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His Answers to Our Anxieties

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His Answers to Our Anxieties

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***His
Answers***

to

***Our
Anxieties***

by Dr. James T. Jeremiah

HIS ANSWERS TO OUR ANXIETIES

By

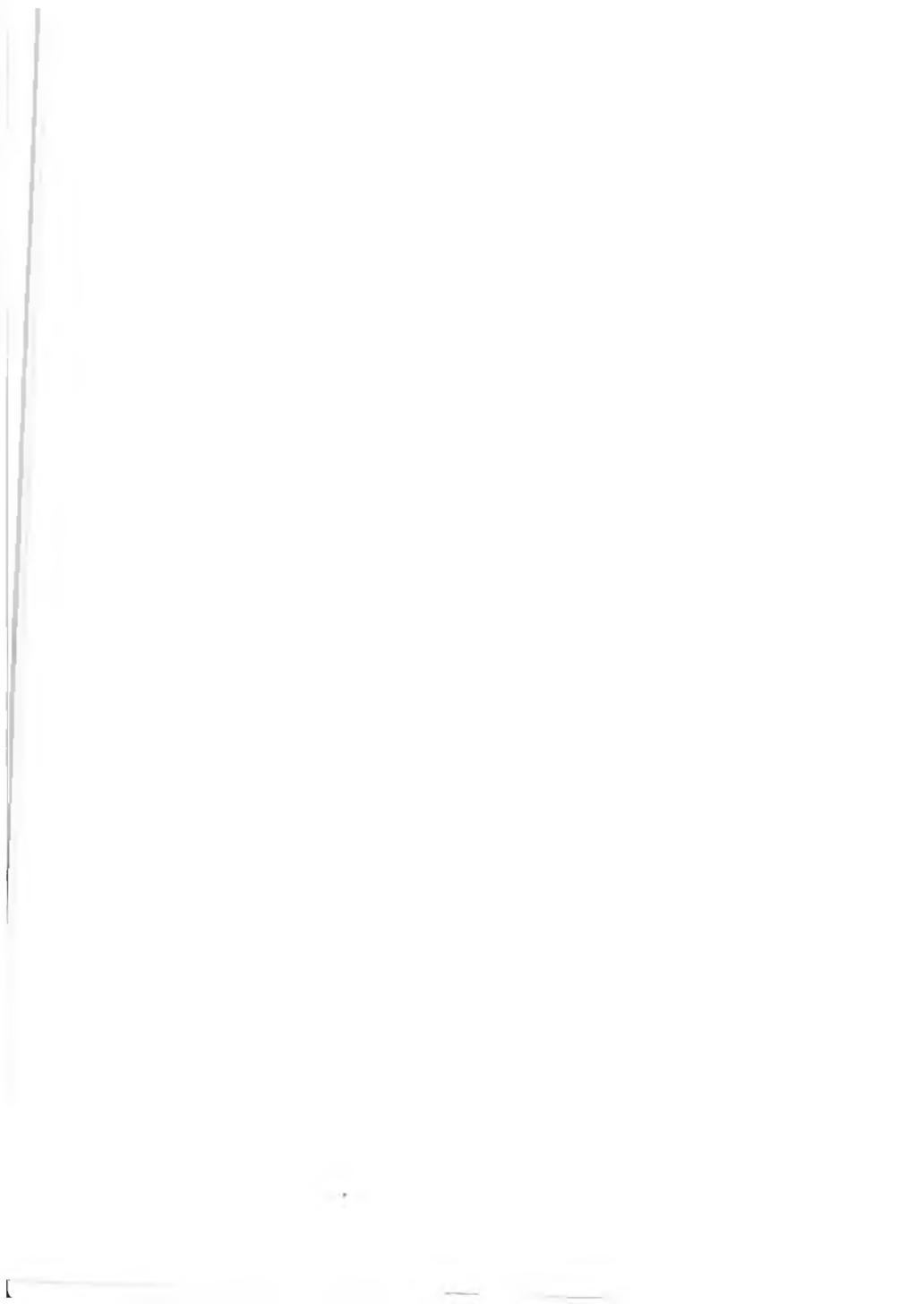
Dr. James T. Jeremiah

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**To the Christian radio stations
that carry "Campus Challenge"
and are also engaged in the ministry
of declaring the Savior's answers
to man's anxieties**

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PREFACE

The world is filled with people who worry. Some are controlled by anxieties about things that never happen. They cross imaginary bridges where there are not even any rivers.

The Bible-believing Christian has a remedy for these so-called anticipated ills. While a prisoner Paul wrote, "Be careful (anxious) for nothing . . . the peace of God . . . shall keep (guard) your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus" (Phil. 4:6,7).

The purpose of the pages to follow is to present some of our Lord's answers to the anxieties that have a tendency to plague us. The twelve brief chapters are "Campus Challenge" messages given over several radio stations. It is our prayer that God will use them in printed form as He has been pleased to do by means of radio.

Chapter 1

SIN

Robert Frost was interviewed on television shortly before his death by a group of reporters whose questions implied that this was the most difficult time in which man has ever lived. They kept trying to badger the octogenarian poet into saying what they wanted him to say. At last he succeeded in outshouting them and making himself heard: "Yes, yes, it's a terribly difficult time for a man to try to save his soul—about as difficult as it always has been."

It is difficult to say whether Mr. Frost understood how **impossible** it is for any one of us to save his soul. The salvation of man's soul is not only difficult, but so far as his own efforts are concerned, it is absolutely impossible. With reference to the salvation of the soul, Jesus said, "With men it is impossible, but not with God, for with God all things are possible" (Mark 10:27).

Salvation is humanly impossible because of sin. The Bible says that sin brings death, the unsaved person being ". . . dead in trespasses and sin" (Eph. 2:1). By nature man's heart is ". . . deceitful above all things, and desperately (incurably) wicked . . ." (Jer. 17:9). He has ". . . sinned and come short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3:23), and ". . . the wrath of God abideth on him" (John 3:36). Sin has so ruined and depraved man's soul, separating him from God, that his salvation can only be a reality by the power of God.

Jesus Christ gave his life on the cross to save us from our sins. The child of God can say with grateful assurance: 1. **He bore my sins**—"Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed" (1 Peter 2:24). 2. **He suffered for my sins**—"For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit" (1 Peter 3:18). 3. **He purged my sins**—"Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he

had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high" (Heb. 1:2). 4. **He removed my sins**—"Behold, for peace I had great bitterness: but thou hast in love to my soul delivered it from the pit of corruption: for thou hast cast all my sins behind thy back" (Isa. 38:17).

The great artist Turner once invited a friend to view his latest painting. It was a vivid picture of a storm at sea. After gazing at the painting for several minutes, the visitor, who was completely overwhelmed, asked the artist, "How did you ever paint such a realistic scene?"

The artist explained his secret. "I went to the seashore," he said, "and hired a fishing boat. The pilot took me out into the sea even though we knew a storm was on the way. We sailed into the storm. Oh, how I wanted to hide in safety in the bottom of the boat, but I stayed on the deck, bound to the mast! I did not simply see the storm; I felt it—I breathed it—I lived in it—and I lived through it! Only then could I paint the picture."

As Christ came to this earth and lived among men, He was ". . . touched with the feeling of our infirmities . . . in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin" (Heb. 4:15). He felt, breathed, and lived through the storm, the storm of God's wrath placed upon Him in our behalf.

Sin, not necessarily personal sins, is the cause of all of our anxieties. Because we are sinners, we have problems. Since Christ died for us, the just for the unjust, and fully paid the sin debt against us, we then can claim His victory in our lives. He is the answer to our anxieties.

For Further Study: Isa. 53:4-7; Rom. 3:10-31; 1 Cor. 6:9-11; 1 John 1:8-10

Chapter 2

GUILT

Of all the problems faced by members of the human race, there is none quite so depressing and defeating as that of guilt. Guilt is "the fact of being responsible for an offense or wrong-doing or the remorseful awareness of having done something wrong." Many biblical characters knew the meaning of guilt, and the Word of God repeatedly states in various ways that the solution of this problem has been provided by Christ in His substitutionary death in our behalf.

David is an outstanding illustration of the way a guilty person suffers within the depths of his soul. Psalm 38 records the sorrows of David's guilty heart. "For thine arrows stick fast in me, and thy hand presseth me sore . . . neither is there any rest in my bones because of my sin. For mine iniquities are gone over mine head: as an heavy burden they are too heavy for me . . . I go mourning all the day long . . . my sorrow is continually before me" (Psa. 38:2-6, 17, 18).

In the 51st Psalm we learn the remedy for guilt. Observe that deliverance from this terrible burden comes through confessing the sin that causes the guilt, then turning to and trusting the Savior Who has paid the full price of our sins. "Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy loving kindness: according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. For I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin is ever before me. Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight . . . Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow" (Psa. 51:1-7).

All of us are sinners before God, but the sense of guilt can be removed as we recognize that Jesus Christ has paid the debt of our sin by His death in our behalf. Often when we recognize we are sinners and consequently in deep debt, we feel guilty and try by our works to pay the debt and remove the guilty feeling. Good works, at best, only temporarily cover a sense of guilt; they never cure it.

It is said that Henry Clay once owed a debt to a bank that he could not pay. He went to the bank to see what arrangements could be made to meet his obligation. To the cashier he said, "I have come to see about my debt."

The cashier replied, "Mr. Clay, you have no obligation at this bank."

Thinking he had been misunderstood, he said, "I am speaking about the note I owe the bank."

The cashier replied, "Mr. Clay, you don't owe this bank one cent. Some of your friends knew of your obligation and they knew of your inability to meet it, so they made up the sum among themselves and came and paid it. You do not owe this bank a penny."

With tears in his eyes, and unable to say another word, Mr. Clay went out to thank his friends for their wonderful display of genuine friendship. Whatever guilt he had because of the unpaid debt vanished when he knew the bill was paid.

We must count our own imagined goodness useless as a means of salvation. We can and must simply accept as a gift what God has done for us through Christ's shed blood on the cross. When you do trust Christ as your Savior, you need no longer be guilty though your sin may be great. When Christ is your Savior you can count on God's forgiving and forgetting your sins. He has promised to remember them no more because He has cast them behind His back and buried them in the depths of the sea.

"Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God" (Rom. 3:24, 25).

"Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification. Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Rom. 4:25, 5:1).

Whatever your sin, wherever committed, and whatever degree of guilt you feel, your guilty standing before God and the guilty feeling in your heart will be removed when you trust Christ as your Savior. For Further Study: Isa. 38:17; 43:25; Jer. 31:34; Micah 7:18; Eph. 1:7; Heb. 1:3.

Chapter 3

DEPRESSION

Depression or despondency is one of the most dangerous diseases the world is facing today or has ever faced. Dr. Harold M. Vesatsky, Chairman of the Department of Psychiatry at Northwestern University, Chicago, said, "The depression that is now gripping our society, particularly affecting the youth, is growing to epidemic proportions . . . the sense of futility that people feel in the face of war, corruption, pollution, and starvation is a forerunner of lawlessness and depression."

The middle-aged and the elderly with a background of life's losses and disappointments are not the only ones who are suffering from this emotional illness. Today young people are the hardest hit with this problem. Some of the evidences of the trouble is an increase in suicides among the young and an addiction to drugs that comes because they want to drown their disappointments. Violence and cruelty, as well as apathy, are also evidences of depression.

Why are people, old and young too, depressed? Perhaps one of the reasons, but certainly not the main one, is that so many find themselves incapable of changing the things happening around them. The basic cause of depression is a hopeless outlook on the future. This generation is reaping the consequences of the last one; for many, hope for the future was destroyed by denying the Word of God and turning from the God of the Bible.

Richard L. Evans asks, "Even if the worst were true, even if the end of all things were a certainty, what would we gain by living as if there weren't going to be a future? And what could we lose by living as though there were? Life without faith in the future would be all but meaningless." Let it be clearly stated, however, that there can be no real faith in the future without confidence in God and His work. He alone guarantees a glorious future to His people and gives them hope, the cure for depression and despondency.

In that great chapter on the resurrection, Paul reminds us why some people are depressed. "If in this life only we have hope in

Christ, we are of all men most miserable” (1 Cor. 15:19). Christians are not “miserable” people; they face a glorious future with confidence. “Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is” (Jer. 17:7).

An individual’s present acceptance by God through the completed work of Christ gives a future glorious hope for the believer and a present peace that overcomes the hopelessness of depression. “By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us” (Rom. 5:2, 5).

Thus while in a damp, dingy prison Paul could write, “According to my earnest expectation and my hope, that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but that with all boldness, as always, so now also Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life, or by death” (Phil. 1:20). The hope of the believer then is the “anti-depressant” that helps him face the future, giving him an inner sense of security and also motivating an outward evidence of godly living. “And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure” (I John 3:2).

None live with more joy and peace than those who rest on God’s promises and love rather than on their own fickle feelings. Hope and trust in God cure depression, but a life without faith in God will likely be troubled with its presence.

For Further Study: Psa. 37:1-8; 42:2-6; 77:7-13; 1 Peter 1:3-9

Chapter 4

FRUSTRATION

It happened in Poca, West Virginia. James Goodwin gave a dog to his friend Archie Moore, but the dog ran away from Moore's home and went back to Goodwin. Being an honest man, Goodwin put the dog in his car and headed for Moore's house. At the same time Moore and his nephew started out for Goodwin's house looking for the pooch.

That's right: at the top of the hill their cars hit head-on. And while the men were checking the wreckage and fixing their injuries, the dog ran away!

Some days nothing seems to go right. There are "head-on" collisions and every waking hour seems to be filled with frustration. You do your best, but everything seems to fall apart. What is the solution to this besetting problem? Perhaps another illustration will help us as we seek an answer.

One of the executives who worked with John Wanamaker's Philadelphia store recalls that one day when he was a cash boy he mustered up courage to go into Wanamaker's office to show him his newly-discovered way of wrapping some small packages. Mr. Wanamaker was sitting at his top desk, and the boy timidly passed to him a sample package he had wrapped. As he did so his sleeve caught on the ink well and upset it. The horrified boy stood frustrated, rooted to the spot.

Wanamaker said, "Now I am going to show you something. If you attack a pool of ink with the edge of a blotter instead of stamping the blotter flat down on it, it is astonishing how quickly it disappears." The devotion of a lifetime of able service was thus won in a minute by this fine display of patience. One who has patience defeats frustration. But from whence comes patience? Through trust and submission to God.

As we surrender our lives to God, He enables us to see that all things are brought together in His plan, including our trials and frus-

trations, so that we know it all works for our good and His glory. "Be still, and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth" (Psa. 46:10). "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose" (Rom. 8:28). "Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls to him in well-doing, as unto a faithful Creator (1 Peter 4:19).

The results of reliance on God's promises and a rest in His provision is the cure of our frustration. "**Strengthened** with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all **patience** and **longsuffering** with **joyfulness**" (Col. 1:11). "**Rejoicing** in hope; **patient** in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer" (Rom. 12:12). "Wherefore glorify ye the Lord in the fires (valleys), even the name of the Lord God of Israel in the isles of the sea" (Isa. 24:15).

The example of Christ's living in the flesh among men and the expectation of His return for His people are the means God will use to help a believer in times of frustration. "For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds" (Heb. 12:3). "Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain" (James 5:7). Since he makes no mistakes in His dealings with us, we need not be frustrated in His process of carrying out His plan.

Faith in God and submission to His will produce patience, the answer to frustration. George Mueller said, "The beginning of anxiety is the end of faith, and the beginning of true faith and trust is the end of anxiety."

For Further Study: Psa. 73:1-17; Lam. 3:1-26; 2 Cor. 4:7-18

Chapter 5

WORRY

John Wesley talked one day with a man who expressed doubt of God's goodness. "I don't know what I shall do with all this worry and trouble," he said. At that moment Wesley noticed a cow looking over a stone wall. "Do you know why that cow is looking over that wall?" asked Wesley. "No," answered his troubled friend. "I will tell you," was Wesley's reply. "It is because she cannot see through it. That is what you must do with your wall of trouble—look over and above it." This should remind us that the things that trouble us never trouble Him; when we look to the Savior, we will always look over and above our troubles.

When Carlyle lived in London, his sleep was frequently disturbed by a crowing rooster which belonged to a neighbor. Carlyle spoke to his neighbor about it, but the neighbor said, "He only crows three or four times during the night." "That may be," replied Carlyle, "but if you only knew how I suffer waiting for him to crow!"

That may sound ridiculous, but there are many of us who do even worse. We worry about roosters that never crow—things that never happen. Someone has said, "Most things that make us sigh and fret are those that haven't happened yet." Another has suggested that too many people go through life running from something that isn't after them.

A husband died, leaving his wife to raise six children of her own. She adopted twelve others. A reporter came from the local paper to interview her. During the course of the interview the reporter asked the widow how she managed to raise all those children and to do it so gracefully. "It's very simple," the widow answered. "You see, I'm in a partnership." "A partnership? I hadn't heard about that. What sort of a partnership?" The woman's face broke into a sunny smile as she replied. "One day a long time ago I said to the Lord: 'Lord, I'll do the work and you do the worrying,' and I haven't had a worry since."

The Word of God assures us that trusting the Lord is the cure for worry. "Be careful for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus" (Phil. 4:6, 7). "Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment" (Matt. 6:25)? "Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and he shall sustain thee: he shall never suffer the righteous to be moved" (Psa. 55:22).

If you are a Christian and have a tendency to worry, then think some of these Bible promises through to some helpful conclusions. We are told not to be anxious because with thanksgiving we can make our requests known to God. We can then face the problems confidently and know the peace of God. God's peace becomes ours by trusting Him and obeying Him. Therefore, we will not need to be anxious for the things of this life. "He will never allow the righteous to be shaken."

The man of the world says, "Why pray and trust God when you can worry." The man of God says, "Why worry when you can trust God and know He answers prayer."

For Further Study: Matt. 6:26-34; 10:16-25; Luke 10:38-42; 1 Peter 5:7-10

Chapter 6

LONELINESS

Have you ever been lonely? Loneliness is defined as being sad from want of companionship. Several heroes and godly people in Bible times knew what it meant to be lonely.

Elijah, that great and courageous man, felt he was quite alone when facing the forces of evil. He said, "I have been very jealous for the Lord God of hosts . . . and I, even I, **only** am left; and they seek my life to take it away" (1 Kings 19:14). Later on God reminded him, "I have left me seven thousand in Israel . . . which have not bowed unto Baal . . ." (vs. 18). He wasn't alone quite as much as he thought. Though to his credit, we have often wondered why the seven thousand did not stand with him.

There were times in David's life when he experienced the soul anguish of loneliness. He knew what it meant to be rejected and hated by King Saul. Out of his experience he wrote, "Make me to hear joy and gladness; that the bones which thou hast broken may rejoice. Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy holy spirit from me. Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free spirit" (Psa. 51:8, 11, 12). In another Psalm written by David, we read, "For the Lord loveth judgment, and forsaketh not his saints; they are preserved forever . . ." (Psa. 37:28). Here we see he learned the cure for his loneliness.

Though Paul could write, "Persecuted but not forsaken . . ." (2 Cor. 4:9) and mean it, he was not without his moments of loneliness. As he came to the end of his ministry on earth he said, "For Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world, . . . At my first answer no man stood with me, but all men forsook me . . ." (2 Tim. 4:10, 16). Not many can sympathize with this man of God who while in prison was aware that his friends outside had turned away from him. Yet, he could say, "but not forsaken," because ". . . the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me . . ." (2 Tim. 4:17).

There are many causes of loneliness. Here is a Christian who has faithfully and courageously been a witness for Christ. Perhaps he has not only lost friends because of his testimony, but his opportunity of employment has been terminated. He knows what it means to be lonely. Death takes a loved one who has been very close and important in one's life. Sorrow brings loneliness. It is even possible to be lonely within a big city with thousands of people all around you. Clarence Macartney wrote, "There is the loneliness of the midnight hour, and the loneliness of the desert and the uninhabited isle, and the heavy, depressing solitude of the mountains. But the worst loneliness of all is the loneliness of the crowd—the solitude of the city."

Christians are not immune from this experience of loneliness. However, they are not like many in the world who have no cure for this problem. They have an answer in the Lord Jesus Christ.

First of all, our Savior meets our need with His promise. To His disciples He said, "I will not leave you comfortless or orphans" (John 14:8). "So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me" (Heb. 13:6).

Scripture assures us of our Savior's **presence**. He said, "I will come to you" (John 14:18). "Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee" (Heb. 13:5).

Few, if any, of us can go through life without at one time or another facing the burden of loneliness. None of us who trust Christ as our Savior need to live with it for long because He has promised to never leave us lonely.

For Further Study: Deut. 31:6-8; Josh. 1:5, 9; Psa. 46:4-7; Isa. 43:1-5; Nahum 1:7; 2 Cor. 12:9, 10; 2 Tim. 4:22

Chapter 7

FEAR

Fear is one of man's greatest adversaries. An ancient legend illustrates the point. According to the story, a man was driving to Constantinople. He was stopped by an old woman who asked him for a ride. As they journeyed toward the city he looked at her and became frightened and asked who she was. She replied, "I am Chalera."

When he heard that word he was more frightened than ever and ordered her to leave his wagon and walk. She promised him she would not kill more than five people in Constantinople. She handed him a dagger and said it was the only weapon that could kill her. Then she said, "I shall meet you in two days. If I break my promise, you may stab me."

Within two days 120 people died in Constantinople. The enraged man found the woman called "Chalera" and raised the dagger to kill her. She stopped him, saying, "I have kept my agreement. I killed only five. Fear killed the others."

Some of the greatest heartaches known to man come from the fear of trouble rather than from trouble itself. Too many spend time crossing bridges where no rivers even exist. Clarence Macartney said, "Fear betrays man's spirit, breaks down his defense, disarms him in the battle, unfits him for the work of life, and adds terror to the dying bed." "The fear of man bringeth a snare: but whoso putteth his trust in the Lord shall be safe" (Prov. 29:25). God has a cure for our fears.

During the last war a four-year old child was among the displaced persons that came to the United States. His parents had been killed in the raids on Rotterdam. He was filled with fear. Strange noises made him cringe. When he heard an airliner overhead he would run for the cellar. Gradually through kindness and patience, his foster parents taught him not to run away **from** what caused him fear, but to run **to** them. In their friendly arms he soon learned not to be afraid. That is the lesson God would teach His children—not

to run from what frightens them—but to run to His arms where they will find protection and comfort.

One of the ways to counter fear in the heart is to consider the “fear not’s” in the Bible. “Say to them that are of a fearful heart, be strong, **fear not**: behold, your God will come with vengeance, even God with a recompence; he will come and save you” (Isa. 35:4).

“**Fear thou not**; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will hold thee with the right hand of my righteousness. For I the Lord thy God will hold thy right hand, saying unto thee, **Fear not**; I will help thee” (Isa. 41:10, 13).

“**Fear not**; for I am with thee: I will bring thy seed from the east, and gather thee from the west” (Isa. 43:5).

“And **fear not** them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell. **Fear ye not** therefore; ye are of more value than many sparrows” (Matt. 10:28, 31).

“And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead. And he laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, **Fear not**; I am the first and the last” (Rev. 1:17).

The living Christ becoming the personal Savior of a person gripped with fear brings peace for the present and hope for the future to that one who personally and confidently trusts Him.

For Further Study: Psa. 49:5; Isa. 35:3; Matt. 10:24-31; Acts 27:23-25

Chapter 8

DOUBT

When a certain teen-ager was presented with the message of the gospel and the authority of the Scriptures, he looked at the Christian worker with disgust and said, "Look, I'm taught five days a week to believe nothing." He was one of many who believe that it is fashionable to doubt everything that comes his way. Some young people believe it is old-fashioned to believe anything. Sometimes their views of doubt are adopted because of the pressure of friends and their theories. This cult of doubt has some of its foundation in the anti-Christian philosophies that have been and are still being taught in many of our high schools and colleges.

Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche, the well-known German philosopher (1844-1900), once wrote, "There are no eternal facts, as there are no absolute truths." Since the Word of God teaches absolute truth, Nietzsche's statement is in direct conflict with it. Since it is fashionable to doubt, young people who want to be popular in the so-called "intellectual realm" join the cult of the doubters.

Unbelief and doubt may at first sound intellectually attractive, but the Bible teaches and experience demonstrates that life without Jesus Christ's eternal and absolute truths and standards is really not life as God intended it to be. In fact, ". . . he that hath not the Son of God hath not life" (I John 5:12).

When we think of doubters, Bible readers generally turn to John 20 and read about Thomas, one of the Lord's disciples. When he was told of the resurrection of Christ he said, "Except I shall see . . . I will not believe (vs. 25). If we can discover why Thomas doubted, we may be able to understand why some are members of the doubters' cult today.

To begin with, Thomas would not accept the testimony of others who had seen the resurrected Christ. They said, "We have seen the Lord." This present generation has been taught to question everything and doubt everyone. It is common for many to reply as did

Thomas, "I will not believe." In New Testament times, as now, there have been many whose lives have been transformed by a personal experience with Christ. They tell the truth when they say, "We have seen the Lord."

In reality Thomas, like so many of his modern-day friends, doubted because he was ignorant. When Jesus appeared to his disciples "Thomas . . . was not with them." For whatever reason, Thomas did not avail himself of the evidence that was at his disposal. Most people who doubt God's Word today are actually ignorant of what it says or means.

Instead of believing what Christ had said about His death and resurrection, often predicted before He went to the cross, Thomas was putting his confidence in his feelings or senses. "Except I shall see . . . and put my finger into the print of the nails . . . I will not believe." In this day of experience theology, too many put more confidence in what they can see, feel, or otherwise experience than they do in what God has said. They doubt God's truth and believe their experience which may be contrary to what God says.

What is our Lord's answer to doubt? "Jesus said, Peace be unto you. Then saith he to Thomas, Reach here thy finger, and behold my hands . . . be not faithless but believing" (John 20:17). Christ made the evidence available, but Thomas had to believe His Word to make it personal. The cure for doubt then and now is taking God at His Word. "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Rom. 10:17).

Though you may live in a doubting age and find yourself daily surrounded by those who ridicule the Word of God, you may avail yourself of God's protecting armor by reading and studying God's Word. When you are tempted to doubt, turn to His promises and triumph.

For Further Study: Psa. 42:5, 6; Matt. 14:29-31; John 14:8-11; 20:24-31

Chapter 9

MONOTONY

Monotony can be dangerous. If there is a persistent sameness or want of variety in life, one may be open to temptation unknown to those who are actively involved in many pursuits. C. S. Lewis said, "The long, dull, monotonous years of middle-aged prosperity or middle-aged adversity are excellent campaigning weather for the devil." This need not be true, but unfortunately it sometimes is. The Devil can use daily sameness to discourage and destroy the motivation or pursue new and greater goals.

Desperate actions occasionally result when certain individuals are locked into the same unexciting details of life as they experience it. In his *Fireside Travels*, James Russell Lowell wrote, "There is nothing so desperately monotonous as the sea, and I no longer wonder at the cruelty of pirates."

On the other hand, if every one of us would seek to eliminate the ordinary and go looking for change, variety, and excitement, little or nothing would ever be finished. What has seemed monotonous to some has brought success beyond what one would expect to others. Thomas Edison said, "I never did anything worth doing by accident, nor did any of my inventions come by accident." He once told a friend that 58 recent experiments had come to nothing. "How awful," consoled the friend, "it must be terribly discouraging to have so many failures." "Oh, they were not failures," responded Edison cheerfully. "Now I know 58 ways that won't work."

In these days when some in the women's liberation movement look at women's place in the home, they are complaining that their roles as wives and mothers leave no time or opportunity for so-called "creative" tasks. Woman's place in the home need not be one of monotony. In answer to this charge someone asked, "What could be more creative than creating new life and a happy home?" There is nothing monotonous about the right kind of a home. The right kind of a home is a Christian home.

If you are becoming tired of your workaday world, listen to the good advice of Theodore Roosevelt, a man of action all his life. He said, "No man needs sympathy because he has to work. Far and away the best prize that life offers is the chance to work hard at work worth doing."

Distasteful monotony will disappear when one considers what God does for him every day. "Blessed be the Lord, who daily loadeth us with benefits, even the God of our salvation" (Psa. 68:19). A paraphrase (AB) gives it like this, "Blessed be the Lord, who bears our burdens, and carries us day by day, even the God Who is our salvation." Who can complain about monotony when he knows the God Who loads him with blessings and carries him along day by day? He provides new roads for us to travel every day, even though we may think we are covering the same territory without a vision of new scenery.

Every day God has something new and different for His children who **look** for it. "It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness" (Lam. 3:22, 23). The Psalmist wrote, ". . . his favor is for a lifetime . . . but joy cometh in the morning" (Psa. 30:5). When we walk with the Lord, life does not have an unbearable sameness. It possesses the quality of excitement as He unfolds new lessons and blessings.

The cure for monotony, then, is a personal experience with the Savior Who does not change but leads His people into pathways that are new and challenging to them. When you trust and obey, monotony will flee away.

For Further Study: Psa. 1:1-3; 25:4, 5; 119:97, 105; Prov. 4:18; Isa. 40:31; 1 Cor. 4:16; Eph. 6:10, 11, 13

Chapter 10

DISCOURAGEMENT

The noted English clergyman, Leslie D. Weatherhead, watched a group of working Persian weavers making beautiful carpets. Their fingers moved deftly under the directions of a master artist who had designed the pattern and who was responsible for seeing that it was executed faithfully. Weatherhead asked what happened if a weaver should make a mistake, use the wrong stroke of the shuttle, or get his colors mixed. The artist announced that usually the weaver does not have to take out the wrong pattern or color. He simply weaves the mistake into his pattern. God often cures discouragement by showing us He has worked it all into His plan for us. "The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord: and he delighteth in his way. Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down: for the Lord upholdeth him with his hand" (Psa. 37:23, 24).

G. A. Young returned to what had been his home to find it in ashes. Here and there the smoke was curling up around some indestructible remnant. As Mr. Young stood there his heart was sad, but he found deep consolation in remembering the priceless things he possessed which could not be destroyed by fire. Thus his mind formed the lines: "Some through the waters, some through the flood. Some through the fire, but all through the blood."

The song soon became popular in a small way, but it required nearly thirty years to bring it to the attention of Christian people everywhere. As far as it is known, this is the only song written by G. A. Young. What encouragement it gives to the discouraged soul!

God does not intend that we should be conquered by or consumed in our trials and discouragements. "When thou passest **through** the waters, I will be with thee; and **through** the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest **through** the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee" (Isa. 43:2).

Satan is an enemy always seeking our defeat. When he succeeds, we can become discouraged. Discouraged Christians never win bat-

bles or accomplish much for God. This is the reason why discouragement is the Devil's most useful tool. On the other hand, Christ is our Savior and has made victory a constant reality. He is the cure for spiritual defeat and the secret of an encouraging Christian experience. 'Christ in you the hope of glory.' "Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: **I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee** with the right hand of my righteousness. For I the Lord thy God will hold thy right hand, saying unto thee, Fear not; **I will help thee.** When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I the Lord will hear them, I the God of Israel **will not forsake them**" (Isa. 41:10, 13, 17).

The discouragements that come our way, though great, are not insurmountable because nothing touches God's people before it has reached His Son, and Christ the Savior lives as victor over all of them. For that reason the apostle John could write, "For whatsoever is born of God **overcometh the world:** and this is the victory that **overcometh the world,** even our faith. Who is he that **overcometh the world,** but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?" (1 John 5:4, 5). "Ye are of God, little children, and **have overcome them:** because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world. Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God" (1 John 4:4, 15).

Discouraged Christians see their disappointments close at hand with God far away in the distance. Discouragement disappears when we know He is near to help us in the time of trouble.

For Further Study: Psa. 31:22; Prov. 13:12; Isa. 50:4-10; Micah 7:1-7; Matt. 10:29-31; John 16:20-22, 33

Chapter 11

AGING

Science has been working on methods to keep us all from aging. As time goes on we are supposed to have a longer span of life, if the scientific formulas really work. Here is a proposed solution for wrinkles. After hearing about the remedy, you just may prefer the signs of aging instead.

Warding off wrinkles, they say, is prolonged by a simple secret. Make a tepid bath in which you stir bran. Follow by long friction, till the flesh fairly shines. Next, smooth out lines in the face and forehead with unsalted butter. Finally, mix a cup of oatmeal with cold water into a rather thick paste. Spread this over the face and knead it until it falls off of itself, as it will, in flakes. At this point you will find yourself not only smooth-skinned, but sitting in a bathtub full of warm bran, butter, and oatmeal flakes. Now pour sugar and half and half over your knees and you will have an exceptionally nutritious breakfast—which is more than you can say for some other modern beauty aids. This solution for the marks of old age is as good as any other for the simple reason no one can remove the wrinkles nor stop the clock's aging process.

“The days of our years are threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labour and sorrow; for it is soon cut off, and we fly away” (Psa. 90:10).

Sometimes older people, in troubled isolation, grow despondent: “I guess we are just sitting here waiting to die . . . When I die, I'll be back with my people again . . . I have lived too long . . . No one needs me, and I don't either.” We are told that in 1900 there were an estimated 3,300,000 people over 65 in the United States. Each day in our present society 4,000 Americans celebrate their 65th birthday. By the year 2000 there will be an estimated 33,000,000 Americans 65 and older.

We can be sure of the presence and blessings of God upon our lives when old age comes because our God does not change with

time. Spiritually, the elderly Christian and the teen-age believer have the same promises in common. Everyone who is born again may claim God's promise for:

1. **The Assurance of Salvation.** "Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life" (John 5:24).

2. **The Presence of the Holy Spirit.** "And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you" (John 14:16, 17).

3. **The Promise of an Eternal Inheritance.** "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time" (1 Peter 1:3-5).

4. **The Guarantee of a New Body.** "Behold, I shew you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed" (1 Cor. 15:51, 52).

Every believer, regardless of his age, has Christ in him, the hope of glory. One day very soon every Christian, old and young alike, will have a new body without spot or wrinkle.

For Further Study: Psa. 37:25-29; 90:1-4; 92:13, 14; Ecc. 6:3, 6; Isa. 46:4; Titus 2:2-6

Chapter 12

DEATH

Westminster Abbey in London contains the bodies of many of England's heroes. Some were great in the realm of politics, others in religion; others were poets or military men or were distinguished in other ways. Many were good men and some were probably bad, but all of them are dead. The Abbey is a great monument to the frailty of human life. It reminds us that human leadership lasts but for a brief time. The days of a man are threescore years and ten, but he is "soon cut off." Death is an inescapable reality.

Hubert Eaton became a millionaire by softening the harshness of death for relatives of those buried in Forest Lawn Memorial Park in Glendale, California. Here the crumbling bodies of many movie stars and other famous people lie surrounded by rolling lawns, sparkling fountains, and marble statuary. Eaton admitted he wanted to "erase all signs of mourning." Death became "leave-taking"; a corpse became "the loved one" who was treated by skilled cosmetologists in a luxuriously furnished "slumber room."

Eaton died at 85 and his own funeral was one to remember. He lay-in-state in the Memorial Court of Honor. Special music was delivered by the famed Roger Wagner Chorale. Tenor Brian Sullivan sang the hymn "Softly and Tenderly." Governor Goodwin Knight delivered a "narration." Then as the organ thundered "The Battle Hymn of the Republic," the lavish casket was placed alongside his wife in "The Westminster Hall of America."

None of this ceremony cancels the reality of death. Behind the disguised words, the costly cosmetology, and the beautiful music, lies the mark of the great conqueror. Man has no power of himself to cancel the harsh reality of death.

Death is an enemy. It is the last one to be conquered, but it will be defeated. For the Christian there is victory now as he faces the experience that takes him from time to eternity. There are many testimonies relating how God's people have encountered death with

victory. R. F. Horton relates that Fanny Crosby in her last illness remarked, "How can anyone call it a dark valley? It is all light and love!" Then stretching her arms out to Christ, she whispered, "I could run to meet Him."

When Dwight L. Moody became ill he was rushed home to Massachusetts where in his last moments he said to his son "This is no dream, Will. If this be death, it is inexpressibly sweet. Earth is receding, heaven is opening, God is calling, and I must go."

Paul wrote, "For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain" (Phil. 1:21). He further suggests that if the decision to die and be with Christ or remain in this world were his alone, he would ". . . desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better" (Phil. 1:23). He could say that because living for Christ was his great goal in life.

The word "depart" refers to loosening the moorings in preparation to set sail and is used in other writings to describe a boat leaving port. Death for the Christian is a departure from this earth and instantaneously brings us to Heaven with Christ. At the end of his journey Paul testified, "I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand" (2 Tim. 4:6). A Christian will not consider death as a penalty for sin. For him it is only a process of change. At death he exchanges earth for Heaven.

If you cannot say, "For to me to live is Christ," you can never say, "to die is gain." Under these circumstances you live only to die and **that** with great loss.

For Further Study: Psa. 31:5; 116:15; 1 Thess. 4:13-18; 2 Tim. 4:6-8; Rev. 14:13

This is a day when it is easy for daily anxieties to take prominence in one's life. In this booklet, Dr. Jeremiah suggests answers that place the Bible at the focal point.



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