

LESSON 24
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AMBASSADOR COLLEGE
BIBLE CORRESPONDENCE COURSE

Result of This World's Ways

About Our Cover ...

This little old lady of Bihar, India, reflects the grimness of famine in all its tragic details. God reveals ALL suffering is the AUTOMATIC PENALTY of following the wrong ways of this world and the downward pulls of human nature. Yet through miseducation and RELIGIOUS DECEPTION, men continually follow the ways that seem right to the human mind. Only when one comes to realize that true, heartfelt repentance of sin and SELF is the first step toward experiencing the abundant life God offers the world, WILL GOD BEGIN TO GRANT IT! This final lesson on repentance makes it plain.

an open letter from THE STAFF

"I'm a changed man," said the reformed smoker. "I have finally quit the tobacco habit!" This man felt he was a CHANGED man because he had dropped a bad habit.

But was he really?

Jesus commands us to "repent" -- to CHANGE! (Mat. 4:17.) But what is it Christ wants us to change? Merely our way of "thinking" about Him? Do we change our "outlook" on religion? Do we change our Church? Change our habits?

Change WHAT?

The apostle Paul explained that the "... carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be" (Rom. 8:7). That CARNAL mind is the NATURAL human mind -- the nominal, sincere, natural, common "way of looking at things" that all of us were born with! It's the mind of every normal human being PRIOR to this CHANGE Christ was talking about! Paul went on to say, "Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, HE IS NONE OF HIS" (Rom. 8:9). Did you notice it? If a man has not the SPIRIT of Christ -- he doesn't BELONG to Christ, and therefore IS NOT A CHRISTIAN!

This change has something to do with the carnal mind, and the Spirit of Christ! Let's notice another important scripture. "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a LIVING SACRIFICE, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. AND BE NOT CONFORMED TO THIS WORLD, but be ye TRANSFORMED by the RENEWING OF YOUR MIND, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God" (Rom. 12:1-2). Read that scripture again! STUDY it!

God says you must undergo a renewing, a TRANSFORMING, a CHANGING -- OF THE MIND!

This changing of the mind is a change of HUMAN NATURE!

The nominal, natural way of human nature is the way of SELFishness. The SELF is the entire motivating drive in human nature. It is the pleasing of the self, the satisfaction of the SELF -- the way of GETTING for the SELF that is the basis of human nature. You are extremely selfish! All human beings are selfish.

And behind the selfishness of every person lies the root cause of it all: VANITY!

"Vanity of vanities, saith the preacher, vanity of vanities; ALL is vanity" (Eccl. 1:2). Every person is filled with VANITY, in one form or another. Notice that Paul tells us, "For the creature [correct meaning, "creation"] was made subject to VANITY, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope" (Rom. 8:20).

All is vanity! The desire of every person to be "liked" by others -- to be "well thought of," to be ACCEPTED by the society, looked up to, respected, admired, and loved by others -- ALL THIS IS VANITY!

It is this VANITY which leads a person to say, "What will my friends say?" or, "What will PEOPLE think?"

Having been reared in a world that measures everything by WHAT PEOPLE THINK, YOU probably are QUITE CONCERNED about the opinions of your friends, neighbors and relatives. Unless you have repented and been totally conquered by God, your life is all wrapped up in this age, this society! Whatever is the standard, whatever is looked upon with approval BY these people, whose acceptance you humanly covet, THAT becomes the standard of your life!

If you're like most people -- you live in the way which is MOST likely to GAIN for you the acceptance and approbation you seek. You are a PART OF THIS WORLD. Your life is regulated by this world and its customs, its holidays, its practices in business, in social life, in religious life, and all the many accepted standards of society which make up this "world."

Most people are ENSNARED by it -- trapped into CONFORMITY with whatever is the way of the majority -- following like blind SHEEP wherever society leads, never QUESTIONING WHETHER it is right, but simply CONFORMING TO the ways of others.

It is the VANITY in human nature, the SELFISHNESS, which drives individuals on and on, seeking the respect and approbation of OTHER PEOPLE!

It is to RELEASE us from these shackles of tradition and society that Jesus calls us OUT of this world!

Jesus said, "My kingdom is NOT of THIS WORLD" (John 18:36). He was the Messenger from God the Father of a BETTER kingdom -- the worldruling Kingdom of God! When Christ walked this earth AS A MAN, He spoke to His disciples of a soon-coming WORLD GOVERNMENT that would SUPERSEDE and PUT DOWN all opposing, man-made governments, and RULE THIS WORLD! (Rev. 2:26-27)

He prayed that His disciples would be SEPARATE from this world. "I pray for THEM: I pray NOT for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are shine" (John 17:9).

Did you know Jesus Christ Himself said -- IF YOU ARE A TRUE CHRISTIAN, YOUR FORMER FRIENDS, YOUR RELATIVES, THIS SOCIETY -- WILL HATE YOU?

Listen!

"If the world HATE YOU, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were OF the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are NOT OF THE WORLD, but I have chosen you OUT of the world, therefore the world HATETH YOU" (John 15:18-19).

Jesus said YOUR OWN FAMILY (unless converted) would begin to look down on you, if you are really willing to OBEY HIM! "THINK NOT that I am come to send peace on earth: I came NOT to send peace, but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. And a man's foes shall be they of his own household" (Mat. 10:34-36).

If you are REALLY FOLLOWING CHRIST -- LIVING as He lived, DOING as He did -- keeping God's LAW as He did -- this society, even your closest former friends and your own relatives, will begin to RESIST and PERSECUTE you.

"Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind: ... For the time past of our life may suffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles you followed the courses of society] that ye run not with them to the same excess of riot, SPEAKING EVIL OF YOU" (I Pet. 4:1-4).

Notice HOW STRONGLY God impresses on every Christian that they must discontinue their relationships with this sinning society! "Love NOT the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, THE LOVE OF THE FATHER IS NOT IN HIM. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that DOETH THE WILL OF GOD abideth forever" (I John 2:15-17).

In Luke 14 Jesus sternly warns every prospective Christian to COUNT THE COST of being a true follower of Him! How many people are being told to COUNT THE COST -- or even told WHAT THAT COST IS, in today's great evangelistic efforts which invite people to "make a decision for Christ?"

Are they being told what it really MEANS? Are they being told HOW to GIVE themselves to God -- HOW to serve Christ -- WHAT to do -- WHAT it means -- are they being told to COME OUT of this society, and be NOT conformed to the world?

No! They MOST DECIDEDLY ARE NOT!

Many people are being led to "accept Jesus" or to "receive Him" today, in a moment of emotional remorse over past mistakes. But many thousands DO NOT KNOW WHAT TO DO to really become a Christian!

Remember, Jesus TELLS YOU what you must DO to become a Christian!

"Not every one that saith unto me, 'Lord, Lord' shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that DOETH the WILL OF MY FATHER which is in heaven" (Mat. 7:21). "REPENT" said Christ! "Do THE WILL of God," said Jesus!

God's WILL is expressed in His Word. "Thy word is truth" (John 17:17). It is the TRUTH, the WORD of God that will set you free.

Here, then, is what it really COSTS to become a true Christian, and to become a begotten son of God!

IT COSTS YOUR LIFE!

LITERALLY!

Does that shock you? Perhaps it does, unless you think that statement is a kind of "spiritual phraseology" which is just another way of saying "set your heart on the Lord" or some similar sentiment.

God's Word tells you that you must LITERALLY LAY DOWN YOUR LIFE for Christ.

"REPENT and BE BAPTIZED every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:38).

After you have been BROKEN UP, and YOUR OWN HUMAN WILL has been totally SHATTERED, after you are DISGUSTED with yourself -- KILLED with ABHORRENCE at your own actions, your own way of life -- your own SELF, which is the VANITY within you -- THEN YOU should be BAPTIZED!

Immersion into a watery "grave" is a deep spiritual symbolism which signifies the actual, LITERAL BURYING of the OLD SELF -- YOU -- the way you HAVE BEEN, and the RESURRECTION of a NEW YOU -- now

CONQUERED by God, SURRENDERED to God, meekly and humbly CHILD-like in your obedience and TRUST in Him as your Living Saviour.

"Know ye not, that so many of us as were BAPTIZED into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore WE ARE BURIED with him BY BAPTISM INTO DEATH: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so WE should WALK IN NEWNESS OF LIFE. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection. KNOWING THIS, that our OLD MAN IS CRUCIFIED with him, that the BODY OF SIN [the former "you"] might be DESTROYED, that henceforth WE SHOULD NOT SERVE SIN" (Rom. 6:3-6).

 PHOTO CAPTION: COST COUNTED -- Mr. Armstrong and staff pour over plans for a new Ambassador College dormitory at the Texas campus. Cost of this building was counted in advance to assure its completion. But how many today are being told the true cost of beginning and completing the Christian life?

Paul explained this principle further when he said, "For I was alive without the law once [without a knowledge of the law]: but when the commandment came [to his consciousness -- so he became AWARE OF WHAT SIN WAS] SIN REVIVED [he was able to see clearly that he was A GREAT SINNER] AND I DIED!" (Rom. 7:9.) Paul said, "For sin, taking occasion by the commandment [being brought to light for what it was by the laws of God] deceived me, and BY IT SLEW me. WHEREFORE [because God's Law had SHOWN HIM he was a sinner] the law is HOLY, and the commandment HOLY, and JUST, and GOOD!" (Rom. 7:11-12.)

The apostle Paul was a true Christian. He had the Spirit of God, which is promised to every one who will literally LAY DOWN HIS LIFE, and surrender the SELF WILL, performing the ordinance of baptism, and coming to God's throne of grace as a meek child. Paul said, "I am CRUCIFIED with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me" (Gal. 2:20).

After REPENTING, and BEING BAPTIZED, which symbolizes the BURYING of the old carnal self, which was formerly HOSTILE toward God -- the Holy Spirit is then implanted WITHIN your mind, and begins to CHANGE your mind. Jesus Christ begins to INSPIRE your thoughts, guide and direct your every action -- LIVE HIS LIFE over again, WITHIN YOU as you YIELD TO Him!

And He does it through the power of God's Holy Spirit!

This is a great mystery to most human beings -- and yet, the Spirit of God MUST enter our CARNAL minds to help CHANGE those minds, and help make them yielding, humble, and OBEDIENT to God, where they had been hostile, antagonistic, resentful, and bitter toward our Creator!

The receiving of God's Spirit to help us CHANGE our human nature is the receiving of an outside POWER -- a BEGETTAL which makes us His spirit-begotten sons!

If you are a true Christian, you WILL NOT CONTINUE to blindly follow the customs and practices of this society any further. Instead, you will begin asking, "What is GOD'S will, what does GOD say about it?" And you will begin to SEARCH THE BIBLE TO GET TO KNOW the will of God.

Your outlook and attitude will gradually become CHRIST-LIKE. YOU will begin saying, with Christ, "Nevertheless not MY WILL, but

THY will, be done!"

Where you formerly "went along with the crowd" in social activities, in customs of dress, in business practices, you will then begin to QUESTION the ways of the crowd. You will want to first ascertain WHAT GOD'S WILL IS concerning these ways of life!

THAT IS THE DEFINITION OF A CHRISTIAN!

A Christian is a person who strives -- with all his own strength and the additional POWER God gives -- to actually LIVE BY EVERY WORD OF GOD!

"Man shall not LIVE by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God" (Mat. 4:4). So said your Saviour! But are most professing Christians really LIVING by every WORD of God?

OBVIOUSLY NOT! MOST PROFESSING CHRISTIANS DO NOT EVEN KNOW A SMALL PORTION OF WHAT THE WORD OF GOD says! It is because they don't STUDY the Bible, and begin to DRINK IN of the Word of God that they gullibly swallow and accept whatever others say and believe!

A person who has really repented has been CONQUERED by God. His carnal will is BROKEN! He realizes He has SINNED! Sin is any action that is contrary to the LAWS of God (I John 3:4). He then CRIES OUT to God and asks for FORGIVENESS for those sins, and a LIFTING of the eternal death penalty, which every sin brings (Rom. 6:23). He accepts God's promise of forgiveness, ON FAITH, by accepting the sacrifice OF CHRIST, accepting Jesus' death in PAYMENT for the penalty of his own sins. He then takes the ordinance of BAPTISM which shows God HE REALLY MEANS IT.

He expects God to stand back of His promise to give him the Holy Spirit, as a result of the REPENTANCE, belief and the baptism which God demands.

THEN -- AND NEVER UNTIL THEN -- WILL YOU BECOME A TRUE CHRISTIAN.

Finally, you will begin to PRACTICE as a HABIT, the very life of Christ. "He that saith, 'I know him,' and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him" (I John 2:4). "He that saith he abideth in him [IS A CHRISTIAN] OUGHT HIMSELF ALSO SO TO WALK [LIVE], even as HE [Christ] walked" (I John 2:6).

The true Christian, who has REALLY repented, will LIVE as Christ lived! He will be striving to keep the LAWS of God with His spiritual help, being obedient to God in every way, and becoming a recipient of the great HAPPINESS and tremendous BLESSINGS that come with that obedience!

"For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for US, LEAVING US AN EXAMPLE, that ye should FOLLOW HIS STEPS" (I Pet. 2:21).

CHECK UP on yourself!

STUDY these scriptures and those of this lesson IN YOUR BIBLE. MANY of you THINK you are already "saved" and that you are already good Christians! But, "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall" (I Cor. 10:12).

GOD WON'T ACCEPT YOU "JUST AS YOU ARE"!

NEVER, in all history, have there been times quite like these! Take a good look at the world for the proof.

Do you see a world BRIMFUL of happiness, productivity, success? Stable, secure homes? Respectful, obedient children? A world full of harmony, joy and beauty?

You most certainly do not! You see, instead, a world filled with jealousy, racial bigotry, religious intolerance, political unrest, divorce, crime, juvenile delinquency and the constant threat of NUCLEAR COSMOCIDE!

Humanity desperately needs to be completely BROKEN UP in attitude over this vile, filthy, wretched swill -- TO TURN AWAY FROM IT ALL IN TRUE REPENTANCE!

Time for a Change!

Peter shouted to those of his day: "REPENT ye therefore, and be CONVERTED, that your SINS may be blotted out ... " (Acts 3:19).

To repent means to CHANGE! To change your ATTITUDE toward God and His perfect Laws, which were designed to BRING US peace, health, happiness and EVERYTHING we so earnestly desire! To change your attitude toward your fellowman -- even toward your own self.

God "winked at" the ignorance of blundering man in past ages. "But NOW [He] COMMANDETH ALL MEN EVERYWHERE TO REPENT!" (Acts 17:30.)

But MAN HAS REFUSED TO OBEY that command, except in rare scattered instances.

As a result of his selfishness, his resentment toward God's Laws, his jealousy, animosity, hatred, bigotry and intolerance toward his fellows, man has filled the world and the nostrils of God with the stench of his decaying, rotting society! He has remained UNmindful of God's command to repent -- and so is suffering the automatic penalty!

But why should you suffer the anguish, sickness, wretchedness and the threat of nuclear holocaust that hovers over this reckless, heedless world? There is no reason for anyone to remain UNrepentant -- especially now that we have SEEN, with our own eyes, from our own Bibles, the amazing, perhaps shocking, truths of God Almighty!

Now is the time to obey the command of our Creator -- the One who gives us every breath of air we breathe -- and REPENT!

David's Example of Repentance

One very outstanding example of repentance is that of a man who lived hundreds of years before Christ. This man did obey God and did repent. That man was DAVID!

"David!" you exclaim, "Why -- what about his affair with Bathsheba?"

Yes, David did commit some terrible sins. And so have we. But he DID SOMETHING about them. He REPENTED! That's why David will be in God's Kingdom and will even rule all Israel when Christ establishes His Millennial government on earth. That's what repentance can lead to -- even though one has committed some very grievous sins!

 PHOTO CAPTION: David was thoroughly broken UP over his sins. His repentance was genuine -- he really meant it! That's why he was a man after God's own heart.

Some people's natures give them more trouble than others. David was one who had more trouble than most. He had pressing drives. He was a man of action. He "gave himself a bad time." On the surface it would seem impossible for someone like him to ever please God enough to be born into His Kingdom -- let alone give him

rule over others.

Just look at what David did! He lusted after Bathsheba, the wife of Uriah, who was one of his generals. David lusted to the point that he committed adultery with her and caused her to have a child by him. Then David, in an attempt to disclaim himself as father of this illegitimate child, caused Bathsheba's husband to become drunk, hoping to make him logically think that it was he, himself, who was its father.

Failing in this, David then took drastic action to conceal what he had done. He had Bathsheba's husband placed in the very front of hottest battle to make certain he would be killed. And Uriah was killed. Thus David became a MURDERER in God's sight (II Sam. 12:9). David had sinned very greatly!

BUT, did David CONFESS his sins? He certainly did -- "David said unto Nathan, I have sinned against the Lord" (verse 13). David's repentant attitude endeared him to God.

Again David sinned greatly when he did not trust God for protection, but rather trusted in the strength of numbers of MEN. He had his fighting men numbered (II Sam. 24:2, 9, 10). Did David REPENT and confess this sin? Again, he certainly did! For "David's heart smote him [or THROBBED from the realization he had sinned against God] after that he had numbered the people. And David said unto the Lord, I have sinned greatly [David confessed his sin] in that I have done: and now, I beseech thee, O Lord, take away [or FORGIVE] the iniquity of thy servant for I have done very foolishly" (verse 10). David's repentance was from the very depths of his being! That is one reason he was a man after God's own heart (Acts 13:22).

David was one of the very few people of Old Covenant times to whom God gave the Holy Spirit (Ps. 51:11), for the Holy Spirit was not yet available to all mankind (John 7:38-39). David obeyed God and overcame by the power of the Holy Spirit, even though at times he did stumble and fall! So David is soon, at Christ's coming, to be resurrected and born into God's Kingdom.

Since REPENTANCE can lead to that for David, who had his weaknesses, just think where it can lead you!

Don't Take This Lightly!

Do you consider this as just "another lesson" of an interesting course? Do you ASSUME this lesson is an emotional appeal to "give your heart to the Lord"? If so, that kind of careless thinking could prove DISASTROUS!

It's time to WAKE UP! It's time we realize that the only way to lasting peace, success and joy here and now, is to REPENT and RECEIVE GOD'S SPIRIT!

Through these lessons on repentance God is making one thing very plain -- that we desperately need the Spirit of God to help CHANGE our human nature and make it conformable to His! We need God's spiritual power to help us conquer and rule over the human vanity, the greed, lust, resentment, hostility and suspicion in every one of us. And God shows that the ONLY WAY we can receive His Spirit is to repent and be baptized! (Acts 2:38.)

But to be truly repentant in God's sight, we must first thoroughly understand the very DEPTHS of true repentance. This lesson makes it absolutely plain.

LESSON 24

God Won't Accept You "Just as You Are"

The favorite invitation or "altar-call hymn" sung in revival or evangelistic services is "JUST AS I AM." But can you really come to God "just as you are"? Will God receive anyone who is VILE and SINFUL?

God reveals we cannot sit down at His immaculate, holy table with wrinkled, soiled clothes and dirty hands, which symbolically represent the human sinner's condition. One must first be WASHED CLEAN of all sin before he can enter God's presence.

Notice this in your Bible.

1. How can we become CLEANSED of sin -- made acceptable to God? Is it through our repentance and acceptance of Christ's sacrifice and His shed blood which covers -- BLOTS OUT -- our sins and reconciles us to God? Rev. 7:13-14 and Rom. 5:8-10.

 PHOTO CAPTION: ALTAR CALL -- Scores at this evangelistic service went to the speaker's stand to "give their hearts to the Lord." But did they really understand true repentance?

2. Is white, clean clothing symbolic of the righteousness God requires of those who would enter His Kingdom? Rev. 19:8-9 and Mat. 22:11-13. What is "righteousness"? Ps. 119:172. Isn't this plainly talking about KEEPING God's commandments?

COMMENT: Because WE CAN'T save ourselves and can't keep God's Law perfectly, OF OURSELVES, the FALSE TEACHING is going out that Jesus did it all for us -- that WE DON'T HAVE TO DO ANYTHING except believe He did it all for us and "accept" Him as our Savior! Millions today have been deceived into believing that God imputes Jesus' righteousness to us, counting us as righteous because of His righteousness -- WHILE WE CONTINUE SINNING!

NOTHING COULD BE FURTHER FROM THE TRUTH! THIS IS JUST ANOTHER DECEPTIVE LIE OF SATAN THE DEVIL!

No, Jesus didn't live a good life for us -- in our stead! We are NOT excused from keeping God's Commandments, living a righteous life, overcoming, growing in spiritual character, and enduring in spite of all opposition, persecution, trial and test unto the end.

You and I must actually DO these things in order to be saved!
 But how?

By the POWER of the Holy Spirit God promises to place within us to help us obey Him! We, of ourselves, can't save ourselves -- God must do it. But we are NOT EXCUSED FROM KEEPING HIS LAW and its various principles revealed throughout the Bible!

God knows our every weakness. He is responsible for putting human nature in every one of us. And so God sent His Son into the world to proclaim the way we can OVERCOME the downward pulls of the flesh. He taught that we must yield to GOD'S GOVERNMENT over our lives -- that we must REPENT and turn from our filth of the flesh and pride of mind and heart so we can receive the power to CHANGE OUR HUMAN NATURE!

Repent of Human Nature!

We were all born with human nature. But few people realize what it is. Human nature has a spiritual side and a physical side.

On its spiritual side, it is VANITY. Vanity loves to exalt the SELF. It is SELF-CENTERED. It is selfish and greedy. It is this way NATURALLY.

On its physical side, there are the five senses, and the PULL

of these senses to want to be satisfied. Exercise of the senses can produce sensations of pleasure. Some of these sensual pleasures are healthy, uplifting and beneficial. But many are injurious, harmful and bad. Yet the bad ones cry out for gratification as much as -- probably far more than -- the beneficial. Thus human nature exerts an automatic, impulsive PULL toward selfishness, greed, vanity, jealousy, envy, hatred, and toward the lusts (wrong desires) of the flesh.

Human nature makes it come NATURAL to resent and resist authority over one. A child tends to resist the authority of its parents. We grow up with a natural attitude of hostility toward any authority, all the way up to God's authority.

Human nature does want to BE good. It just doesn't want to DO good!

Perhaps a motion picture from several years ago might illustrate how human nature works. It was an old Charlie Chaplin picture. He acted the part of Adolf Hitler, who was paying a "State Visit" to Benito Mussolini. Mussolini had a private barber shop with two chairs. The two dictators went together to the barber shop for haircuts. Before the barber arrived, Mussolini reached down the side of his chair, grasped the lever and jacked it up a notch, elevating himself an inch or two above Hitler. Immediately Hitler elevated his seat TWO notches, elevating himself one or two inches above Mussolini. Then Mussolini jacked his seat up a couple additional notches -- and so on and on, until they both crashed into the ceiling -- each trying to elevate himself above the other.

It made human nature appear not only funny, but foolish. And it really is. You see it all around you. And while people condemn it in others, most fail to recognize, let alone repent of THEIR OWN human nature!

As the cartoonist says, "There oughta be a law." Yes, there ought to be a LAW AGAINST human nature. And, as a matter of fact, there is. IT IS GOD'S LAW! The EXPRESSION of human nature is ILLEGAL! It is CRIMINAL! Understand why.

1. How did Jesus sum up God's Law? Mat. 22:36-40. Can God's Law be summed up in the one word "love"? John 14:15; 15:9-10; II John 6 and Rom. 13:8-10.

COMMENT: Jesus summed up God's Law in two simple SUMMARY COMMANDS. The first, to love God, summarizes basically the first four of the Ten Commandments which teach us HOW TO LOVE GOD. The second great commandment, to love neighbor, summarizes the last six of the Ten Commandments which teach us HOW TO LOVE OUR NEIGHBOR!

2. But is the carnal, UNSPIRITUAL mind -- motivated by the downward pulls of human nature -- UNABLE to obey the Laws of God -- unable to really LOVE God and man? Rom. 8:7-8 and Gal. 5:19-21.

3. Therefore isn't the expression of human nature CRIMINAL in God's sight? I John 3:4.

COMMENT: Human nature, or the carnal mind, loves first of all itself. Next it loves that which belongs to it or is in some way connected to it -- persons, concepts, material possessions. All these are a part of a larger "self" -- like a little empire. This "empirical self" even broadens to include the social or occupational group of which the person is a member, ITS state, region or nation, and ultimately the whole human society with the beliefs, customs and ideologies which are a part of it. This is the "self" that human nature loves ahead of God and ahead of any other supposed opposer or "outsider."

PHOTO CAPTION: Power-mad dictators Mussolini, left and Hitler,

right. Their expressions of vanity and unrestrained human nature caused the suffering and death of millions.

 PHOTO CAPTION: HUMAN NATURE IN ACTION -- Referee tries to break up a scuffle between opposing basketball teams.

Those whom God will ultimately change from mortal humans to the divine likeness of God -- those who will be BORN as the very sons of God -- are those who repent of that nature. They repent of what they ARE as well as what they have done. Then, through faith in the sacrifice of Jesus Christ as well as in His resurrected LIFE and POWER, they are forgiven their guilty past. They are given contact with God and receive His Holy Spirit. Through His Spirit they are begotten as HIS SPIRITUAL CHILDREN and receive His DIVINE NATURE.

When they REPENT OF HUMAN NATURE -- they repent of hostility to authority -- of resentment against God's Law. They SURRENDER UNCONDITIONALLY to God, and wholeheartedly WANT Him to RULE in their lives. They then CHANGE (through God's power given as His gift) from rebellion to submission -- from self-centeredness to being GOD-centered. They OVERCOME the temptations of the flesh. And they continually GROW in God's character through obedience to God the rest of their lives.

The Essence of Repentance

The dictionary definition of repentance is "to feel self-reproach, compunction or contrition for past conduct, to feel such sorrow for sin or fault as to be disposed to change one's life for the better" (The American College Dictionary).

The Bible definition means all of that AND MUCH MORE!

The Smith-Goodspeed translation of Ephesians 4:22 plainly states that we must "LAY ASIDE [our] SELF." In other words, we must completely do away with our former way of life which was totally motivated by our carnal minds!

1. Is true repentance deep, moving and heartfelt? Hosea 7:14-16.

COMMENT: God condemns those whose "repentance" leads to no change of action. "And they have not cried unto me WITH THEIR HEARTS [that is, their MINDS -- they did not really mean it -- in other words, it was all just EMOTION] ... They return [repent] but NOT TO THE MOST HIGH." True repentance requires TOTAL mental AND emotional involvement.

2. Is repentance toward God? Acts 20:21.

COMMENT: Most people have never understood what this means. Even their so-called repentance is wholly turned toward self! Sin is against God -- He is the Lawgiver whose perfect Law we have broken! To repent means to be so humbled -- broken up -- by the audacity of the colossal crime of rebelling against the living, HOLY GOD -- SO abhorrent of our deceitful, vain, selfish selves -- that in real contrition we turn to God for mercy, forgiveness and the help we desperately need to overcome human nature.

3. What did Job say, when finally stripped of his self-righteous shell? Job 42:5, 6.

COMMENT: "NOW my [mind's] eye seeth thee," said Job. For the first time, after he had been brought down completely, Job got his man-centered mind off of himself and really saw God as the center of the universe! "Wherefore I ABHOR myself, and REPENT in dust and ashes"!

Some have thought repentance is merely a matter of being thankful that they are so "good" they have been able to see the truth and are now accepting it. THAT IS NOT REPENTANCE! That is self-righteousness -- sin -- to be repented of!

Every one of us must ultimately come to see God as Job did. We have to quit trying to approach God thinking, "What can God do for ME?" We ought rather to think, "What does GOD DEMAND of me?"

We all are GOD'S workmanship, not He ours! Try to see yourself through God's eyes and put Him foremost in your mind. If you do, then you will begin to love God as Jesus instructs (Mat. 22:37)

God Leads Us to Repentance

When you first grasp - THIS concept -- when YOU UNDERSTAND WHAT repentance really is -- you will find it shocking! Then the question will arise in your mind: How is it POSSIBLE for a human being to come to that kind of repentance? How can one even start to change from self-love to God-love?

The startling answer is that even this must come from God!

We can't just drum up the deep feeling of abhorrence for our sins and our wicked human nature. It has to come from God!

1. Does God's goodness and mercy lead one to repentance? Rom. 2:4. And is He patient and loving in leading one to repentance? Same verse.

2. Is God willing to grant repentance even to those that have been strongly opposed to Him? II Tim. 2:25. See also Acts 11:18.

3. Didn't Jesus plainly say NO ONE could come to Him unless the Father draws him? John 6:44

COMMENT: But what about the "whosoever will" (John 3:16) you have heard so much about? Is it possible that one could WANT to come to repentance and to God AND BE UNABLE? The answer is: if you have understood this far, and YOU WANT to come to God, you ARE being called -- YOU ARE being drawn by God's Spirit!

BUT IT TAKES ACTION ON YOUR PART NOW to make your calling and election SURE. "For many are called, but few are [finally] chosen" (Mat. 22:14)

There are certain definite steps YOU must take to become a true child of God. Let's review these steps once again.

4. What are Peter's instructions on becoming a Christian? How did he say we can receive God's Spirit? Acts 2:38. Must we then CONTINUE to obey God to remain a true Christian? Acts 5:32.

COMMENT: Repentance is toward God and means we THOROUGHLY ABHOR our past lives of transgressing His spiritual laws -- of giving in to our carnal lusts and wicked human nature. It means we turn AWAY from that kind of life and turn TO God's way -- that we henceforth obey the principles and laws laid down in God's Word.

Then we must BELIEVE in Christ's sacrifice as payment of the death penalty our past sins have incurred -- believing that His shed blood will cover all our past transgressions of God's Law. We must also believe in His resurrection from the dead and God's promise of eternal life through Him.

Finally, we must be BAPTIZED -- completely immersed in water -- as an outward symbol of our inward belief. Then, according to God's promise, He will miraculously place His Holy Spirit in us and thus BEGET US as His SPIRITUAL CHILDREN!

Outstanding Examples of Repentance

1. To what kind of a man will God look with favor -- a HUMBLE and MEEK man? Isa. 66:2 and Psalm 25:9.

2. What kind of a man was Moses? Num. 12:3. Was God going to destroy Israel, because of their disobedience, and start another great nation through Moses? Ex. 32:9, 10.

COMMENT: Meekness does not mean weakness. Moses was meek, but he was not WEAK. Moses was STRONG, physically and spiritually.

3. Did Moses succumb to vanity -- as most of us would have done -- when God said "I will make of thee a great nation"? What was his reaction? Ex. 32:11-13.

COMMENT: Moses was more concerned for the good of others than for self. Above all, he was concerned for God's Holy Name. His life was God-centered (Num. 14:11-20 -- be sure to read these verses).

4. Did Moses try to elevate himself above others -- as Hitler and Mussolini did? Num. 11:27-29; 16:3-5.

COMMENT: Meekness is the opposite of arrogance (Titus 3:1-2). This is the attitude of a repentant mind. Moses through meekness was made strong spiritually and was thereby enabled TO LIVE the Ten Commandments.

5. But had Moses always been that meek and humble? Or had he formerly taken on himself to go beyond his authority? Ex. 2:11-14.

COMMENT: Moses was trained in all the learning of Egypt and all the prerogatives of Pharaoh's court. He was the adopted son of Pharaoh's daughter (Ex. 2:10). As a young man, he made a great name for himself as a politician and military leader in Egypt. He was "mighty in WORDS and in DEEDS" (Acts 7:22). The historian Josephus tells us the story of his conquest of Ethiopia. Moses is even listed -- under the name of "The General" -- in the thirteenth dynasty of ancient Egyptian kings.

But God then began to deal with Moses' arrogance.

6. Did Moses at first think he could deliver Israel by his own human power? Acts 7:23-25. Then did God strike him down and humble him for FORTY LONG YEARS until his whole attitude was changed? Verses 26-30.

COMMENT: Moses, in the height of his carnal pride and glory, was STRUCK DOWN. It was God who forced his flight into the wilderness to bring about Moses' conversion. There, for forty years, he was trained -- UNDER authority -- by a man who apparently really KNEW the TRUE GOD (Ex. 2:16, 21 and chapter 18).

Moses, in this exile, is a type of each one of us. Not the least of his tasks was UNLEARNING the results of 40 years of false Egyptian training -- a task for which he was given an equal number of years. Likewise we also must come out of this world and UNLEARN its ways!

When Moses became meek and humble, God showed him that he COULD, after all, succeed in delivering Israel. But he would have to do it in and by GOD'S power -- not his own! This God demonstrated by turning his staff into a serpent, and by turning Moses' hand leprous and instantaneously healing it again.

Yes, Moses was originally very carnal-minded and arrogant -- with the same human nature all of us have. Then God began to strike him down. We, like Job and Moses, must be struck down and our carnal will shattered. If He has not brought YOU down -- CONQUERED YOU -- brought you to total surrender in true repentance, then you have not really repented and been truly converted -- no matter how "good" a person you think you "naturally" are!

7. Was Jesus Christ meek (although He did not have to repent of sin, because He never sinned)? Mat. 11:29; 21:5 and II Cor. 10:1.

COMMENT: Jesus Christ had the STRONGEST character of any man who ever lived. He was also physically strong and healthy. But He always had the attitude of TOTAL submission to God His Father

because He was filled with God's Spirit.

8. Does Christ say we all must also become childlike -- teachable? Mat. 18:3-4.

COMMENT: This does not mean like a rebellious teen-ager -- but like a VERY SMALL child.

9. What will become of the meek? Mat. 5:3, 5; Psalm 22:26 and Zeph. 2:3.

10. Did David strive to be humble before God? Psalm 131:1-2. Did he repent TOWARD GOD? Psalm 51:1-4, 17. (Be sure to READ this entire chapter.)

COMMENT: David, Moses and all the prophets of God in Old Testament times prayed to the One who became Christ. People THEN did not personally pray to the Father, though they knew of Him.

Not the Common Ideal

You won't become a David or a Moses all at once. But the important thing is to know what real repentance is, and how you can truly repent. Don't make the mistake of overlooking repentance as a necessary step to salvation. Don't assume -- with THIS WORLD'S religions -- that you can QUALIFY YOURSELF TO GOD by some man-devised method which is FALSELY called "repentance."

It is amazing to see the misunderstanding of so many people, especially about repenting and becoming a Christian.

Here is what one person said: "I'll tell you why my husband and I have not been converted. AS I UNDERSTAND IT, we have to go forward in a meeting before a lot of people, kneel at the altar, and have a FEELING of deep emotion, pray before a lot of people, and shed a lot of tears. And I just don't know how to WORK UP that feeling, and I'm afraid I wouldn't be able to shed tears or pray aloud before others."

That is NOT REPENTANCE!

Where did JESUS give such instructions? Where did HE set such an example? Where did HE have His disciples "get converted" by such a formula? Where do you find it in your Bible? Where is the teaching for it? Where did the apostle Paul practice it or have others do it? YOU FIND NO SUCH EXAMPLES OR TEACHING ANYWHERE IN YOUR BIBLE!

Repentance is not only a matter of FEELING! It is NOT a matter of stirring up one's EMOTIONS. It is a matter of HEART. It is a heart-felt realization that you have thought, spoken, and lived contrary to God's Laws and that you should QUIT DOING so!

Tragically most of us are victims of pagan teachings, doctrines, rituals, and customs, which have wormed their way into a so-called "Christianity" and have been given Christian-sounding names! Let's contend for the FAITH ONCE DELIVERED -- as faithfully recorded in the Bible -- not as practiced by the churches of MEN!

 PHOTO CAPTION: Rock and Roll religious appeal to crowds watching the "Orangemen Procession" in Belfast, Ireland. Is this how God calls people to repentance?

A Parting of the Ways

Repentance is a matter of turning FROM your old way of life which may have seemed right to you -- of turning TO a new and TRUE way of life in Jesus Christ, living by every word of God in and by God's Holy Spirit. When you UNDERSTAND the real meaning and purpose

of repentance, you will see that it is something that takes place deep in your heart and is not a matter of the surroundings, or the presence of other people.

When you come to this PARTING OF THE WAYS of your old life -- when you come to the place of this COMPLETE CHANGE -- this total unconditional surrender to God -- this complete consecration, GIVING OF SELF to Him, accepting Christ as your personal Saviour -- turning FROM your sins, and TURNING TO God's way of life as you find it in the Bible, you will want to PRAY, you will want to throw yourself completely on God's mercy, and ask Him through Jesus to forgive all your past sins and transgressions against Him.

Mr. Armstrong's Experience of Repentance

There are many ways by which God can bring man to repentance. Here are the thoughts and emotions Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong experienced in coming to repentance -- as revealed in excerpts taken from his Autobiography.

"After the flash depression of 1920 had plunged all my major advertising clients into receiverships, sweeping away the publisher's representative business in Chicago, I hung grimly on for two years. It was futile.

"What I totally failed, then, to realize was that God was beginning to deal with me, to strike me down, to take away the 'idols' of business ambitions, and set me in His work for a very special mission. Jonah tried to escape on a ship from a mission of God. Isaiah protested he was unworthy. Jeremiah argued he was too young. Paul had to be knocked down. But it required several knock-downs to deflate me and wean me from a love of this world.

"It was bewildering -- utterly frustrating! It seemed as if some mysterious, invisible hand was just disintegrating every business I ever started!

"That was exactly what WAS happening! The hand of God was taking away every activity on which my heart had been set -- the business success before which shrine I had worshipped. This zeal to become important in the business world had become an IDOL. God was destroying the idol. He was knocking me down -- again and again! He was puncturing the ego, and deflating the vanity.

"I had been beaten down. God had brought that about -- though I didn't realize it then.

This made surrender less difficult. Repeated business reverses, failure after failure had destroyed my self-confidence. I was broken in spirit. The SELF in me didn't want to die. It wanted to try to get up from ignominious defeat and try again to tread the broad and popular WAY of vanity and of this world. But now I knew THAT way was wrong! I knew its ultimate penalty was [eternal] death. But I [my old carnal self] didn't want to die NOW!

"It was truly a battle for life [my CARNAL life] -- a life and death struggle. In the end, I [my CARNAL self] lost that battle as I had been losing all worldly battles in recent years.

"I told God I was only a burned-out hunk of junk. In final desperation I threw myself on His mercy. If He could use my life, I would give it to HIM -- not in physical suicide, but as a LIVING sacrifice, to be used as HE willed. It was worth nothing to me any longer.

"Jesus Christ had bought and paid for my life by His death. It really BELONGED to Him, and I told Him He could have it!

"From then on, this defeated no-good life of mine was GOD'S. I didn't see how it could be worth anything to Him. But it was His to use as His instrument, if He thought He could use it.

"It was humiliating to have to admit my wife had been right and that I had been wrong, in the most serious argument that ever came between us.

"It was shocking, disillusioning, to learn, after intensive study of the Bible for the first time, that what I had been taught from a child in Sunday School, was in so many basic points, the very opposite from what the Bible plainly states!

"I had argued. I commanded her to stop this ridiculous nonsense. I had said she was CRAZY!

"Finally I entered into an intensive study of the Bible for the first time in my life. I was determined to PROVE she was wrong, for her new belief and practice was contrary to the orthodox teaching of the large denominational churches that call themselves Christian. My study started early mornings, lasted often until 1:00 or 2:00 a.m.

"But to my utter disappointment and astonishment, I found that the popular church teachings and practices were NOT based on the Bible. They had originated, as research in history had revealed, in paganism.

"The opening of my eyes to the TRUTH brought me to the crossroads of my life. To accept it meant to throw in my lot with a class of humble and unpretentious people I had always looked upon as inferior. It meant being cut off from the high and the mighty and the wealthy of this world, to which I had aspired. It meant the final crushing of VANITY. It meant a total CHANGE OF LIFE! It meant real REPENTANCE, for now I saw that I had been breaking God's Law. I had been rebelling against God. It meant turning around and going the WAY OF GOD -- the WAY of His BIBLE -- living according to every word in the Bible, instead of according to the ways of society or the desires of the flesh and of vanity.

"It was a matter of which WAY I would travel for the remainder of my life. I had certainly reached the CROSSROADS! In final desperation, I threw myself on His mercy. If He could use my life I would give it to Him.

"This utter surrender to God -- this REPENTANCE -- this GIVING UP of the world, of friends and associates, and everything -- was the most bitter pill I ever swallowed. Yet it was the ONLY medicine in all of my life that ever brought a healing!

"For I actually began to realize that I was finding JOY beyond words to describe in this total defeat. I had actually found JOY in the study of the Bible -- in the discovery of new truth heretofore hidden from my consciousness. And in surrendering to GOD in complete repentance, I found unspeakable joy in accepting JESUS CHRIST as my personal Saviour and my present High Priest.

"Somehow I began to realize a NEW fellowship and friendship had come into my life. I began to be conscious of a contact and fellowship with Christ, and with God the Father.

"When I read and studied the Bible, God was talking to ME and how I loved to listen! I began to pray, and I KNEW that in prayer I was talking with God. I was not yet very well acquainted with God. But one gets to be better acquainted with another by constant contact and continuous conversation."

And this is the experience Mr. Armstrong went through, and the final great joy he has found, as a result of repentance.

Proof of True Repentance

After you have surrendered to God and been baptized, how can you be SURE YOU have truly repented? What are the "fruits" of true repentance? What will tell you with absolute CERTAINTY whether you

are in a continuous ATTITUDE of repentance? Let's understand.

1. Will you continue to be deeply involved in things pertaining to this material, evil world? Col. 3:1-2.

2. Will you STILL be yielding yourself to God's will and GROWING in His character, months and years after baptism? II Peter 3:18.

COMMENT: If you have truly repented and been baptized, you will have been given God's Holy Spirit. Your mind is now surrendered -- yielded to God. You have given up always wanting your own way. You have been CONQUERED in your rebellion against God. And you are WILLING TO OBEY God no matter what the cost.

Jesus surrendered totally to the rule of God and let the Holy Spirit direct and empower His life completely. Even when facing what He knew would be an agonizing death, Jesus prayed: "Not my will, but THINE, be done" (Luke 22:42). Your attitude will be more like His CONTINUALLY until the time you are transformed at the resurrection. For now a new constancy, a new steadfastness, a new certainty, has been added to your character -- if you have really been converted and received God's Spirit. No longer are you completely at the mercy of every emotion and every circumstance -- timid, irresolute, unstable, unsteady, wishy-washy. Instead, you are gradually developing the very CHARACTER OF GOD!

3. If you have truly repented and received God's Spirit, will you find that you are now ABLE to keep God's Commandments, discovering they are actually a JOY to keep? I John 5:3 and John 15:10-11. Will keeping God's Commandments become EASIER as you continue to grow spiritually? Mat. 11:29-30.

COMMENT: Gradually you will sense the lifting power of the Holy Spirit within you as you strive to serve and obey God. You will be pleasantly surprised at your ability to withstand and HOLD DOWN the downward pulls which mastered you in the past. You will be-pattern your life more and more after the way Christ lived (I Peter 2:21-23). Your whole point of view towards everything and everybody will be CHANGING as you continue to yield to God.

4. Do Christians still sin occasionally after their initial repentance and after burial in baptism? Eccl. 7:20 and I John 1:8-10; 2:1.

COMMENT: Repentance is not complete with baptism. It is not ended in going down once into a watery grave. Baptism is merely a SYMBOL of your initial repentance of all past sins up to that point in your life.

Repentance must be on a DAILY BASIS! For in actual living you will be coming to God in repentance for sins you STILL COMMIT DAILY, asking God to cover and cancel them out with Christ's shed blood. New knowledge, together with daily repentance, will produce a CHANGE in your character and in your whole attitude towards everything!

5. If you have truly repented before baptism and are repenting of your daily sins, will you also be striving to live by every word of the Bible, although your carnal nature tends to REBEL against it? Mat. 4:4; John 3:19-21.

COMMENT: The "light" that has come into the world is God's inspired Word. But the carnal mind is "enmity against God" (Rom. 8:7) and does not, BY NATURE, want to live by His Word. And it is only when driven to it by bitter experiences that one will repent and accept its teachings. So, if you have truly repented, you will be continuing to follow the Bible, although your human nature -- which still remains as long as you're human -- will tend to DRAW YOU AWAY from obedience to God.

6. But after you have continued steadfast in this new way of

life several years, drinking in of God's Spirit every day, what CHANGES will you and others find has occurred within you? What spiritual "fruits" will be MANIFESTED THROUGH YOU more and more as you continue in God's ways? Gal. 5:22-23. Also READ I Cor. 13.

COMMENT: You will be filled with SPIRITUAL LOVE for God and all fellowmen -- even your enemies. You will have sympathy, patience, and kindness for others and their faults and mistakes. You will be gentle and kind, seeking only to HELP and to SERVE.

7. Will you have much new SPIRITUAL KNOWLEDGE which you know by past experience that you, of yourself -- with your own effort -- could NOT have acquired? John 16:13.

8. Will you be "growing up" in these new truths which lead to becoming a son in God's Family, while those in the world around you plod on in a life that leads to nowhere? Mat. 11:25; I Peter 2:2 and Mat. 4:4.

COMMENT: If you have truly yielded to God, you will have become like a SPIRITUAL "babe" that needs to be nourished on God's Word so it can grow up SPIRITUALLY.

You will also be like plastic clay, ready and willing to be molded and fashioned into God's character. You will be willing to CHANGE your ways as new truth is revealed.

9. Will you be growing in Jesus Christ's character? Eph. 4:15.

10. Will you have a respect for God and His Word that you never had before? Isa. 66:2.

11. Will you be receiving ANSWERS to your prayers? I John 3:22.

12. Will you be willing to give of your time and effort in serving others? Mat. 20:25-27.

13. If you have truly repented and been converted by God's Spirit, will your POCKETBOOK be "converted" too? Mat. 6:19-21.

14. And what will have become of your ATTITUDE toward this "Present Evil World" and its glitter, though you love the people in it? II Cor. 6:17 and I John 2:15-17.

COMMENT: One who is a true Christian will NOT BE FOLLOWING the customs and practices of this world's societies. Instead, he will be searching the Bible to learn GOD'S REVEALED WILL, and doing it! You will have questioned all the ways of the "crowd" and clearly discerned where the world's ministers are wrong.

However, the apostle John does not mean that we are to absolve all contact with the "outside world." We can still LOVE others and yet not fellowship with them. We were born into this world. We cannot remove ourselves physically out of the world (I Cor. 5:9-10), but we need NOT BE OF IT -- involved in its pursuits which are contrary to God's Word.

These, then, are the "fruits" of a truly repentant and converted mind. How do you measure up?

Begin to Live ABUNDANTLY

If you have never before come to true repentance as God defines it -- if you are now sick and tired of the empty, fruitless, materialistic life you have been living -- IF in your heart you DO want to turn FROM it to a FULL and JOYFUL life filled with God's Holy Spirit, then why delay? Why delay another minute?

Wherever you are now, go where you can be alone with God -- into the privacy of your own room if you are at home -- YES, RIGHT NOW! Get down on your knees and make your full surrender to God -- give yourself to Him without any reservations. Ask God to forgive your sins, no matter how sinful you may have been. He will forgive them all -- your sins will become "WHITE as snow"! (Isa. 1:18.)

Accept Christ as your living Saviour. But don't look for a certain "feeling." It is not a matter of feeling, but of REPENTANCE and of BELIEVING. God laid down the terms. Conform to them NOW!

Don't say, "I don't know how," but do it now! ACT and DO IT -- YOU know you OUGHT to, so EXERCISE YOUR WILL and DO IT! Just go to a room ALONE, close the door, and with no one else around, except you and God alone -- GIVE YOURSELF TO HIM, ask Him to FORGIVE all your past sins -- CONFESS them to HIM (not to any human being) -- and then just say -- yes, say it: "I here and now accept JESUS CHRIST as my personal Saviour." Everything may be HARD, until YOU SAY THAT. But the minute you say those words to your heavenly Father, the unseen power that caused you to hesitate, and put it off, and has made it so difficult -- the power of the devil's demon-world -- will let loose. You will then be free -- you'll know you now belong to GOD -- the contact will be established! You can TALK to Him, and He will HEAR! YOU can POUR OUT YOUR HEART TO Him, and He will LISTEN -- and comfort, and come close and give YOU WHAT YOU NEED.

Then you must be BAPTIZED -- not into any religious denomination or organization, but into Jesus Christ. You should be baptized as SOON AS POSSIBLE after you repent and give yourself to God. (If you have truly repented and want to be baptized God's way, then write to Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong, and one of God's ministers in the field can visit you. This service, like all the literature from God's Work, is absolutely FREE!)

Once you are baptized, God PROMISES to put His Spirit within you -- to give you, and radiate from you a LOVE YOU never had, a new FAITH, PATIENCE, UNDERSTANDING. Through His Spirit you will be given POWER for SELF-MASTERY. Power to UNDERSTAND the Bible.

Then KEEP UP THE CONTACT now established! You do this by DAILY Bible study and prayer. God talks to you through His Word. You talk to Him in prayer. It is a two-way conversation. Through it you BECOME ACQUAINTED -- get to KNOW God. And where once He seemed far away and unreal, He will now seem close, and REAL! But be sure to KEEP IT UP EVERY DAY! YOU will experience an inner joy you didn't dream could exist -- you will find He IS truly REAL -- and an ACTUAL help in every time of need!

You won't be perfect all at once. You will still have your self to WRESTLE with. Trials, tests, afflictions, persecutions will come -- but now you will find an ever-present HELP and deliverance -- a constant Source of inspiration, and courage, and power -- an inner peace and faith -- and you'd begin to live a full and ABUNDANT LIFE for the first time, with the assurance of ETERNAL LIFE.

Don't become discouraged and give up, though, when you make a SLIP. You'll be starting out as a Spiritual BABE in Christ. Babies stumble and fall down many times before they learn to walk. Don't let that discourage you -- get up and try all the harder and, as you continue the CHRISTIAN LIFE, the Bible and God's way will become a new, and the SUPREME INTEREST of your life!

When you look at your troublesome, naturally evil self, so human and full of faults and weaknesses, so beset by temptations of pride in the flesh, with all its limitations and shortcomings, knowing that to be finally saved you must GROW in grace and in God's knowledge -- must develop in righteous holy character -- must overcome this SELF and temptations and weaknesses -- and must endure through trial and test and opposition and all discouragement unto the end -- well, when you look at it that way, it may seem utterly impossible ever to be saved.

Of course!

Of yourself, it is impossible to be saved. But with GOD it is certain -- IF we yield to Him and TRUST Him. We shall be saved, NOT by our own power to overcome and develop perfect character, but through FAITH in GOD'S POWER! GOD WON'T LET YOU FAIL if you endure to the end in the conditions which He has set for salvation!