

THE SABBATH SCOOP

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Onward to VICTORY!

We are Christian soldiers battling enemies on three fronts. The only way home is winning!

by Gregory Dullum

Almost immediately after 19 terrorists hijacked airliners and attacked the United States on Sept. 11, 2001, the U.S. mounted a counterattack.

The first military response was to send 12 Green Berets into Afghanistan to join up with a general from the Northern Alliance to fight against terrorists called the Taliban. He would get the 12 close enough to the enemy to call in air strikes. Their mission was to prevent the Taliban from taking control of a major city in northern Afghanistan. If the Taliban gained control, the whole country would be turned into one big terrorist training camp, and more 9/11-style attacks would be inevitable.

There were 12 Green Berets. The Afghan general had 200 soldiers with him. They were up against 5,000 Taliban soldiers who were better trained and better equipped than the Northern Alliance. The Green Berets were outnumbered by the Taliban almost 5,000 to one. Even when adding the Afghan soldiers, they were still outnumbered 25 to one. In *12 Strong*, the Hollywood movie which tells their story, one Green Beret wasn't worried about the odds. He called it a "target-rich environment."

The superiors who planned the mission told the leader of the 12 Green Berets that this was a dangerous mission and it was very likely that they would not all come back alive.

In a show of confidence or bravado, the group leader disagreed with his commanding officer, saying that the chances of them all returning were 100 percent. They all wanted to come home to their families and there was only one way to do that. When he reported to his men that their group had been chosen for the mission, he told them, "The only way home is winning."

As the mission unfolded, a number of things went wrong and one of the Green Berets was injured. But in the

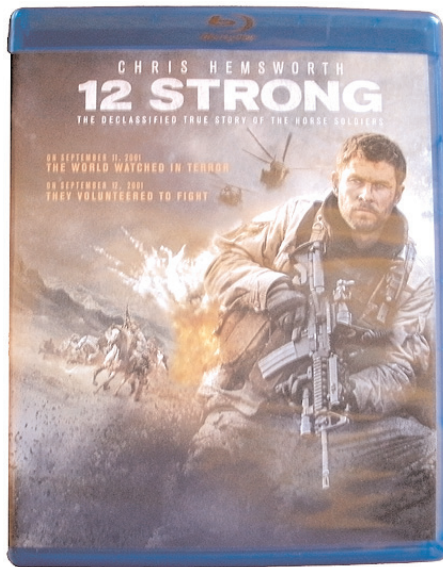


Photo by Gregory Dullum

In the film *12 Strong*, the leader of a group of 12 Green Berets tells his men, "The only way home is winning."

end, they were victorious and every single one returned home alive. The Taliban consider this to be their greatest defeat.

Christian Soldiers

We are "Christian soldiers"—each one of us is a "soldier of Christ" (2 Tim. 2:3). We sing a hymn titled "Onward Christian Soldiers." We may be more than 12, but we are a small group, vastly outnumbered by the enemy. Christ calls us a "little flock" (Luke 12:32). Who do we fight?

Fighting on Several Fronts

During World War II, U.S. soldiers fought in two different "theaters." Early on, U.S. soldiers were sent to the dry and dusty desert of North Africa, where they stopped the Axis army's advance across that continent and pushed the enemy back across the Mediterranean Sea into Europe. Then they fought the enemy up the

Italian peninsula into the heart of Europe, season after season, including some bitter cold winters.

Other U.S. soldiers were sent to the South Pacific, where they fought in sweaty island jungles, dislodging Japanese soldiers and pushing them back to their home islands. There was no desert dust or frosty snow on these battlefields; just incessant heat, humidity, mosquitoes, and endless stretches of blue ocean. There were two different theaters of war requiring different tactics, and the enemies being fought were different, but it was all one war.

The war we are fighting as Christian soldiers is like that. We are fighting a three-front war against three different enemies.

We Must Overcome

For us as well, THE ONLY WAY HOME IS WINNING. We must NOT *surrender* to our enemies or *lose our battles* with them.

Jesus Christ, who is our "captain" (Heb. 2:10), commands us seven times in two chapters of Revelation to OVERCOME! Notice his words to us:

"To him that overcomes I will give to eat from the tree of life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God" (Rev. 2:7).

"He who overcomes shall not be hurt by the second death" (v. 11).

"To him who overcomes I will give some of the hidden manna to eat. And I will give him a white stone, and on the stone a new name written which no one knows except him who receives it" (v. 17).

"And he who overcomes, and keeps My works until the end, to him I will give power over the nations—'He shall rule them with a rod of iron; and the potter's vessels shall be broken to

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Onward to Victory!

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pieces’—as I also have received from My Father; and I will give him the morning star” (vv. 26-28).

“He who overcomes shall be clothed in white garments, and I will not blot out his name from the Book of Life; but I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels” (Ch. 3:6).

“He who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God, and he shall go out no more. And I will write on him the name of My God and name of the city of My God, the New Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from My God. And I will write on him My new name” (v. 13).

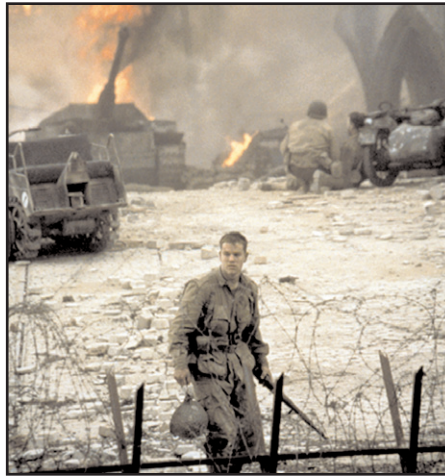
“To him who overcomes, I will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne” (v. 21).

WHAT OF WHOM are we to OVERCOME? We must overcome THREE *enemies* who will prevent us from getting into the kingdom!

Overcome Ourselves

The first enemy we must battle is our own human nature. Sometimes we can be *our own worst enemy*. “The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it?” (Jer. 17:9).

The Apostle Paul battled with his human nature. He tells us, “For what I will to do, that I do not practice; but what I hate, that I do. ... But now it is no longer I that do it, but sin that dwells in me. For I know that in me (that is in my flesh) nothing good dwells; for to will is present with me, but how to perform what is good I do not find. For the good that I will to do, I do not do; but the evil I will not do, that I practice. ... I find then a law, that evil is present with me, the one who wills to do good. For I delight in the law of God according to the inward man. But I see another law in my



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U.S. soldiers in World War II fought in two very different theaters of war against two different enemies. We Christians must fight—not two—but three different enemies.

members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death? I thank God—through Jesus Christ our Lord!” (Rom. 6:14-15, 17-19, 21-25).

Jesus Christ saves us by paying the penalty for our sins and washing us clean (Rev. 1:5). *He saves us from ourselves!* Our part of the battle is to REPENT! We must CHANGE. We must change the direction of our lives. Where we once lived CONTRARY to God’s law, we must now live ACCORDING to God’s law.

As long as we are flesh, there will be a struggle. But the more we conform our thoughts and actions to those of Christ and the more we obey God’s laws, the easier it will become. *Obedience becomes habit forming.* That is how we overcome ourselves. That is the path to VICTORY!



NAPS photo

Look in the mirror to see our first enemy: We must battle ourselves and our own human nature.

Overcome the World

The second enemy we must battle is the world around us.

The world around us is NOT our friend! It is an ENEMY! “Adulterers and adulteresses! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God” (James 4:4).

The society in which we live may appear shiny, bright and attractive to us, so that we may want to become a part of it, but it’s all a facade. What the world has to offer—riches, fame, fortune, etc.—are in reality matters of selfish LUST and PRIDE, things that are *opposite* to outgoing LOVE—the way God wants us to live. And everything this society has to offer is TEMPORARY. It has *no lasting value* because this world is physical and everything that is physical eventually perishes and passes away. The apostle John explains it this way:

“Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—is not of the Father but is of the world. And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever” (1 John 2:15-17).

The world may *act friendly* toward us, but it’s a TRAP to entice us to *become like the world*. If we stick to the Christian way of living, we may find ourselves *out-cast* by our friends and family and *hated* by the world. Jesus tells us, “If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before it hated you. If you were of the world, the world would love its own. Yet because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you” (John 15:18-19).

Know Your Bible

by Charles Nenninger

1. What is the name of the burying ground that Abraham bought?
2. Who built the first city?
3. What two cities are called “the cities of David”?
4. Noah sent out two birds from the ark. Which was first?
5. Solomon imported birds to add beauty to his palace. What kind?

(Answers on page 5)

The SABBATH SCOOP

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The world may appear shiny and attractive, but it's all a facade to trap us into becoming like the world..

Satan's society is designed to keep us BUSY. The airwaves, satellite feeds and cable TV lines are filled with hundreds of channels of non-stop entertainment. Cell phones keep us constantly connected or perpetually playing games. Activities, events, meetings and entertainment fill our spare time while both parents must work to make a living. This world and its cares gobble up so much of our time that it's hard to find time for God—for prayer, Bible study, quiet meditation and keeping God's Sabbath and Feast days.

Jesus described this well in the parable of the sower. Some of the seed—the word of God—“fell among thorns, and the thorns sprang up with it and choked it” (Luke 8:7). The thorns choking out the word of God are the things this world offers that allow no time for God. “And the ones that fell among thorns are those who, when they have heard, go out and are choked with cares, riches and pleasures of life, and bring no fruit to maturity” (v. 14).

How do we battle the world? How do we become victorious?

We start by separating ourselves from the world; by coming out of it. We remove ourselves from any *sinful activities*. “And I heard another voice from heaven saying, ‘Come out of her, my people, lest you share in her sins, and lest you receive of her plagues’ ” (Rev. 18:4).

“Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness? ... Therefore ‘Come out from among them and be separate,’ says the Lord. Do not touch what is unclean, and I will receive you.’ ‘I will be a Father to you, and you shall be my sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty’ ” (2 Cor. 6:14, 17-18).

We must also remove ourselves from activities which *take all our time* and leave NONE for God. These activities may not be wrong in themselves but we must not make them so important that they become our gods. It comes down to *prioritizing our*

time. Once God is firmly established first and foremost in our lives, we can use whatever free time we have left for *decent* entertainment and proper “worldly” activities.

The surest way to overcome the world is be like Christ. Follow in his footsteps, for He has shown us *the way to victory*: “In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer. I HAVE OVERCOME THE WORLD” (John 16:33, emphasis added).

We must believe in Christ and obey his instructions to us. The faith we need is one that includes BELIEF and inspires OBEDIENCE (James 2:28). This kind of faith will give us victory over the world! “For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith. Who is he who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?” (1 John 5:4-5).

Overcome Satan

As we battle ourselves and the world, we need to realize our struggle is NOT against flesh and blood. There is a spiritual battle going on behind the scenes. Our ultimate enemy is Satan the devil. He is called our “adversary” or “enemy.”

“Be sober, be vigilant: because the adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour” (1 Pet. 5:8).

How are we to fight him? The next verse tells us, “Resist him, steadfast in the faith” (v. 9).

James expounds on this important aspect of our fight: “Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. Draw near to God and he will draw near to you” (James 4:7-8).

Paul further explains, “For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places” (Eph. 6:12).

God gives us spiritual weapons to fight our spiritual battles (2 Cor. 10:4). We are



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Satan goes about as a roaring lion seeking to devour us!

given the whole armor to withstand the devil (Gal. 6:13). Our equipment includes having our waist girded with TRUTH, a breastplate of RIGHTEOUSNESS, feet shod with the PREPARATION OF THE GOSPEL, the shield of FAITH, the helmet of SALVATION and the sword of the SPIRIT (vv. 14-17).

With God's help, we will be “*more than conquerors*” (Rom. 8:37). We are going to WIN our battles! God will lead us to TRIUMPH in Christ (2 Cor. 2:14).

One More Enemy

After God leads us to VICTORY over ourselves, over the world and over Satan, He will *reward us* with ETERNAL LIFE! When that happens *at Christ's return*, a fourth enemy—our final enemy—will be conquered—the enemy of DEATH.

“So when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: ‘Death is swallowed up in victory.’ ... But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Cor. 15:53-54, 56).

What a glorious victory it will be when ALL humans (or at least most of us) will become spirit beings! There will be *no more death* (Rev. 21:4). Death and Hades (the grave) will be cast into the lake of fire (Rev. 20:14).

Our battles will be behind us. We will be *at home with God* in his kingdom. The ONLY way home is *winning*. Let us press on to VICTORY!

Smile Awhile

“A merry heart does good, like medicine” (Prov. 17:22). Here is this month's dose:

These friars were behind on their belfry payments, so they opened up a small florist shop to raise funds. Since everyone liked to buy flowers from the “men of God,” a rival florist across town thought the competition was unfair. He asked the friars to close down, but they would not. He went back and begged them to close. They ignored him.

So the rival florist hired Hugh MacTaggart, the roughest and most vicious thug in town to “persuade” them to close. Hugh beat up the friars and trashed their store, saying he'd be back if they didn't close up shop. Terrified, they did so, thereby proving that: Hugh, and only Hugh, can prevent florist friars.

THE STAGES OF LIFE

There are advantages and disadvantages to each stage of our lives.

by Gregory Dullum

I find the following story amusing and insightful, even if it's not Biblically accurate.

On the very first day, God created the cow. He said to the cow, "Today, I have created you. As a cow, you must go to the field with the farmer all day long. You will work all day under the hot sun! I will give you a life span of 50 years."

The cow objected. "What? This kind of tough life you want me to live for 50 years? Let me have 20 years, and the remaining 30 years I'll give back to you." So God agreed.

On the second day, God created the monkey. He said to the monkey, "A monkey has to entertain people. You've got to make them laugh and do monkey tricks. And I'll give you a 20 year life span."

The monkey objected. "What? Make them laugh? Do monkey faces and tricks? Ten years will do. And the other 10 years I'll give back to you." So God agreed.

On the third day God created the dog. God said to the dog, "What you are supposed to do is sit all day by the door of your house. Any people who come by or come in, you will have to bark at them. I'll give you a life span of 20 years."

The dog objected. "What? All day long I have to sit by the door? No way! Let me live for only 10 years. I give you back my other 10 years of life." So God agreed.

On the fourth day God created man and said to him, "Your job is to sleep, eat and play. You will enjoy very much in your life. All you need to do is enjoy, and do nothing. For this kind of life, I'll give you a 20-year life span."

The man objected. "What? Such a good life! Eat, sleep and do nothing? Enjoy the best, and you expect me to live for only 20 years? No way! Why don't we make a deal? Since Cow gave you back 30 years, Dog gave you back 10 years and Monkey gave you back 10 years, I will take them from you! That makes my life span 70 years, right?" So God agreed.

And that's why, in our first 20 years we eat, sleep and play, enjoying the best and doing nothing much. For the next 30 years, we work all day long, suffer, and support the family. For the next 10 years, we entertain our grandchildren by making monkey faces and doing monkey tricks. And for the last 10 years, we stay at home, sit in front of the door and bark at people.

We may laugh at this story, but there's some truth to it, isn't there? We may know

people in the world who fit into these categories. What about us Christians? Where in those 70 years do we find time to develop Godly character, personality and the fruits of the spirit—love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control?

At each stage of our life, we find *advantages* and *disadvantages*. Different temptations hit us *at different stages*. We must *take advantage* of the POSITIVES that are offered in each stage and *beware* of the NEGATIVE aspects!

Children

Children have some advantages over older people. They have more health and vitality than their parents or grandparents. That's why Solomon admonished, "Remember now your Creator in the days of your youth, before the difficult days come, and the years draw near when you say, 'I have no pleasure in them' " (Eccles. 12:1).

Children also seem to have a special faith (they believe what they're told) and humility (they're teachable) that we tend to lose as we grow older. Christ wants us to keep those qualities. He tells us, "unless you are converted and become as little children, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven. Therefore whoever humbles himself as this little child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven" (Mat. 18:3-4).

There are some DISADVANTAGES to being a child. Children are often *too busy playing* to think about God. They do childish things and think immature thoughts. Paul recognized this when he wrote, "When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things" (1 Cor. 13:11).

Children can grasp some BASIC principles of truth but the *deeper truths* tend to go over their heads. The Bible calls the basic understanding "the first principles" and "milk" of the word while the deeper understanding of truth is called "solid food" (Heb. 5:12-14).

Children also don't have as much freedom to obey God as adults do. If they want to attend church on the Sabbath, but their parents won't allow it, then they must wait until they're older and become independent, or work things out some other way, such as attending church with a relative.

William Wilberforce published a book in 1797 titled *Real Christianity*. Although



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There are advantages and disadvantages when it comes to childhood, middle age and older adulthood. We should beware of the disadvantages and make full use of the advantages.

the book is more than 200 years old, our human nature hasn't changed much in those years. He offers insight into the advantages and disadvantages Christians have at various stages of their lives.

On page 267, Wilberforce describes the problems young people face: Young people "are apt to be thoughtless of the feelings of others, while they yield to their own physical temptations; they tend to be lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God." These are the days of *the man* in the story.

Middle Age

Middle age should be the OPTIMAL time to serve God. Our minds have grown so we can understand the *more complex aspects* of Christian living. We reach our *peak in physical prowess*, so we're strong enough to handle physical duties without tiring as quickly as we do in old age.

Unfortunately, there are disadvantages to this time in our life as well. Wilberforce explains it well in his book:

"Middle-aged people, on the other hand, are not so strongly tempted to be thoughtless and lazy and licentious [as young people]. Family responsibilities, social connections, and tradition are enough to restrain them from these sort of excesses. Older people, however, must

face another test. They are tempted to be obsessed with worldly cares, with their family's interests, with professional goals, with the pursuit of wealth or ambition. Thus occupied they are tempted to 'mind earthly rather than heavenly things,' forgetting 'the one thing needful'; they are likely to set their affections on earthly rather than eternal concerns."

It is at this time in our lives when we may become too busy for God. We start our careers and work toward advancement. We may marry and have children.

In the parable of the sower, the thorny soil best describes this time in our lives: "And some fell among thorns, and the thorns sprang up with it and choked it" (Luke 8:7). These thorns, Christ explained, are the cares of life. "And the ones that fell among thorns are those who, when they have heard, go out and are choked with cares, riches, and pleasures of life, and bring no fruit to maturity" (v. 14).

Paul adds, "There is a difference between a wife and a virgin. The unmarried woman cares about the things of the Lord, that she may be holy both in body and spirit. But she who is married cares about the things of the world—how she may please her husband" (1 Cor. 7:34). This busy time is the time of the cow in the story.

Senior Citizens

Senior citizens have a lifetime of knowledge, wisdom and experience. By this time, you would think that we would have become almost perfect Christians! But that's not the case. Too often we may end up "monkeying around" with our grandchildren or "barking at others" as we sit on our front porch like the monkey and dog in the story.

Wilberforce speaks to our senior citizens on page 261 of his book: "Eventually these same people will grow old. Now, if ever, we might expect that they would begin to think about eternal things. No such thing! They are still pleasant people. We see in them an appropriate measure of peace, and so we are not worried about them. They have no worries about themselves either, for they are quite satisfied with their characters."

There is a real danger of self-satisfaction as we reach this stage. We may stop trying to grow because we think we have grown enough. We may stop listening at church because we think we have heard it all before. We may get to the point where we become like the Pharisees "who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others" (Luke 18:9). Christ warns, "everyone who exalts himself will be abased, and he who humbles himself will be exalted" (v. 14).

There also is a real danger of becoming weary of well doing because we have been "well doing" for so many years (Gal. 6:9, 2 Thes. 3:13)!

On page 160, Wilberforce adds: "As we get older, our hearts are no longer cheerful and placid; if we look pleasant still on the outside, our appearance isn't the honest expression of our hearts. Prosperity, luxury, and a lack of sympathy for others harden and diminish our souls while all the while we become puffed up with pride. In other instances, shame secretly clouds our hearts, and remorse stings them, while suspicions corrode, and jealousy and envy embitter us. Disappointed hopes, unsuccessful competitions, and frustrated pursuits, all sour and irritate our tempers. A little personal experience of human selfishness dampens our generous warmth and kind feelings, taking away the unsuspecting simplicity of our earlier years. Above all, ingratitude sickens our hearts and chills and thickens the very lifeblood of kindness. In the end, our mature selves are nothing like the people the world once thought us to be."

We have become the dog barking on the front porch.

The Unconverted

These same attitudes are present in the unconverted people of this world. It's a way Satan uses to keep people deceived and unresponsive to God's calling.

Young people are too busy being wrapped up in themselves and their selfish desires to be concerned about God.

Middle aged people are too busy being wrapped up in their families and their jobs to be concerned about God.

Old people have lived their way of life so long and it got them this far that they see no need to change and be concerned about God.

We Must Be Different!

We in the Church of God have been called to a greater purpose than to be wrapped up in our own personal lives. We have been called to be CHRISTIANS—TO BE CHRIST-LIKE! What should be OUR attitude be?

"Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus, who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself

STAGES OF LIFE

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Know Your Bible Answers

1) Cave of Machpelah. 2) Cain. 3) Jerusalem & Bethlehem. 4) Raven. 5) Peacocks.

Fun Fact

of creation, history, holidays & the Bible



Drawing and Fun Fact are courtesy of NAPS
A domestic cat can run 30 miles an hour, beating the fastest human, who reached 27.89 mph.

Witerature

Wit and wisdom to complement the truths of the Holy Bible can be found in secular writings.
Here is this month's selection:

Wild Men, Wild Alaska by Rocky McElveen, Thomas Nelson, 2006, p. 66.

Putting God First

"Steve Jones, another professional athlete (if you can call golfers 'athletes') loves to hunt and fish. ...

"Steve is a wonderful athlete, and he is also deeply religious. 'Sure,' he says, 'golf is just a game, but it's also my job. It's OK for golf to hold a position of importance in my life and to treat it seriously, but if that's what's driving my life, that's wrong. God needs to drive my life, not a golf game.'"

Ex. 20:1-3, Deut. 5:6-7, Mat. 6:33

Quotable Quotes

"What lies behind us and what lies before us are tiny matters compared to what lies within us."

—Walt Emerson

Memory Scripture

"And he who overcomes, and keeps My works until the end, to him I will give power over the nations— 'He shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the potter's vessels shall be broken to pieces'— as I also have received from My Father; and I will give him the morning star."

—Rev. 2:26-28

Stages of Life

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nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death—even death on a cross! ...

“Do everything without complaining or arguing, so that you may become blameless and pure, children of God without fault in a crooked and depraved generation, in which you shine like stars in the universe as you hold out the word of life” (Philip. 2:3-16, *New International Version*).

This is a hard one! Have we perfected this yet?

Christ summed up our duty with two great commandments: “‘And you shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.’ This is the first commandment. And the second, like it, is this: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no other commandment greater than these” (Mark 12:30-31).

William Wilberforce gets to the heart of true Christianity when he writes on page 239, “[T]he one thing that characterizes all true Christians is their desire to please God in all their thoughts, words and actions; to take the revealed Word as the rule for their belief and practice, to let their ‘light shine before men’ and in all things to be a credit to the doctrine they profess. No profession is outlawed, no pursuit forbidden, no science or art or pleasure is disallowed that can be reconciled with this principle.”

How deep is our love for God and for our fellow man? Are we leaving undone some act of love or kindness? Do we have the mind of Jesus—a lowly mind of a servant? Are we serving God and the brethren in every way we can, with every talent we have?

Are we reading our Bibles and studying them? How can we live by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God if we don’t read every word? How can we call ourselves Christian if we don’t read what Christ taught?

Let us put on the mind of Christ and continue to humbly learn God’s way and walk in it. Let us truly love God with all our heart and soul and mind and strength. And let us love our neighbors as ourselves.

No matter what stage of our lives we may find ourselves in—the young man, the cow, the monkey or the dog—let us beware of the temptations and sins that beset us. Let us take full advantage of the positive aspects of the stage we are in.

If we do, we will not end up as a man, a cow, a monkey or a dog. We will end up as glorified sons of God!



Press Release: ‘World Teacher’ has emerged

According to a press release dated July 12, 2018, a world teacher named Maitreya has emerged.

“All the great religions posit the idea of a further revelation to be given by a future Teacher. Christians hope for the return of Christ, the Buddhists look for the coming of another Buddha (the Lord Maitreya), while Muslims await the Imam Mahdi, the Hindus a reincarnation of Krishna, and the Jews the Messiah.

“Students of the esoteric tradition know all these as different names of the same individual—Maitreya, the World Teacher, the head of the Spiritual Hierarchy of Masters, and they look for his imminent return now.

“In July, 1977, Maitreya emerged from his centre in the Himalayas, when least expected, ‘like a thief in the night.’ Since then, he has lived in London as an ordinary man concerned with modern problems Since March 1978, He has been emerging as a spokesman in the Pakistani-Indian community. He is not a religious leader, but an educator in the broadest sense—pointing the way out of the present world crisis. According to esoteric teaching, Maitreya manifested Himself 2,000 years ago in Palestine by overshadowing His disciple Jesus—now the Master Jesus. This time Maitreya has come Himself. ...

“In late 1991, Maitreya began carrying out a series of appearances like the one in Nairobi, Kenya. There, on 11 June 1998, He appeared miraculously, ‘out of the blue,’ at an open-air prayer/healing meeting. He was photographed addressing (in their own language) thousands of people who instantly recognized Him as the Christ.”

Although going by another name, this Maitreya is a false Christ—one of many that the real Jesus Christ said would be a sign that his second coming is near.

When asked what would be the sign of his coming and the end of the age, Jesus began his reply with, “Take heed that no one deceives you. For many will come in My name, saying, ‘I am Christ,’ and will deceive many” (Mat.

24:3-4. He later added, “Then many false prophets will rise up and deceive many” (v. 11).

One bit of advice fits this news item quite well. Jesus warns, “Therefore if they say to you, ‘Look, He is in the desert!’ do not go out; or ‘Look, He is in the inner rooms!’ do not believe it. For as the lightning comes from the east and flashes to the west, so also shall the coming of the Son of Man be” (vv. 26-27).

E.U., U.S. Relations Sink

“After a week of the worst barrage of insults yet from President Donald Trump, the European Union is looking westward toward the White House less and less.

“‘This Helsinki summit is above all another wake-up call for Europe,’ said Manfred Weber, the German leader of the EPP center-right group in the European Parliament, the legislature’s biggest. “We Europeans must take our fate in our own hands” (“EU, U.S. relations sink further after divisive Trump messages” by Raf Casert, Associated Press, *Southeast Missourian*, July 18, 2018, p. 9A).

A “10-king” union is prophesied to rise in Europe as a final resurrection of the Holy Roman Empire before Christ returns (Dan. 2:41-45, Rev. 17:7-14). President Trump may be pushing the Europeans along on their path to that union.

Quake Hits Indonesia

“A strong and shallow earthquake early Sunday [July 29] killed at least 14 people and injured more than 160 on Indonesia’s Lombok Island, a popular tourist destination next to Bali, officials said.

“The quake damaged more than 1,000 houses and was felt in a wider area, including Bali, where no damage or casualties were reported” (“Strong quake hits Indonesian island, killing at least 14,” by Niniek Karmini and Ali Kotarumalos, Associated Press, *Southeast Missourian*, July 30, 2018, p. 8A).

One of the signs that Jesus Christ gave to signal his return and the end of the age is “earthquakes in various places” (Mat. 24:3, 7).