good.

“What’s that?” (I’m the one who’s whispering now.) A soft noise—like wings. There’s somebody there, bending over him in the moonlight. We peer through the trees. Can’t tell who it is. It’s not good, his being here in this garden. Too many people know they can find him here. What! Whoever was there has—why, vanished! Just like that! He is standing now, his face lifted up.

“That’s the third time he’s prayed the same prayer,” my friend says. I didn’t hear it.

We keep talking, trying to stay awake this time. He needs me, I guess. We’d better be on our toes. Not sure what’s going on. Is he in danger? But he doesn’t seem to know fear. Has his own ways of getting out of trouble when he wants

to—remember the time he slipped through the crowd that was about to dump him over the precipice? Yes, but we told him this time he ought not to come up to the city. Bad timing.

What about what he said about our needing purse, pack, and sword now, after sending us out barefoot, without a coin or crust, the first time? Said he had a good many other things he couldn't tell us now, but would send a spirit—Spirit of Truth, that was it—who would explain things that were going to happen.

Hours go by. We lose track of how long we talk. Yawn, relax.

“Still sleeping? Up, let's go forward.” On our feet like a shot. What's happening? “My betrayer is upon us.” Mob surging through the garden. Lanterns, torches, swords, cudgels.

“Master! Here, quickly, get behind. . . .” He doesn't hear me. Walks straight up to them. “What is it you want?” I grab my sword, swing it at one of the gang, only get his ear.

“Put up your sword,” he tells me. “This is the cup the Father has given me. Don't you realize I must drink it?”

What could we do? I follow him partway, but I can see it's all over. No point getting involved.

From my book, *On Asking God Why*

Prayer as Incense

Prayer is compared in the Bible to incense. “Let my prayer be counted as incense before thee,” wrote the psalmist, and the angel who stood before the altar with the golden censer in Revelation 6 was given incense to mingle with the prayers of the saints. Incense was very expensive, blended by a perfumer according to a strict formula. It appears to serve no particularly useful purpose. Its smoke and fragrance soon dissipate. Couldn't incense be done without?

Prayer is like incense. It costs a great deal. Sometimes it seems to accomplish little (as we mortals assess things). It soon dissipates. But God likes the fragrance. It was God's idea to arrange the work of the tabernacle to include a special altar for incense. We can be pretty sure He included all that was necessary and nothing that was unnecessary.

Jesus prayed: He offered thanksgiving, He interceded for others, He made petitions. That the Son—coequal, coeternal, consubstantial with the Father—should come to the Father in prayer is a mystery. That we, God's children, should be not only permitted but commanded also to come is a mystery. How can we change things by prayer? How can we “move” a sovereign and omnipotent God? We do not understand. We simply obey because it is a law of the universe, as we obey other laws of the universe, knowing only that this is how things have been arranged: the book falls to the floor in obedience to the law of gravity if I let go of it; spiritual power is released through prayer.

I could say, “God can make my hands clean if He wants to,” or I could wash them myself. Chances are God *won't* make my hands clean. That's a job He leaves up to me. His omnipotence is not impaired by His having ordained my participation, whether it be in the washing of hands with soap or the helping of a friend with prayer. Jesus Christ redeemed the world by the laying down of His life, a perfect sacrifice, once for all. Yet He is in the business, as David Redding says, of “maintenance and repair.” He lets us participate with Him in that business by the laying down of our own lives.

One way of laying down our lives is by praying for somebody. In prayer I am saying, in effect, “my life for yours.” My time, my energy, my thought, my concern, my concentration, my faith—here they are, for you. So it is that I participate in the work of Christ. So it is that no work of faith, no labor of love, no smallest prayer is ever lost, but, like the smoke of the incense on the golden altar, rises from the hand of the angel before God.

From my “Notes on Prayer” booklet

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Letter from a Grandmother

Six years ago, I received a letter from a lady in Wisconsin, who, if she is still alive, would be 95 years old this year. The settled spirit of her letter blessed me, so I kept it. Oh, that we all could grow old so gracefully! Here are excerpts:

“‘What do you want for your birthday, Grandma?’

“‘I’m thinking.’

What do I need? On my 89th birthday? How about a grateful heart? A heart that is thankful for the fresh air after the much-needed rain. A heart that counts blessings too numerous to list, which I’ve already mentioned to God. I’m forgetting names, and when I recall them, I forget how to spell them. But I’m alive!

“I have another day before me when I can keep cool in the face of distraction and irritation. Let it be a day when I can touch routine with the sheer happiness of serving You, Lord. Let it be a day of praise for the loving kindness You show, for the strength and power You lend to my life, for the unexpected joys that bless the hours, and for Your Spirit’s presence.

“That’s what I want for my birthday, and every day. A grateful heart.”

Grandmother’s Beatitudes

Blessed are those who understand my faltering step and palsied hand.

Blessed are those who know that my ears today must strain to catch the things they say.

Blessed are those who seem to know that my eyes are dim and my wits are slow.

Blessed are those who looked away when coffee spilled at table today.

Blessed are those with a cheery smile who stop to chat for a little while.

Blessed are those who never say, “You’ve told that story twice today.”

Blessed are those who know the ways to bring back memories of yesterdays.

Blessed are those who make it known that I’m loved, respected, and not alone.

Blessed are those who know I’m at a loss to find the strength to carry the Cross.

Blessed are those who ease the days on my journey Home in loving ways.

Esther Mary Walker

Gifts and Vocation Last a Lifetime

“I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called” (Ephesians 4:1, KJV).

Let us examine our capacities and gifts, and then put them to the best use we may. As our own view of life is of necessity partial, I do not find that we can do better than to put them absolutely in God’s hand, and look to him for the direction of our life-energy. God can do great things with our lives, if we but give them to Him in sincerity. He can make them useful, uplifting, heroic. God never wastes anything. God never forgets anything. God never loses anything. As long as we live we have a work to do. We shall never be too old for it, nor too feeble. Illness, weakness, fatigue, sorrow—none of these things can excuse us from this work of ours. That we are alive today is proof positive that God has something for us to do today.

Anna R. B. Lindsay (quoted in *Joy & Strength*, Mary Wilder Tileston, ed.)

Lars’ Ramblings From the Cove

The phone rang one noon as Elisabeth and I were in the kitchen. The call was not urgent, only an enjoyable natter. The young lady told me how much Elisabeth’s work had helped in her life. In conveying this, she said, “I have even named my cat after her.” Now this was not the usual thing; up until then we’d only known of a few babies named after Elisabeth. I had a bit of a laugh and asked, “why?” Well, she said, “it is because she is so feminine.” Had to agree at least with her good reasoning. Turned out the cat had three names: Annabelle Elisabeth Smith.

Quite aristocratic. An 18-month-old Maltese. Well, my Elisabeth did seem pleased, not responding as did Pat, a girl I was once sweet on when I lived on a farm and I had named our pretty Guernsey cow after her. Did me no good at all.

Among recent letters was one telling me that the correspondent's grandfather's name was Lars and if the last child had been a boy that would have been the name but it was not to be—a girl arrived. I jotted a note in return saying since Johnny Cash had a song titled "A Boy Named Sue," why not a girl named Lars? In the U.S. perhaps the name could be for either gender. Oh well, we're both from Norwegian ancestry. It was of no importance.

Just now I called to chat a bit with my cousin in Norway. It only took a few words to know that all was not well. Björg said, "Oh, such a sad day."

"What 's wrong?" Several things ran through my mind before she said, "Tønnes died Saturday." He was her brother-in-law. His wife had called to give the news and told how he had a moose-hunting trip planned for that day. At 6:45 she had heard him snoring, and at 7:00 the alarm went off and kept ringing. "Tønnes, shut the alarm off, you have to get up!" The alarm kept ringing. Tønnes as we knew him was no longer there. He was a big—no huge—good-natured man, ever helpful to all, historian of his community. When people in the town said "Tønnes" without a last name, all knew who they were speaking of. At 7:15 his hunting

companions called. "Where is Tønnes? We're waiting for him." "Tønnes has died." I wonder if there was something Tønnes had wanted to say to his hunting companions, his son, or Marit his wife, and had decided to wait until morning. More than once have I gone to sleep saying, "I'll do it in the morning."

Just a letter and a couple of phone calls without thoughts of the eternal significance. But as it says, "Do not boast of tomorrow, for you do not know what a day may bring forth." That's it from the Cove.

Breaking News From Lars:

"We've gotten into high cotton—a web page! You can find us at www.elisabethelliott.org."

Travel Schedule March-May 2003

March 14-15 Santa Clarita, Calif., Grace Baptist Church.

April 3 Fargo, N.D., New Life Center Auxiliary, Susan Asp, (218)236-0080.

May 9-11 Asheville, N.C., The Billy Graham Training Center. For reservations call 1-800-950-2092.

Many apologies: If you missed the Paris, Texas meeting because of the wrong date in the January/February issue, please drop me a postcard.

Lars Gren, 10 Strawberry Cove, Magnolia, MA 01930.

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To a New Widow

Dearest one:

I know the proportion of that pain, and there is no minimizing it here and now. I also know the truth of 2 Corinthians 4:17, "These little troubles (which are really so transitory) are winning for us a permanent, glorious and solid reward out of all proportion to our pain." The bigger our pain now, the bigger that "weight of glory" will be. It's mysterious, it's unimaginable, but it's going to *be*, and for that we give thanks.

You are alone now. You go to bed alone, you are having to learn to say "I" instead of "we," you find yourself catching your breath as you turn to say something to the man who isn't there, you put off a decision until he gets home to help you make it, and then you know, with a pang, that you'll have to make it by yourself. The children come with needs, needs that Daddy could meet, but Daddy won't be there—today or tomorrow, or ever again, so there you are. You open a drawer, and you find a book his hands have handled, you come across his handwriting (so very personal a sign of the man), you see his shoes with the shape of his feet which you know so well, and the sting of the arrow in your heart is not missed by Him who loves us as no one else ever has. He puts those tears into His bottle, for He gave you the love that brings those tears and He made you so you could cry, and you cast it all on the Rock that never moves. You find everything else shaken, tottering, the mountains moved into the midst of the sea, the earth "roaring," the things that seemed changeless all changed now, except for the Rock. He seems sometimes a very absent help in time of trouble, but He's there. Be still, know that He's still God, wait for Him.

I know how your memory goes over every inch

of his body, for you loved every inch of it, and you remember just how it felt and the smell of him and the sound of his breathing and his voice and the taste of him, and each day you find it a little bit harder to remember just *exactly* how it was and you know you have forgotten some of it, and this, too, is pain. You don't want anybody telling you that "time heals all things," for you don't in the least want to forget, not for a second.

People will be very kind for quite a long time. They will remember, and their hearts will go out to you and they will be utterly at a loss to know how to look at you, what to say, how to keep you from talking about your husband. They don't know how to cope with the emotion in themselves so they simply cannot imagine how you cope. They are not practiced in being open and honest with their true emotions, and at a time like this they are at a loss to know how to fake, although they feel that faking is what they ought to do. So you have to accept that and try to believe that all they want is to be kind, though they blunder at it most touchingly.

But after a while they will not remember much anymore, or they will assume you've "gotten over it," and you will become a worse threat to them because they won't know how in the world to fit you into their world. The couples who were your good friends will want to do things for you, but they won't know how to do things with you, and finally, although they would hardly admit this to themselves, you become a burden, a nuisance, and a dangerous person to have around susceptible husbands. (I write this not so much from personal experience, since most of my first widowhood was spent in relative isolation from the civilized social scene, but from talking with others, and from

observation.) You are a widow, a social misfit, not single, not married. You'll find it hard, I think, to relate to single women again, but you can't expect to be included in couples' groups again either. Perhaps it's cruel of me to tell you so much so soon, but then again perhaps, as it happens to you, it will be of some help to know that this is the way it is! And of course, to be able to accept things that can't be changed is a mark of maturity.

There will be those who can "explain" to you God's purposes in all of this. They'll "see" what it's supposed to mean for you. Don't worry about them. They are blind. No explanation this side of Heaven can *possibly* cover the data. It's imponderable, inexplicable, and far, far beyond any explanations. You have to cast all that nonsense on the Rock too.

Your ringing assertion of faith in God's sovereign design was a great encouragement to me. He's there, He's God, He's in charge, and we do not flounder around in a sea of pure chance. Our hope is "for that future day when God will resurrect his children. For on that day thorns and thistles, sin, death, and decay—the things that overcame the world against its will at God's command—will all disappear, and the world around us will share in the glorious freedom from sin which God's children enjoy" (Romans 8:19-20, Living Bible).

Ever so much love,
Elisabeth

Lean Hard

"Cast thy burden upon the Lord and He shall sustain thee" (Psalm 55:22).

Child of My love, Lean Hard,
And let Me feel the pressure of thy care;
I know thy burden, child, I shaped it;
Poised it in My own hand, made no proportion in
its weight to thine unaided strength;
For even as I laid it on, I said,
I shall be near, and while he leans on Me,
This burden shall be Mine, not his;
So shall I keep My child within the circling arms
of My own love.

Here lay it down, nor fear to impose it on a shoulder
which upholds the government of worlds.
Yet closer come; Thou art not near enough;
I would embrace thy care so I might feel My child
reposing on My breast.
Thou lovest Me? I knew it. Doubt not then;
But loving Me, Lean Hard.

"Casting all your care upon Him; for he careth for you" (1 Peter 5:7).

May Prentiss Smith
(published as a tract by the Tract League,
Grand Rapids, Michigan)

Mere Openness

The "openness" that is often praised among Christians as a sign of true humility may sometimes be an oblique effort to prove that there is no such thing as a saint after all, and that those who believe that it is possible to live a holy life are only deceiving themselves.

When we enjoy listening to some Christian confess his weaknesses and failures, we may be eager only to convince ourselves that we are not so bad after all. We sit on the edge of our chairs waiting to grasp at an excuse for continuing to do what we have made up our minds long ago to do anyway.

The Lord is ready to forgive sin at any moment and to make strong servants out of the worst of us. But we must believe it; we must come to Him in faith for forgiveness and deliverance and then go out to do the work He has given us to do.

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“Charity rejoiceth not in iniquity” (1 Corinthians 13:6, KJV). Let us be willing to call iniquity what is really iniquity, rather than to call it weakness, temperament, failure, hang-ups, or to fall back on the tired excuse, “It’s just the way I am; at least I’m open about it.”

Create in me a clean heart, O God,
And renew a right spirit within me.

PSALM 51:10, KJV

Magnolias in Magnolia

We used to have a magnolia (also called a tulip) tree on our front lawn. The velvety buds would be there all winter and suddenly, one spring day, they would burst into bloom. There was not a leaf on the tree yet, only hundreds of lovely, tall, pink and white, tulip-shaped cups. I would drink in its beauty from the window, knowing that it would be very short-lived. Sure enough, in two or three days, the green lawn would be littered with pink scraps.

Why this waste? Why, when things seemed so promising?

All that is given is meant to be poured forth. The flower pours forth its sweetness, the tree its blossom and fruit, its powers of purification, its shade, its wood. In the words of Ugo Bassi, “Measure thy life by loss and not by gain; not by the wine drunk but by the wine poured forth.”

It is a merciful Father who strips us when we need to be stripped, as the tree needs to be stripped of its blossoms. He is not finished with us yet, whatever the loss we suffer, for as we loose our hold on visible things, the invisible become more precious—where our treasure is, there will our hearts be.

He may be asking us to sell a much-loved house, to part with material things we no longer need, to retire from a position in which we feel ourselves irreplaceable, to turn over to Him fears which hold us in bondage, forms of self-improvement or recreation or social life which hinder obedience.

Does all this seem hard? Being ordinary mortals, we would rather live in continual springtime, truth be told. Of course it is right to be glad for spring sunshine. But it was achieved through the long relinquishments of winter. All of it is from His hand.

Close to Your Heart

“The things that are closest to our hearts are the things we talk about, and if God is close to your heart, you will talk about Him.”

A.W. Tozer

Lars’ Ramblings—from the Cove

In the photograph, he is a handsome man with a mustache, well-set eyes, an earnest look, and a good head of wavy hair, dressed in coat and tie with the shirt collar straight up around the neck, the type used in 1898. Beside him is a beautiful young lady in her white blouse and dark, probably black, dress. My guess—their wedding portrait.

Another picture shows the two of them standing together. His 6-foot-plus frame is erect, head held high, with coat and tie, the shirt collar down as it would be today, hair still wavy and dark. His wife is by his side, a bit thick through the middle, having had four children, still with a warm beautiful face, and with graying hair. But in this picture there is a small fellow holding the hand of the man’s wife.

A third picture is of the man, sitting on a chair on the lawn of the old folks’ home on a pretty summer day. Near ninety-one, yet with a full head of white wavy hair, still a good face, blue eyes that held you, but alone since his wife had died 14 years before.

He was Syvert Mosby from Kristiansand, Norway. For a period of ten years I had, by the grace and providence of God, the privilege of living under his roof and calling him *Far*, Father we would say, though he was my *morfar*, translated “my mother’s father,” or as we say, Grandfather. It

is I in the picture holding his wife's hand, and she was to me, *Mor*. I was for a short time the son of his old age.

Perhaps it is natural that he had the greatest influence in setting the course of my early life as well as today, some sixty-five-plus years later.

I have two keepsakes from Far. One is a small New Testament left by someone in the church we attended. The owner could not be found, and so it came to me. I look at my penciled name written in the beginners' style of the European script. No, it has not been used much in the past forty years, since I tend toward reading English, but I remember what Far said to me "les Biblen Lars, der finner du livets ansvar" i.e., "read the Bible Lars, there you will find life's answer's." On board ship in the Navy it was with me and has moved as I have moved. Yes, to have paid more attention to Far's admonition, for its use could have prevented some of my "if onlies."

The other is also pocket-size, its red cover creased and worn with use and age. Pressed into the cover is "Hynderosten" ("The Shepherd's Voice"), a songbook for Sunday school and junior workers containing psalms and hymns, or "songs," as they were called (not choruses as we think of them). It came to me in the same way as did the New Testament, but in this one is written in Far's neat, mature hand, "Tilhörer Lars Gren." "Syng Lars, det letter livets tunge gang," i.e., "Belongs to Lars Gren." "Sing Lars, it lifts life's heavy burdens." What a

message! How many would put that inscription into the songbook of a young fellow who was just old enough to be allowed to wear long pants. But I think there has never been a year that has gone by that I don't often say those words, and Elisabeth can attest to that for the past twenty-five years. Most every day at home I use that little songbook. No, I don't sing them, since it is without notes, but I read them as prayers or just an audible, sensible word to the Lord and a comfort and assurance to myself. "Sing—it does lift life's heavy burdens."

Much more could be said about the man in the pictures. But for now I'll say, "that's it from the Cove."

Summer 2003 Travel Schedule

May 9-11 Asheville, N.C., The Cove, Billy Graham Training Center. For reservations, call 1-800-950-2092.

August 24 Alton Bay, N.H., Alton Bay Christian Conference Center. For information, call (603)875-6161 or write info@abccc.org.

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What the Savages Taught Me

For the whole first year that I lived with the Auca Indians (1958–1959), I watched and learned and kept my mouth shut. I had to keep my mouth shut most of the time because I did not know the Auca language. Although the language itself was highly complex, the definition of my task was simple: learn it.

I spent a second year there, when I had a fairly workable knowledge of the language. I learned more about the Indians, about how they felt and thought, and why they did things the way they did. As a result, more questions were raised in my mind, especially about my own thoughts and feelings and ways of doing things. Often the Auca way seemed better. It was always a sensible and simple way.

I was driven to the admission that I had not as many answers as I had thought. Why was I here? To “serve the Lord,” of course. But I had assumed too much. How was I to do it? What did it mean? I wanted to give God’s Word to the Indians. What, exactly, did this mean? How would that Word be revealed? In trying to get to the bottom of these issues, I did not want to be misled by prejudices born of my American culture or my church tradition.

Here are “heathen” people, I told myself. Was the difference between good and evil the same for them as it was for me? What would “Christian” conduct mean to the Aucas? I kept balancing the Auca way of life against the American, or against what I had always taken to be the Christian.

I found the Aucas easy to love, generous, intelligent, happy. But what of their morals? I had come from a society where polygamy was illegal to one

where it was permissible. Here it seemed to be merely a question of taste. A man might have as many wives as he cared to support at one time, but he did not go and help himself to another man’s wife without authorization. In my society a man might neglect even the one wife he had, he might play with other men’s wives, and still keep his job and most of his friends.

In America a man who switched a naked child with nettles would be called cruel. Aucas considered this a legitimate and effective form of punishment, and were outraged to see me spank my three-year-old child. I was, to them, a savage. But were the Aucas not killers? They were, but let us not forget that in our society it is permissible to murder a man not only in one’s heart, but also by verbally cutting him to pieces before his friends. Aucas had not been acquainted with this method.

In America, standards of dress vary every few years, and costumes that are considered acceptable today might have landed the wearer in jail a decade earlier. The Aucas were unhampered by clothing and the caprices of fashion (with the vanity, jealousy, covetousness and discontent which it fosters), but stuck firmly to a timeless code of modesty. In their nakedness they accepted themselves and one another for what they were, always abiding by the rules: men and women did not bathe together, women taught their daughters how to sit and stand with modesty, men taught their sons how to wear the string which was their only adornment. Physiological functions were discussed in public but performed in strictest privacy.

I saw the Indians live in a harmony which far surpassed anything I had seen among those who

call themselves Christians. I found that even their killing had at least as valid reasons as the wars in which my people engaged.

Could I really offer them a better way? I was a representative of the One who said, “I am the Way.” I wanted to be very sure I knew what He did actually say about the questions of conduct and service, for it was to Him above all others that I must give account.

From my Journal

(I have been keeping some sort of a journal since 1938, often not writing in it every day, but recording events big and small, my conundrums, my joys. Apropos of the article above, here is an excerpt from my journal from September, 1969. I had married Addison Leitch on New Year's Day, 1969, and I was learning how to juggle my new responsibilities. Although it represents quite a different set of circumstances from the ones I had in the jungle, I was still thinking about how my daily life was meant to be ordered, under God.)

September 29, 1969

It is a Monday morning and having put last night's and this morning's dishes in the dishwasher, I washed the remaining pots and pans, cleaned up the stove and counter, made the bed, and cleaned up the puppy's scatterings. Then I checked my list for today: grocery-shopping, doctor's appointment, pick up photographs, call locksmith to fix bathroom door, clean Add's study, put prices on things for garage sale, write Tom, call Katherine, finish making skirt, wash hair, get out winter clothes, return book to library, iron, have Elizabeth for lunch. Now I have come down to my study to try to put in two hours of writing.

But first I prayed, asking God for guidance today—how to do things serenely, in their proper order and each as an offering of faith to Him in whose hands are my “times.” I asked also for clear direction as to my new responsibilities. Having

been recently married and recently moved into a new house and community—how shall I know what to do to help my husband, my daughter (who is in a new school), my church, the college where Add teaches, my new neighbors, my “reading public”? It is all too easy to leap into the saddle and ride off in all directions.

“Next week I've *got* to get organized,” I tell myself. But I know the absurdity of such a resolution. It won't work. It's today that I have, only today, so I'd better organize my tasks and do them carefully, one by one. And the Lord who walked this earth and knows all its exigencies and interruptions and frustrations walks with me.

September 30, 1969

Sitting on flat granite rocks by the sea. The water is calm and swells gently in the morning sunshine, sliding up the dark brown seaweed-covered rocks. A single lobster fisherman checks his pots. The motor of his boat is muffled in the distance. Seagulls and crows glide nearby.

Yesterday's schedule went fairly well. The photographs were not finished, though they had been promised ten days ago. The bank had closed at 2:30; I got there at 3:00. But we are not let loose in a chaotic world. Our lives, as God promised David, are “ordered in all things and sure.” So a trifle like a ten-mile drive to find one's photographs not yet ready must mean *something*, and we walk in faith if we can believe that and give thanks.

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“Do it *now*” is a good motto, I think. It is a lovely morning, cool and dewy, with the promise of the warmth of an Indian summer day. Should I return to my basement study to work on my writing, or should I get in the car and go to the sea? The ocean is always there, vast and strong and inviting, but the weather does not always invite. Today it does. I wanted to see the sea, to sit beside it and breathe the salt air. “Do it now,” I said, and came.

Responsibilities? Work to be done? Yes. But it is usually possible to sacrifice a little somewhere else, to rearrange the mundane routine a little in order to *live!* Have we not some obligation to contemplate what the Maker of the Universe has created?

I’m getting stuffy. It is lovely here, wonderfully lovely, and I’m glad I came.

My Little Frame of Reference

God leads me, I believe, within my own frame of reference. What I am, where I am, how I got there, all have a great deal to do with what my frame of reference is.

Consider, for example, the vast differences between the frames of reference of Rahab, the harlot, David, the handsome young keeper of sheep, Esther, the loveliest woman in a heathen king’s harem, and a tax collector named Matthew. What of a redheaded monk in Germany, a noblewoman in the court of Louis XIV, a Russian pilgrim seeking in the forests and steppes the meaning of the Jesus Prayer, a Bible Belt farmwife, a Japanese university student, a Jewish psychiatrist, or a Long Island Episcopalian?

I grew up in a middle-class fundamentalist family in Philadelphia. Family prayers, Sunday school and church, table talk about God and Christian people and Christian work were very much a part of the fabric of my life. It hardly occurred to me that God needed to meet different people in different ways, or that his truth could take forms that

would be unrecognizable to me. I saw a certain kind of Christianity in operation, and to me that was what it meant to be a Christian. It took a while for my imagination to go to work to apply that vision to people in other categories such as those listed above, but in the meantime God met me where I was. When I began to learn of the wideness in his mercy, my faith began to grow, and I saw that salvation was a scheme of infinitely vaster dimensions than I had dreamed.

Whatever our views, they are probably too narrow. Our God is, as J.B. Phillips has said, too small. But the wonderful thing is that God is willing to start there. He can lead us into what the psalmist calls large and even wealthy places.

**from my book, *God’s Guidance:
A Slow and Certain Light***

Make Friends With Your Trials

“Make friends with your trials as though you were always to live together; you will see that when you cease to take thought for your own deliverance, God will take thought for you; and when you cease to help yourself eagerly, He will help you.”

St. Francis de Sales, 1567-1622

Lars’ Ramblings— From the Cove

Is it not satisfying to run into folks we haven’t seen for a while? Even if a name can’t be called up, at least the face is recognizable. So it was one day at a shopping center. Elisabeth was off somewhere while I just strolled about. As I turned into another section of the mall, I thought I saw a man walking towards me. “Oh, now, I know him—at least he looks familiar.” He was coming nearer and directly towards me as I walked on. “Surely I know him. Now what’s his name?” A few more steps and I stopped in my tracks—and he stopped. Then truth

dawned. I had been walking towards a partial mirrored wall. I took another good look and then remarked in a soft voice, "Boy, have you gotten old." And I walked on.

That reminds me of the little fellow who came with his mother to a seminar. He knew the voice of the lady that he listened to on weekdays on the radio together with his mother and now he was to meet her. The two came to the booktable where Elisabeth was sitting. The mother made the introduction as the boy stood gazing into the speaker's face, and exclaimed in utter shock, "Is *that* Elisabeth Elliot?!" I only wish that I could have seen the picture he had drawn of her in his mind.

Speaking of pictures, Elisabeth has always tried to keep publicity photos fairly current to preserve some semblance of reality to what people would see when she arrived at an engagement. Coming once to a church to speak, she looked for someone who was in charge. A lady approached her and Elisabeth introduced herself. "Are you Elisabeth Elliot? My, you certainly look a lot older than your picture."

So we may have a reflection of ourselves which is pretty fractured, perhaps at times unrecognizable, as I experienced. Some form an image from afar and find that the imagined one is better than the real person. Coming face-to-face with reality, some find that the reproduction would have been

more enjoyable. For some reason, this makes me think of seeing "through a glass darkly." What will that day be like when our true selves are known? A joyful anticipation? Yes, but with some trepidation perhaps; do we want our true selves to be known?

An under-20-year-old stopped Elisabeth once in an aisle and asked in a very solemn voice, "Tell me, who is the real Elisabeth Elliot?"

"Only God knows, and may God preserve me from ever finding out," answered EE. I agree. It seems to me that I know just enough about myself to make me uneasy and at the same time remind me of my dire need of mercy and grace.

That's it from the Cove.

Summer 2003 Travel Schedule

Check for last-minute engagements online at www.elisabethelliott.org

August 10 5:00 P.M., Southhampton, L.I., New York. for more information, call Mary Ellen Horcher at 631-283-0656.

August 24 Alton Bay, N.H. Alton Bay Christian Conference Center. For information, call (603)875-6161 or write info@abccc.org.

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Restlessness and Worry

The book of Ecclesiastes was written by a very restless man. He was fed up with his life and everything had become meaningless to him. He wrote, “I hated life.... All of it is meaningless, a chasing after the wind. I hated all the things I had toiled for under the sun (Ecclesiastes 2:17-18).

Do you find yourself in the same boat? Is there some work that seems so pointless to you that you find yourself doing it distractedly because you are fed up with doing it and you wish you were somewhere else?

We quote St. Augustine: “Our hearts are restless until they rest in Thee.” But do we live it out? Do we not tend instead to live, like the godless world around us, as if our perpetual restlessness is more or less normal, assuming that our lives are supposed to be a series of struggles to achieve “closure”? Subconsciously, we rephrase the quote: “My heart is restless until it rests at the end of this current effort. Until then, naturally I will be agitated.”

Think back over yesterday. Did somebody upset you? (your spouse or your children or the driver in front of you on the highway, perhaps?) Did you become frustrated about your own failure to accomplish some work? Were you disgusted with your boss? Were you worried about a medical problem?

What were you worried about last Wednesday? Did the worrying do you any good? You know it didn't. Worrying is forbidden (read Matthew 6:25, Philippians 4:6, Psalm 37). It is useless, a colossal waste of time. Still, we carry on as if it's unavoidable.

Rest is a divine gift. But entering into rest is

a lesson that all of us must learn. Can you accept this moment, just this one, trusting Him and becoming still before Him? Can you do it when you are in a traffic jam, becoming tardier by the minute for an appointment? It is God's appointment for you—sitting there breathing exhaust fumes, learning to calm your soul by acknowledging that He is in charge of every detail of your life and that everything that happens to you has come through the hedge of His love.

There is always time enough to do the will of God. The great thing is to make our planning subject to God's perfect plan, laying our agendas at His feet and asking Him to help us choose wisely. All of us have duties. How gratefully and calmly we carry them out will indicate how we have obeyed Him.

Someone I love was going through a divorce. When she heard that her husband had gone to court, it was next to impossible for her to rest in the Lord and wait patiently for the outcome. Over and over, she realized that she was fretting anew, losing her peace. With God's grace she was able, moment by moment, to lay her burden at His feet. Step by step, asking for God's help, putting her trust in Him over and over, she proved that He Himself is the road to peace and the gateway to joy.

“I have put my trust in You” (Psalm 143:8). *Put* is an active verb and *trust* is a purposeful, not passive, choice. I may have to combine active trusting with taking myself by the scruff of the neck to undertake an unpleasant task. I may have to decide to terminate a

pleasant activity to which I resorted in my agitation. (“I just need a break.”) I may have to re-do a project that I ruined in my restless haste. I may have to apologize for words spoken out of anxiety.

Eventually, the restless Teacher who wrote Ecclesiastes discovered how to be happy. “It is good and proper for a man to find satisfaction in his toilsome labor under the sun during the few days of life. . . . God enables him to enjoy them, to accept his lot and be happy in his work—this is a gift of God” (Ecclesiastes 5:18-19).

Diminishment

(This was taken from a message to his congregation from Dr. Charles McLain of Blue Valley Baptist Church in Olathe, Kansas. It was sent to me by a friend.)

Do you trust God? We in the church spend a great deal of time speaking about trusting God in all things, but do we really trust Him to provide for our needs, help us to solve problems, supply the strength to face daily trials, face our fears, overcome our weaknesses and handicaps? Do we simply believe that no matter what comes into our lives, God is with us and can be fully trusted? The great thinker and writer Pierre Teilhard de Chardin had a different way of stating his trust in God. He speaks of “communion through diminishment”:

“When the signs of age begin to mark my body
(and still more when they touch my mind);
when the ill this is to diminish me or carry
me off
strikes from without or is born within me;
when the painful moment comes in which
I suddenly awaken to the fact
that I am ill or growing old,
and above all at that last moment,

when I feel I am losing hold of myself
and am absolutely passive within the hands
of the great unknown forces that have formed
me,
in all those dark moments, O God,
grant that I may understand that it is You
who are painfully parting the fibers of my
being
in order to penetrate to the very marrow of my
substance
and bear me away within Yourself.”

When life throws you a curve, when problems seem to have no answer, when fear gains the upper hand, what are we to do? We must trust, holding on to the unchanging truth that God is absolutely faithful. In my moments of weakness I cling to Psalm 56:3, which reads, “What time I am afraid, I will trust in Thee.”

John Quincy Adams

When John Quincy Adams was well past the usual span of life, a young friend met him on the street and asked, “How is John Quincy Adams today?”

Adams replied: “John Quincy Adams is very well, thank you. But the house he lives in is sadly dilapidated. It is tottering on its foundations. The walls are badly shattered and the roof

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is worn. The building trembles with every wind, and I think John Quincy Adams will have to move out before long. But he himself is very well, thank you.”

Teaching Thoughtfulness

Good parents teach their children that it is not enough to claim that you’re being “good” merely because you haven’t punched anybody today or run off with anybody else’s toys or cookies, haven’t teased your little brother or argued with your mother. Parents must also teach positive acts of thoughtfulness such as doing obvious things without having to be asked: Feed the baby his applesauce, pick up the garbage the dogs strewed around the yard, help your sister clean up her room, replace the paper and pencil that someone else took from near the telephone. In short, parents model and teach that Love is thoughtful of others. Love sees what ought to be done and goes ahead and does it.

From my Journals (1973)

“The great Shepherd of the sheep brings His flock slowly and carefully as they are ready for it to the dark valleys and the ravines. One of these valleys is where a sheep may find himself apparently cut off from the rest of the flock. Lonely, perhaps ostracized because of misunderstanding or isolated for another reason, he must then learn that the Shepherd is all that he needs.”

A Great Need

For very little money, a great need can be met for The Mossyfoot Project, which I have mentioned before in this newsletter. It was orga-

nized by Dr. Nathan Barlow to help Ethiopians who have a disease very much like elephantiasis. Dr. Barlow, who is now in his 90s, has worked for years with these people, offering a simple remedy, that of wearing socks and shoes.

The shoes are made in Ethiopia by the patients themselves, who have been taught to make them by hand. But there is a need for socks, and it happens that a shipment can be sent to Ethiopia with a doctor who is going there in September.

If you care to donate socks (top of sock unbanded, men’s sizes only, cotton-synthetic blend only, any color except white, best if new), please send them to Dr. Nathan Barlow, 1411 Sweetbriar Circle, Carlsbad, CA 92009.

Lars’ Ramblings From the Cove

She sure nailed me. No, we don’t remember to pray before our meal 100 percent of the time. The mind slips. Still, it is not often we miss doing it, whether at home or out for a meal. I can’t remember where it happened—at home at the kitchen table or at a one-fork restaurant (as opposed to a two- or three-fork type with real napkins). Suffice it to say, I had already sampled the food when Elisabeth said, “Aren’t we going to pray?” “Sure, just forgot.” I put my fork down, closed my eyes, said a few words, then “amen,” and picked up my fork again, whereupon Elisabeth said, “Did you *mean* that?” I was nailed—real good—by the truth of her statement. To whom and for whom did I pray?

That happened fairly recently. It reminded me of a vivid memory from the distant past, forty years ago or so, a different prayer for a different meal. It was on one of my trips home to see Far (my grandfather) in Norway. We had walked to town from his apartment and it was

about lunch time. Near the town square was a very small shop called *melkemeieriet*. Far asked if I would care for a plate of *flatbröd-soll*. It is sour milk, or we might say buttermilk, with the cream still in it. On top of the skin of cream you crunch up *flatbröt* (a very thin, flat cracker) and sprinkle sugar on it. Delicious. The little place was crowded with workmen who had come to get something “to go” or to sit down to eat. It wasn’t long before the waitress placed the two dishes before us.

Have you ever seen the print of the old man sitting at a wooden table with a knife and a loaf of bread on it, his head on his folded hands resting on the table? That was Far that noon in Kristiansand. He pushed his plate toward me to make room for his folded hands and bowed for an audible prayer, a visible sign of an invisible reality. No haste, no sense of obligation, no self-consciousness, just gratitude to the One who had filled his every need for over eighty years. A sense of presence, a short interval of communion.

What’s the difference, one might say? It’s hard to brush off the difference when one reads Jesus’ word, “This people honors me with their lips, but their heart is far from me; in vain do they worship me, teaching as

doctrines the precepts of men.” Or, “Do not heap up empty phrases.”

Whether I heard it or read it somewhere, I recall the thought that animals give thanks to their Creator in their sigh of contentment when they lie down and are at peace. A meaningful sigh in response to Elisabeth’s “aren’t we going to pray?” may have been truer than my few words spoken in haste. I should add some thought to the next time I thank God for our daily bread.

That’s it from the Cove.

Travel Schedule September-October 2003

Check for last-minute engagements online at www.elisabethelliott.org

October 4 Fellowship Deaconry, 3575 Valley Road, Liberty Corner, N.J. 07938, (908)647-1777.

October 23 Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, Wake Forest, North Carolina., (919)761-2305.

October 25 Kempsville Presbyterian Church, Virginia Beach, Virginia, (757)495-1913.

November 1 Ockenga Institute, Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary. (800)294-2774.

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The Elisabeth Elliot Newsletter

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Farewells

God works in mysterious ways, His wonders to perform. Throughout my life, I have considered those words, especially when circumstances have threatened to undo my faith in His love and provision.

When I went to Ecuador in 1952, I used my linguistic training to decipher three different Indian languages with a goal of translating the Bible. But at the end of my eleven years in that country, my labors seemed to have turned to ashes. One set of translation notes was in a suitcase that was stolen from the top of a banana truck. My Auca materials sit in my attic to this day. Only a portion of my Quichua work was useful to two other missionaries.

Of course, even more insuperable than that seemingly wasted effort was the question of why my husband Jim, to whom I had been married a mere 27 months (after 5 1/2 years of waiting), was killed by the Aucas, along with the husbands of four other young wives. Years later, my second husband, Add Leitch, who died of cancer after a short four years of happy marriage, commented: "One cannot unscrew the Inscrutable." God's ways are mysterious and our faith develops strong muscles as we negotiate the twists and turns of our lives. Although He allowed me to be widowed twice, God gave me my wonderful daughter, Valerie. She and her husband

Walter and their eight children have brought me such great joy. (I'm including a recent picture in this newsletter, because so often readers ask about Walt and Val and the children, who are growing up quickly and leaving the nest for college and marriage.) He also gave me a third good husband, Lars Gren, who, I hope, will outlive me.



Elisabeth and Lars, in a photo taken on a recent trip to Switzerland.

In December of this year I will celebrate my 77th birthday. I marvel at the ways in which God has led me, from my birth in Belgium where my parents were missionaries, to Wheaton College, to Ecuador—really to the ends of the earth in ministry travels. Psalm 16:5-6 best expresses my sentiments: "Lord, you have assigned me my portion and my cup, and

have made my lot secure. The boundary lines have fallen for me in pleasant places; surely I have a goodly heritage."



I began writing this newsletter in 1982 with the help of Servant Publications in Ann Arbor, Michigan. At first I thought it might be a bit misleading to call it a "newsletter." After all, it didn't convey much actual *news*. It hasn't been "relevant" in the popular sense. But I took refuge in C.S. Lewis' remark, "All that is not eternal is eternally out of date," and I tried



The Shepard family at Christiana's wedding, July 19, 2003. Left to right: Evangeline, Walter III, Valerie, Walter, Jr., Sarah, Theo, Gaines Kergosien (Christiana's new husband), Christiana, Elisabeth Martin (matron of honor), Colleen, and Jim.

to include things eternal in every issue. Like the psalmist, I have had a burning desire to share "good words." ("My heart is teeming with a good word; I utter what I have framed concerning the King." Psalm 45:1, Kay).

Now it is time to end the newsletter. This will be your last issue. Two factors brought about this decision: One was wondering how long to keep doing the newsletter, and the other was that Servant could no longer continue doing the layout and all that is required to get the newsletter into your hands. So it seems to be the right time to bring this chapter of my life to a close. There is no adequate way to express my deepest gratitude to you readers for all that you have meant to me. I'm particularly grateful for having met many of you in person, and for your many notes and letters over the years.

I bid you farewell with words from a hymn written by Anna L. Waring in 1850:

*Father, I know that all my life
Is portioned out for me,
And the changes that are sure to come
I do not fear to see;
I ask Thee for a present mind,
Intent on pleasing Thee.*

*I would not have the restless will
That hurries to and fro,
Seeking for some great thing to do
Or secret thing to know;
I would be treated as a child
And guided where I go.*

*Wherever in the world I am,
In whatso'er estate,
I have a fellowship with hearts
To keep and cultivate.*

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I ask thee for the daily strength
To none that ask denied,
A mind to blend with outward life,
While keeping at Thy side;
Content to fill a little space,
If Thou be glorified.

There are briers besetting every path,
That call for patient care;
There is a cross in every lot,
And an earnest need for prayer;
But a lowly heart that leans on Thee
Is happy anywhere.

In service which thy will appoints
There are no bonds for me;
For my inmost heart is taught the truth
That makes thy children free.
A life of self-renouncing love
Is one of liberty.



www.elisabethelliott.org

You will find back issues of this newsletter online at www.elisabethelliott.org. Also on my website is ordering information about many of my books and tapes, my speaking schedule, some photos, a daily devotional, and a link to radio transcripts from the Gateway to Joy broadcast.

Please visit the website often to see if there's something new!



Colleen Elliot with Lars and Elisabeth.

Lars' Ramblings from the Cove

From what I've heard, newsletters are difficult to "float," that is, to operate in the black. This one has been nothing short of phenomenal. A few of you readers may have been with us from the first issue in 1982. When Elisabeth started it, it became my obligation to see that it was in the black. If not, then I was to make up the deficit. This occurred only two times—the first and third year. I wrote a note, "Some of you may make year-end donations. If you do, maybe you can think of adding a bit for the newsletter." That was all, and the "red" became "black." In every other year, there has been a surplus. From the beginning, we began giving a tithe to various ministries, eventually increasing the tithe to 25 percent. Further gifts were given after Servant's expenses were paid.

From 1993 through 2003, \$240,000 was sent to various ministries, including the work of Bert Elliot (Jim's brother) and his wife Colleen, who have been missionaries in Peru for 53 years. They recently purchased their first home to call their own and are happily working away, a wonderful pair, greatly loved. The newsletter also contributed to the work of Ramez and Becky Attalah, who are with the Bible Society in Cairo, Egypt, where Becky has a ministry in "Garbage City," an almost unbelievable place. Many of you know of the Dohnavur Fellowship in India through Elisabeth's writings or by reading Amy Carmichael's books. You have supported their ongoing work. Other recipients of donations were a doctor in the Philippines who, I would say, gets more value out of a gift than one would expect, and a single woman who works in the inner city of Denver. Your gifts helped the Hungarian Literature Mission to translate many books, including 16 of Elisabeth's titles. We also gave to a few large organizations such as Focus on the Family, Campus

Crusade for Christ, Word of Life in New York, and Prison Fellowship, but mainly it was to the trusted, unsung workers whom we know from a personal relationship. The giving records from 1982 to 1993 are not available, but my guess would be that another \$75,000 or a bit more was donated during that time. I tell you this so that you may know how you have blessed others in blessing us. All along, your gifts have enabled many readers, especially those overseas, to receive the newsletter without cost. The newsletter has been mailed out to over 100 countries besides the United States, and at its height a few years back, it had 18,000 recipients.

It has encouraged us greatly to read the words many of you have jotted on the renewal cards. Sometimes you have sent long letters. Not many were left unanswered, even though often we responded with just a few words of thanks on a postcard. Elisabeth took this seriously and it was part of her joy to write to you.

There would not have been a newsletter without Servant Publications, which did the

layout, printing, mailing, and handling of subscriptions. It has been a good relationship, particularly with Kathy Deering, who has been the editor for many years, Louise Paré, who has managed the circulation processes for all 21 years, and Don Cooper, a publisher with a sense of humor (a trait not always found in the somber business of production deadlines).

So a wonderful portion of our life comes to an end. We are grateful beyond words for your kindness, encouragement, and generosity, and for the privilege of meeting many of you on the road, sometimes for coffee or lunch. May the Lord richly bless your lives. Only He knows whether or not we might meet on the road again.

Do visit the website. Messages get to us but we don't use e-mail for correspondence. If an answer is required, we'd be happy to hear from you via regular mail (10 Strawberry Cove, Magnolia, MA 01930). As always, I'll continue to send out books and tapes, and we'll try to keep up with the letters and cards.

And that's it from the Cove.



Lars and Elisabeth, Interlaken, Switzerland.

The Elisabeth Elliot Newsletter

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