

SKY-WAY MESSAGES



Pointing People Heavenward

Internet Bible Materials

VOLUME 11: **CONTENTS:-**

- Page 2 - **REFLECTION:** ***Our Perfect High Priest***
- *Better than Aaron in Exodus 28*
- Page 4 - **BIBLE BOOK:** ***The Call to Contend***
- *A vital message from Jude for today*
- Page 8 - **CHRISTIAN LIFE:** ***The Last Words of a Soldier***
- *"Just Praise and Pray and Peg Away!"*
- Page 11 - **TODAY'S WORLD:** ***Not Forgotten:***
Diana - Princess of Wales
- *Five lessons from her life and death*
- Page 15 - **UNDERSTANDING:** ***Inside-Out***
- *A Contrast from 2 Corinthians*
- Page 18 - **GOSPEL TRUTH:** ***What's Your Question?***
- *The one most people wanted answered*



Among the many instructions given by God to Moses were some for the “holy garments” which were to be made for Aaron, the high priest of God’s Old Testament people. Before giving him the details, God told Moses that these garments were to be “for glory and for beauty”. (Exodus 28:2, KJV) These two features would be recognized by all who saw the high priest in his splendid robes.

Today there is no earthly priest to whom we turn. Instead “we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God. (Hebrews 4:14, NKJV) If glory and beauty were seen in Aaron’s garments, how much more glorious and beautiful is our Lord Jesus? Great though Aaron was, his disobedience resulted in his death upon Mount Hor. ⁽¹⁾ Our Lord Jesus was *always* obedient - even unto death. ⁽²⁾ When we look at Him we see beauty and glory that are incomparable. The very glory of God shines in His face. ⁽³⁾ He *is* the Lord of Glory.

If **glory** speaks of His deity, **beauty** speaks of His perfect manhood. No other life has displayed such beauty. The four Gospels clearly delineate the

features of His sinless life. Indeed, all the facets of His character displayed upon earth, when added together, make us exclaim, “He is altogether lovely!” (Song of Solomon 5:16)

Aaron, the high priest, carried two onyx stones upon his shoulders, inscribed with the names of the twelve tribes of Israel, which he brought before the Lord. ⁽⁴⁾ Our Great High Priest in heaven supports His people constantly on His strong shoulders - just as the shepherd carried the lost sheep home in that same place of safety and strength. ⁽⁵⁾

Strength

But Aaron also carried the names of the twelve tribes of Israel on the breastplate “upon his heart.” (Exodus 28:29, KJV) What a lovely picture of the way our Lord Jesus carries His people today near to His heart! Nothing can ever separate us from His love. There, in the Father’s presence, our Great High Pries represents us. It is wonderful to be borne on His strong shoulders - but even *more* wonderful to be held near to His heart of love!

Love

END NOTES:- (1)Numbers 20:28. (2)Philippians 2:8. (3)2 Corinthians 4:6. (4)Exodus 28:12. (5)Luke 15:5.

*We have a great High Priest
Jesus the Son of God*

Hebrews 4:14



THE CALL TO CONTEND

Towards the end of the Bible is a short letter from a man who wrote less material than any of the other New Testament writers. When placed alongside the writings of Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Paul, Peter, and James, Jude's contribution seems almost insignificant. But although it may be short, its theme is by no means unimportant.

In his opening remarks, Jude tells of the letter that refused to be written. It was his intention to write on the theme of our "common salvation" - a shared salvation, common to author and readers alike, (Jude 3). But God had other plans for His servant, Jude. Paul had already written a detailed exposition of the truth of the Gospel in his epistle to the Romans. A more-pressing need existed just then, so the Holy Spirit directed Jude to sound a clarion call for believers to ***contend for the faith***. Over nineteen centuries later, we can look back with gratitude to the way in which God guided His servant to write something that has vital significance for the times in which we live. We would be the poorer if we did not have in our possession the Epistle of Jude.



THE HEART OF THE LETTER

In the third verse we are taken right to the heart of Jude's message. In uncompromising language he tells us that we must "earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints."

Four important facts in this verse deserve our careful consideration. First, we notice that Jude is concerned not with "faith" but with ***the faith***. In other words, his concern is with that body of doctrine which God has revealed to us. Second, we find Jude using the past tense when he tells us that the faith ***was once delivered***. God's revelation is complete, not continuing. Third, "the faith" has been delivered not to the Church (where it might have become the preserve of a hierarchy) but ***to the saints***. It has been delivered to each and every believer.

Fourth, the logical consequence therefore is that all the saints of God should ***earnestly contend*** for the faith. The expression used is a strong one. This is a call for combat!

These points are important. The Christian faith has been “delivered”. It is not something developing or evolving gradually with “new light” being given from time to time. After speaking by His Son, God continued to speak through the apostles and prophets of the New Testament. (1) **That revelation is now complete.**

1. "the faith"

2. "was once delivered"

3. "to the saints"

4. "earnestly contend"

It is vital to recognize this fact. It is significant that many of the cults claiming to be Christian have required “new light” in order to establish their doctrines. The Jehovah’s Witnesses and the Mormons (Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints) are just two examples. In his book *The Charismatics*, John MacArthur writes:-

God’s Word is the only basis for authority. Once we see Scripture as less than the final infallible authority for faith and practice, we have opened the doors to theological chaos. Anyone or everyone can claim to be speaking God’s revelation. (2)

CAUGHT BY STEALTH

The Devil is often active as a roaring lion, but he is never more dangerous than in his guise as an angel of light. (3) In Jude’s day “certain men” had crept into the fellowship of the Church bringing a doctrine that may have been new but certainly was not true, (Jude 4). The expression Jude uses suggests that they had crept in unnoticed - by the side door. Within the Church they were now spreading their destructive heresies. Jude’s purpose in writing was to alert the Lord’s people to this danger that had caught them off guard and to make them aware of the need to “earnestly contend for the faith.”



Error can present itself in many forms. Unlike the truth (which cannot change) error is adaptable and may, like the chameleon, appear in different ways at different times. This ought not to surprise us when we realize that behind all error is the one whom Scripture calls the father of lies. (4) Satan, our infernal foe, is constantly devising new errors and resurrecting old ones in order to confuse and seduce the unsuspecting. We must remember that in every age error, whether old or new, has the tendency of creeping in unawares, just as it did in Jude’s day.

TODAY'S EQUIVALENTS



What is creeping into the Church today? It would be impossible to produce a comprehensive list, for what is found in one part of the world may not be found in another. The enemy of our souls obviously will concentrate his efforts on that which is most likely to succeed in a particular place.

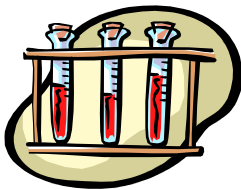
One target that Satan has attacked relentlessly since New Testament times is the Person of our Lord Jesus Christ. Our Lord and Saviour faced the cross in order to defeat Satan and deliver us from his control (5). Through false teaching, and unbalanced doctrine which gives emphasis to one aspect of truth at the expense of another - resulting in distortion - Satan has done all he can to discredit the Lord Jesus. We must beware of any teaching that raises questions or doubts in our minds about the Person of Christ. He is none other than “the Son of the living God” (6) and must be honoured as such.

In some areas of the world today Satan has been successful in using trends in contemporary society to bring new doctrines into the Church. The rise of feminism in the West has brought about a kind of “Christian women’s liberation movement” - with “equal opportunities” being sought and the biblical distinctions between men and women in the Church becoming blurred. Psychology too has made its inroads and has spawned a popular brand of teaching, encouraging such things as self-love and self-fulfilment and promising material benefits. It must not be forgotten that psychology has behind it the theories of humanists. The disciple of Christ is not called to a life of self-fulfilment but to one of self-denial. (See Luke 9:23.) The world has crept into the Church as well. Under the pretext of being “relevant” to the day in which we live, many have been brainwashed into adopting modes of worship and methods of evangelism that lack any sound biblical basis.

Trends...

WITHOUT BEING CONTENTIOUS

What are we to do when we find that we have been led astray or when we discover that false teaching has crept in unnoticed? First of all we must test everything by Scripture. The prophet Isaiah sends us “to the law and to the testimony”. He tells us: “If they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them,” (Isa.8:20). Remember, God’s revelation is complete. We are responsible to “prove all things” that we hear and then to “hold fast that which is good”. (7) However, while we must be earnest in contending for the faith, we must not be contentious about



it! Jude exhorts us to build ourselves up in our most holy faith and to be people of prayer, (Jude 20). Another responsibility is to keep ourselves in the love of God (Jude 21). The Lord is able to keep us from falling into error and to present us faultless before the presence of His glory one day with exceeding joy (Jude 24). He will do *His* part; we must do *ours*.

The love of God is a boundless supply that cannot fail. If we are not filled with that love, we may become unnecessarily heated or argumentative as we contend for the faith. Compassion is needed for those who have been seduced, (Jude 22). Some may not be true believers and therefore face the danger of eternal fire. Although a sinful lifestyle must be detested, the sinner must be loved - and rescued if possible - from the fate that awaits him. Like our Saviour, we must seek to befriend sinners but at the same time remain separate from their sins (8).

PRESERVED FOR US

We can be thankful that the Holy Spirit directed Jude to write this necessary little epistle. It contains both warning and encouragement. Solemn examples from the past are used to show how ungodly teachers will face God's judgment, (Jude 5-8).



Three Old Testament names appear in verse 11. Cain's counterpart is still with us and is seen in those who teach salvation by works rather than through the sacrifice of Christ. Balaam's name appears - to warn us of those who, like him, serve God "for reward" and seek to build empires for themselves at the expense of God's people. Korah's sin was self-assertion. Not content with being a Levite, he wanted to become a priest too (9). The spirit of Korah is evident today in those who are dissatisfied with the position God has given them and who aspire to something that is not in accordance with His will.

...Cain
...Balaam
...Korah

It has been said that those who will not learn from history must repeat the mistakes of the past. The warnings of Scripture are for our profit. The encouragements are given that we might continue in the faith, "looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Jude 21) - that moment when He comes from heaven to take His redeemed people home.

END NOTES:- (1)Heb.1:2 & 2:3-4. (2)John F. MacArthur, *The Charismatics*, (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan, 1978), p.22. (3)1 Pet.5:8 & 2 Cor.11:14. (4)Jn.8:44. (5)Heb.2:14-15. (6)Mt.16:16. (7)1 Thess.5:21. (8)Lk.15:2; Heb.7:26. (9)Num.16:1-35.



by Martin Girard

THE LAST WORDS OF A SOLDIER

In his epistle to the Galatians, Paul encourages the believers to persevere in the Lord's service. "Let us not be weary in well doing," he writes, "for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not," (Gal.6:9). From his own intensive labours for the Lord, Paul knew how easily weariness can set in. At times we can experience outright opposition. On other occasions we can feel despondent when there appear to be no results.

In our service we can sometimes "faint" spiritually. Paul recognized this tendency and therefore encouraged the believers to carry on in their "well doing" without growing weary. Our Lord Jesus taught "that men ought always to pray, and not to faint," (Lk.18:1). Without prayer, we will be weak in service. Stressing the importance of prayer, the poet James Montgomery wrote:

Prayer is the Christian's vital breath,
The Christian's native air. (1)

When we are young, we often have more energy. Isaiah tells us, however, that "even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall," (Is.40:30). If those with the most stamina can "faint" and "utterly fall" we may well ask what hope there is for the rest of us! The following verse supplies the answer: "But they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; they shall walk, and not faint," (Is.40:31). What encouragement this gives!



SORTING OUT



While I was sorting through a supply of old tracts and booklets, I came across a faded card produced many years ago by the *Religious Tract Society* of London containing the last words of a Christian soldier in the South African War. The verses of the poem inspire us to persevere.

“PRAISE AND PRAY AND PEG AWAY”

When life seems hard, and friendships fail,
When doubts and fears thy faith assail,
If thou would'st know how to prevail,
Just Praise and Pray and Peg Away!

Should threat'ning clouds obscure thy sky,
And cherished plans in failure die;
Fresh courage take! God reigns on high!
Just Praise and Pray and Peg Away!

Should all thy labour seem in vain,
And those whom thou would'st serve disdain
Thy work and thee - heed not the pain!
Just Praise and Pray and Peg Away!

When all around thee duties press,
And time seems short and strength grows less,
Let God's own peace thy soul possess -
Just Praise and Pray and Peg Away!

Yes, Praise thy Lord for all that's past,
And Pray that He will hold thee fast,
And Peg away while life shall last -
Just Praise and Pray and Peg Away!

S.E. Burrow

STILL PRAISING...

One person who encountered much opposition in Old Testament times was David. He wrote Psalm 57 when he was a fugitive, hunted by that malicious king, Saul. David knew the importance of prayer. “I will cry unto God most high,” he declared in verse 2. He had confidence that God would both hear and answer him.

David was also prepared to praise God in his adverse circumstances. “I will sing and give praise!” he cried, (v.7). “I will praise Thee, O Lord, among the people: I will sing unto Thee among the nations,” (v.9). Though he might find himself banished from the place where God was worshipped by His people, David maintained that he would *still* praise God - even “among the nations” where he might be driven. There is a note of triumph in this Psalm. David writes as one whose heart was “fixed” (v.7). He would not be moved by an enemy or by his circumstances.



PREVAILING

John Phillips has said that “the praising man is the prevailing man,” (2). David prevailed. So did Paul. Let us wait upon the Lord in prayer and find new strength. Let us praise Him too as we “peg away” in His service. What an encouragement to know His promise that “we shall reap if we faint not,” (Gal.6:9)!

END NOTES:- (1)Hymn 81 in GOLDEN BELLS: *Prayer is the soul's sincere desire.*
(2)John Phillips, *Exploring the New Testament* (Emmaus Bible School, 1972), p.58.

Let us not be weary in well doing:
for in due season we shall reap,
if we faint not.

GALATIANS 6:9

Not Forgotten:

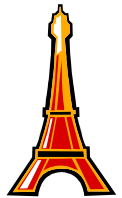
Diana Princess of Wales

by Martin Girard



All over the world people were stunned to hear of the death of Diana, Princess of Wales, on Sunday, 31st August, 1997. Bill Clinton, President of the United States of America at the time, summed up the mood of so many when he said how “profoundly saddened” he was by the tragedy. Tony Blair, Britain’s Prime Minister, described her as “the People’s Princess.” Recalling the compassion that she had shown so often, he said, “She was a wonderful and warm human being.”

Diana and her friend Dodi Al Fayed, son of the owner of the famous Harrods’ Department Store, Mohamed Al Fayed, had dined at the Ritz Hotel in Paris. The friendship appeared to be blossoming. Video pictures, released by Mohamed Al Fayed after the tragedy, showed Diana and Dodi leaving the Ritz shortly after midnight by the back entrance, along with their driver Henri Paul and bodyguard Trevor Rees-Jones. The intention was to avoid the photographers, but as we now know the plan didn’t work. Speeding through the streets of Paris, pursued by the relentless paparazzi, the powerful Mercedes veered out of control in the Pont de l’Alma underpass and smashed into a concrete post. Henri Paul and Dodi died instantly. Diana remained alive but in a critical condition. In spite of heroic efforts by French surgeons, however, she was pronounced dead at 4 a.m. local time.



UNFORGETTABLE SCENES

During the next few days some unforgettable scenes were witnessed. On that fateful Sunday evening Prince Charles flew to Paris to collect the body of his former wife before returning on the plane with it to R.A.F. Northolt outside London. It must have been a distressing experience for the Prince. Tributes poured in from across the world. Books of condolence were opened in many towns for people to register their own personal grief, and some queued for as

much as eleven hours to sign one of these books at St. James' Palace in London. The great and the small seemed to be touched by her death. World leaders paid tribute to her final humanitarian concern - discouraging the use of landmines. We were reminded of her compassion for the needy as we saw pictures of children, invalids, AIDS sufferers, and accident victims receiving her love and attention. So many people had come to regard her as a friend.



On Saturday 6th September a unique display of public grief was witnessed as millions of mourners lined the streets of London and the roads leading out of the capital to catch a glimpse of the coffin of Diana, Princess of Wales. Commentators described it as one of the most significant events of the century, with such world-wide T.V. coverage as had never been known before. Viewers on every continent were able to watch the funeral on their screens. Across the world people wept at the loss of a young woman whose compassion had touched the lives of so many individuals.

What do we make of all this? I suggest five lessons we can learn from the life and death of Diana, Princess of Wales.

1. THE SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD

While it was right to mourn the loss of Diana, Christians recognize that God is Sovereign in all that He does. He gives life and takes it away when He sees fit. Dodi Al Fayed was a Muslim. If Diana's relationship with Dodi had deepened and if they had married, there might have been a very significant Islamic influence on Prince William, Diana's eldest son and future heir to the throne. It would be wrong to say that *this* was God's reason for taking her, but we know that He is Sovereign and He called her from this life in His own time.

2. THE BREVITY OF LIFE



In his Bidding at the funeral, the Dean of Westminster used two very humbling words that describe each one of us. They were *mortality* and *vulnerability*. Diana was a princess, but she was mortal. She was vulnerable too, for she died unexpectedly in an accident. She was only 36.

Not all of us live to reach old age. Even many of those who do, feel - like Jacob - that their years have been "few and evil" (Gen.47:9). Life passes quickly, "swifter than a runner," (Job 9:25 NKJV). Diana's accident demonstrates the uncertainty

of life. Each of us should ponder Isaac's words seriously: "I know not the day of my death," (Gen.27:2).

3. THE URGENCY OF THE GOSPEL

This third lesson follows on naturally from the previous one and concerns the urgency of believing the Gospel message while there is time. "Now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation," (2 Cor.6:2). The Bible warns:- "Boast not thyself of tomorrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth," (Prov.27:1).



Did Diana ever trust Christ as her Saviour? Sadly, we have to say that we do not know. Without wishing in any way to underrate her valuable humanitarian work, we must remember that it could not earn her salvation. All our righteous deeds are only "filthy rags" in the sight of a holy God, (Isa.64:6). The only way to be saved is by repenting of our sins and personally placing our faith in Christ who died for us. Salvation is by God's grace and not by our works (1). Christ alone can make us righteous (2). When we **are** saved, He expects us to live differently. He **does** look for a life of good works, but He **also** looks for godliness, holiness, and obedience to His Word.

Like the dying thief in Luke 23:39-43, did Diana place her faith in Christ in her final moments? Some years before, the Gideons (a Christian organization committed to distributing the Scriptures without charge) had presented her with a Bible. Only God knows if she ever read it and believed its message of salvation. What we **do** know is that to neglect God's great salvation is disastrous. (See Hebrews 2:3.)

4. DEATH SPELLS FINALITY

For true Christians, one of the saddest and one of the most frustrating things was to hear false and misleading words of comfort being broadcast around the world from Diana's funeral at Westminster Abbey. In his Bidding, the Dean of Westminster declared that it was a time "to commend her soul to almighty God." Later, he referred to Diana as "our companion in faith and sister in Christ." He continued: "May you rest in peace and rise in glory, where grief and misery are banished and light and joy evermore abide."



When we compare the Dean's words with Holy Scripture, we find that there are startling differences. At the moment of death the soul and spirit leave the body (3). There is an absolute finality about death. The Bible gives us no encouragement

whatever to pray for the dead. Those who are “in Christ” **do** pass into His presence and into joy and bliss, but those who die without faith in Him go to a place of eternal torment where there is no rest but wailing and gnashing of teeth, (see Matthew 13:50). This is a vital lesson to grasp: the soul’s destiny after death cannot be altered.

5. THE CHRISTIAN’S RESPONSIBILITY

Mummy As the funeral cortege made its way through the streets of London, television cameras frequently focused on the card on top of the coffin bearing the single word “Mummy”. It was a poignant reminder that two young princes had lost their beloved mother. It was right and proper that prayers were offered for them in the service.

Christians have certain God-given responsibilities. One is to pray for those who are in positions of authority, (1 Tim.2:1-5). Another is to seek to bring the gospel to the lost. Rich and poor both need to hear it before they die. Many have been made to think of eternal issues through the death of Diana, Princess of Wales. May they also be open to the message of God’s salvation!

Diana has not been forgotten. National newspapers often publish pictures that remind us of her life, and many books about her have been written. These five important lessons from her life and death should not be forgotten either.

END NOTES:- (1)Eph.2:8-9. (2)1 Cor.1:30., (3)Eccl.12:7.

DIANA, PRINCESS OF WALES

Born: 1st July 1961

Died: 31st August 1997

“Life at best is very brief....

Be in time!”

(William J. Kirkpatrick)

INSIDE

OUT

by Martin Girard

In Paul's second epistle to the Corinthians, two contrasting expressions appear. First we read of those who "are being transformed," (3:18, NKJV) and then of those who "transform themselves," (11:15, NKJV). Although the New King James Version uses the same English word both times, the Greek expressions are very different. It is enlightening to compare the two words - rendered "changed" and "transformed" in the Authorized Version.

For the sake of emphasis, we will start with the second expression. Some people at Corinth had questioned Paul's apostolic authority. In bringing this second epistle to its close, Paul defended his position. He certainly was not inferior to "the very chiefest apostles," (11:5)! Then, in a very direct manner, Paul unmasked his opponents. They simply desired to boast - wanting to be seen in just the same light as Paul and his associates. Paul was not deceived by *their* appearance! "Such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ," (11:13).

The Greek word used here is **metaschematizo** - meaning *to change in fashion or appearance*. The idea is that these "false apostles" demonstrated an *outward* change only. They had not been changed on the inside. They were "false apostles" because Christ had never commissioned them; "deceitful workers" because they used doubtful methods in order to mislead God's people. Outwardly they posed as Christ's apostles - and this is why Paul uses the expression "transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ," (11:13).

OUTWARD ONLY

Why should they adopt this approach? In the next verse, Paul provides the answer. It ought not to surprise us that such things happen, because "Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light," (11:14). These "false apostles" were simply using the method employed by their master, the devil. He had come

to Eve in the Garden of Eden in an attractive form. If he had approached her displaying his true colours, he might not have succeeded in his despicable work. The tense used in this verse indicates that this is what Satan does *repeatedly*. Beware of this “angel of light”! When Satan comes as a roaring lion, we are the more prepared to meet him (1). He is never more dangerous than when he comes to us in disguise.



If this is the method *Satan* adopts, it ought not to surprise us that his agents also take on the appearance of “ministers of righteousness,” (11:15). They were doing so in Paul’s day, and things have not changed since then. A person may take the name of “Christian” and may be able to quote and explain the Bible. Beware! The Lord Jesus unmasked those who were the children of their father the Devil in John 8:44. The end of such, Paul tells us, “shall be according to their works,” (11:15).

There is an interesting legend about a man who lived in China many years ago and was accepted into the Emperor’s orchestra through the help of an influential



friend. He claimed to be a talented flute-player, though actually he could hardly play a single note! For a while things went well. At concerts he would hold the flute to his lips and at the appropriate moment pretend to play. One day the Emperor announced that he wanted to hear each member of the orchestra perform alone. The man was filled with terror and quickly began to take some lessons - but had very little

success. Could he pretend to be ill on the day he was meant to play before the Emperor? No, the royal physician would surely discover the truth. Not wishing to be revealed as a fraud, the man took a fatal dose of poison (2).

We may be able to change ourselves outwardly and deceive other people by pretending to be more spiritual than we really are. Others may succeed in deceiving us by transforming themselves into “ministers of righteousness,” (11:15). But God is not mocked (3). He always knows when the outward appearance is not an accurate indicator of the true inner condition.

FROM THE INSIDE

In contrast, the expression used in 2 Corinthians 3:18 is very different. The Greek word **metamorphoo** means *to change into another form*. This change is not simply outward but *inward*. In this verse Paul contrasts our position with that of Moses. While he was the only one in Israel at the time who could see the glory of the Lord, “we all” can view that glory. Moses had to veil his face after being in

the Lord's presence, but with an "open face" we can draw near. "Beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, (we) are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord."

As we view the Lord in His Word and are occupied with Him, we can "reflect" (NIV) that glory too. An **internal** change takes place, and we are made more like Christ. The Lord is the object before us; the Holy Spirit is the power within us. We cannot effect the change because it is an internal one, but we can and must take the time to "(behold)... the glory of the Lord." There must be no "veil" of sin to keep us from seeing Christ. All hypocrisy and compromise must be renounced.

Perhaps the loveliest New Testament example is Stephen. Facing death, he gazed upward to heaven and saw the risen and glorified Lord. Is it any wonder that his face was "as the face of an angel"? (4) He was only reflecting what he had seen.

There is a story that may help to illustrate this point. One day a poor little peasant girl discovered the statue of a Grecian maiden in an Italian city. The figure was so graceful, and had such a beautiful face and noble expression that the peasant girl stood and stared, captivated by what she had found. After standing for some time, she went home to wash her face and comb her hair. The next day she came back and stood once more in front of the statue before returning home - this time to mend her ragged clothing. Day by day she changed. Gradually she became more graceful in appearance and more refined in manner until at last she reflected the beauty of the famous statue (5).



An important difference, however, must be understood. The change in the peasant girl was external and was entirely self-induced.

It is no good just "transforming" ourselves outwardly. What is needed is an **inner** transformation. When the Holy Spirit forms Christ within us, we will not need to put on an appearance. His work will be evident to all.

END NOTES:- (1)1 Pet.5:8. (2)*Our Daily Bread*: 28 March, 1988; Radio Bible Class, Grand Rapids, Michigan. (3)Gal.6:7. (4)Acts 7:55-56 & 6:15. (5)*Our Daily Bread*: 25 September, 1988; Radio Bible Class, Grand Rapids, Michigan.

changed- INSIDE

- OUT

WHAT'S YOUR QUESTION?

by Martin Girard



Walking through a shopping centre, it's not unusual to see someone with a clipboard conducting a survey. Although the questioner may seem a nuisance when you're in a hurry, opinion polls do have their uses in testing the political pulse of the nation at election time and in reflecting the views of society generally.

WHAT MOST PEOPLE ASKED.....

In one survey a very interesting question was raised. "If you could ask God any question not answered in the Bible, what would it be?" To this question, 34% said they wanted to ask God what happens when we die.

If you are among the one in three wanting to find out, we have the answer! Actually, the Bible is ***not*** silent on the subject of death and ***does*** provide a clear answer to this important question.

THE REAL ANSWER

Each of us possesses more than just a body, for we also have a soul and a spirit. (1)

The soul and spirit are invisible. At the moment of death both soul and spirit leave the body and go to one of two places.

The person who dies believing in the Lord Jesus Christ is immediately with Him, which is "far better" than remaining

here on earth. (2) The person who dies without having trusted in Jesus goes from this life to a place of torment called Hades, later to stand trial before God's Judgment Throne. All who appear there, without exception, are condemned to the Lake of Fire for ever. (3)

We leave

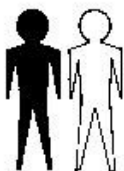
Two Places

ONE MAN KNOWS FOR SURE

Jesus Christ, God's Son, lived on earth, died and returned to life three days later. He taught that after death we are *conscious* - either in a place of bliss or in one of torment. His very important words are found in Luke 16:19-31. Our destiny after death is determined *in this life*. After death it is too late to change. The Bible teaches nothing about purgatory and gives us no encouragement whatsoever to pray for the dead. We must each prepare for life after death *now*. Heaven and Hell are both real - but do you know where *you* are going?

HOW MUCH IT COSTS

God is *holy* and must punish sin. All of us have sinned and do not deserve to enter Heaven. (4) But God is also *love* and does not want us to go to Hell. He is "not willing that any should perish" and loved us so much that He sent His only Son to die in our place. (5) Very simply, Jesus suffered on the cross to save us from Hell. God offers freely to forgive our sins - if only we will ask Him. However, if we will not accept His offer, then we will be punished for our own sins - in Hell.



THE GOOD, THE BAD.....

It is *not* true that the good people go to Heaven and the bad people go to Hell. Sinners will be found in both places - but in Heaven they will be *forgiven* sinners. If you want to be sure of going to Heaven, this is what you must do:-

- (1) Admit to God that you are a sinner, deserving His judgment.
- (2) Believe that Jesus died on the cross in your place.
- (3) Confess your sins to God, telling Him that you are truly sorry.
- (4) Ask the risen Lord Jesus to enter and control your life.

God always keeps His promises. *If* we confess our sins to Him, *then* He will forgive us completely and cleanse our lives. (6) The death of Jesus Christ upon the cross can make us fit to enter Heaven; there is no other way. To delay can be dangerous. The Bible invites us to come to Jesus Christ *now*. (7)

END NOTES:- (1) 1 Thess. 5:23. (2) Phil. 1:23. (3) Heb. 9:27; Rev. 20:11-15. (4) Rom. 3:23. (5) 2 Pet. 3:9; John 3:16. (6) 1 Jn. 1:9. (7) 2 Cor. 6:2.