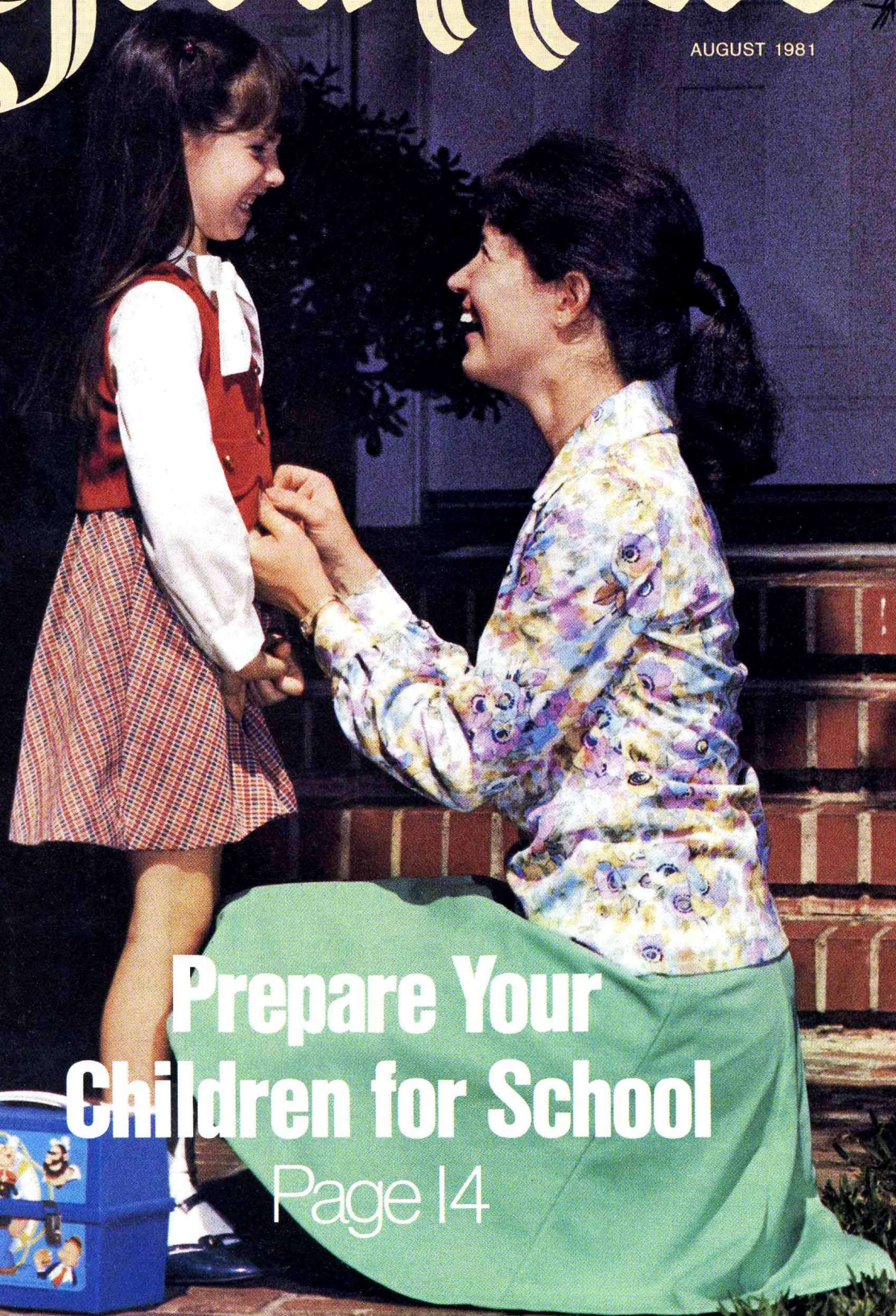


The

Good News

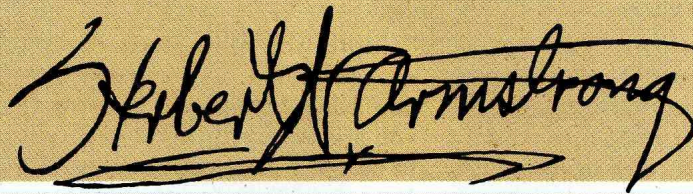
AUGUST 1981

How to Better
Watch World Events
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**Prepare Your
Children for School**

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A UNITED STATES senator preached a sermon in a Methodist pulpit in Los Angeles, Calif.

Of all things, imagine a well-known senator saying that *patriotism* is a false god to many people! And he was right.

“Love of country can transcend the love of God,” he said, “and we must, in time of stress, avoid making patriotism a religion.”

He said a number of other things I could have said, myself. Among the idols professing Christians worship, he cited *prosperity, science, patriotism, peace* — and some people actually make an idol of the Bible, strange as that may sound. Some, he said, worship the Bible for *itself*, NOT as containing TRUTHS necessary for salvation, and, I add, as a GUIDE to a WAY OF LIFE.

What is *your* idol? What are YOU really dedicated to? Is it earning a living — making money? What absorbs your mind, your thoughts, your time — what are you really *devoted* to?

Is it GOD — above all else? Or is it your hobby, your wife or husband, your children, your home, your sports — or amusements and entertainments?

What do you keep your MIND on most of the time? What most occupies your INTEREST? Is it friends — society? Is it PEOPLE — or is it THINGS?

It surely couldn't be GOD, could it?

Probably not. And, if not, then it is an IDOL. You are breaking the First Commandment. You have this other god *before* Him.

Just WHAT IS RELIGION?

Is it merely an incidental interest, secondary to *many* other things, such as earning a living, your home, your family, your friends, hobbies, sports,

entertainments? Possibly secondary to television or movies?

Religion is your CONNECTION WITH GOD — your relationship with Him.

Religion is realizing the PURPOSE of your life — the reason why God had you to be born — the reason you draw the breath of air and exist — the PURPOSE or end GOAL of your life, and HOW to live that life so as to arrive there.

I have written of the *seven laws of SUCCESS*. You may have the free booklet on *The Seven Laws of Success* by writing our office nearest you. They are really the seven laws of LIFE. They are the seven laws of RELIGION. Yet most people do not know or practice or apply a single one of them.

The first is to have the RIGHT GOAL.

That GOAL — God's PURPOSE for having put the breath of life in you — is that you be born of GOD, to share with Him the GLORY of creation, to inherit His divine NATURE, to be LIKE HIM — to do what He does, to accomplish what He accomplishes, enjoy what He ENJOYS — peace, happiness, joy, resplendent GLORY in LIFE EVERLASTING.

No other goal could be as great. It is superlative.

But what are *you, now*? Just a mass of matter, put together like a machine. Your present existence has to be constantly SUSTAINED. You have to keep drawing a breath of air into your lungs about every four or five seconds. You have to eat food on the average of at least three times every day. You have to take care of eliminating the impurities from food, and of bathing and cleansing your body.

Maybe you don't *really* have to “brush your teeth after every meal” as a certain toothpaste TV commercial keeps repeating like a phonograph record that got stuck.

But you *do* have to maintain and sustain your physical anatomy to keep on existing — and even then you are aging and degenerating every day and every year — and the most certain thing in this existence we call “life” is that this machine process is going to run down — YOU ARE GOING TO DIE.

Actually, we have to simply *keep pumping life into* ourselves constantly — daily — to continue existing — to continue consciousness.

Yet most people keep on, day after day, year after year, pumping that existence into themselves, with NO MORE PURPOSE than to try to be comfortable, free from pain, and to be pleasing the five senses — with their minds on the passing physical and material things of the moment — things that are not lasting, and are soon gone.

Unless God's own CHARACTER is being formed and developed in your mind and your life, replacing the carnality that is there now, you shall have missed your GOAL.

God's PURPOSE is to CREATE within you, during this life, a new and perfect CHARACTER, so that you may be *given* eternal life — self-containing, inherent life.

If you are converted — that is, if you do once establish actual *contact* with God — He supernaturally puts within you His HOLY SPIRIT. This impregnates you with HIS LIFE — begets you as His child, actually yet unborn.

Actually, what many professing Christians call “being born again” *should* be termed “being begotten.”

Technically, to be “born of God” means to be changed in composition from flesh and blood matter to SPIRIT — no longer mortal, no longer human.

But it does put within you a NEW NATURE, entirely opposite to HUMAN

NATURE with which you were first born.

You are, as Scripture says, given "exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be PARTAKERS OF THE DIVINE NATURE" (II Pet. 1:4). Of course the old human nature *remains*, and *your mind* makes the continual decisions whether to yield to the downward pull and appetites and established habits of human nature, or to resist it by yielding to the new divine nature — to BE LED BY GOD'S HOLY SPIRIT.

This, then, BECOMES *your very life!*

You can only succeed if your GOAL is kept constantly — continually — before your eyes.

When you drive a car, if you take your eyes and attention off what is in front of you (and sometimes coming from the side or behind) even for two or three seconds, you may find yourself "coming to" in a hospital, dying and saying "It all happened *so suddenly!*"

Driving *carefully* means BEING ALERT — being DILIGENT every second — KEEPING YOUR EYE and your mind and attention on the matter of DRIVING — not on conversation or other things.

In the same manner, if you let other interests, material pursuits, steal first place in your mind and heart and *interest*, even for a few days, you are in danger of a SPIRITUAL SMASHUP that will let you wake up being plunged into the LAKE OF FIRE, which will mean eternal DEATH.

That's why God doesn't want you to have these other gods BEFORE Him.

For your own sake — in your own interest — you must keep Him enthroned and enshrined constantly ABOVE ALL.

You must study HIS WORD in order to be *instructed* by Him.

Instructed in what? Instructed in true KNOWLEDGE — knowledge of God's PURPOSE for you — knowledge of and about GOD — and knowledge of HOW TO LIVE. Jesus Christ said you must actually LIVE BY the words of the Bible. It is your GUIDE TO LIVING — your INSTRUCTION BOOK the Maker sent along to instruct you HOW to

OPERATE this mechanism that is YOU.

More, you must study His Word — your BIBLE — to find what you now believe that is wrong, and what you are now DOING that is wrong — to be CORRECTED and reproved by it. You must study it to let it INSTRUCT you in the ways of God's RIGHTEOUSNESS — His WAY OF LIFE. And then you must *devote* yourself to LIVING IT!

Still, without regular and constant PRAYER, you cannot maintain CONTACT with God. And when that *contact* is broken, you are CUT OFF from Him — and His spiritual LIFE, LOVE and very NATURE cease flowing into you.

For, understand, these divine attributes of His Spirit DO FLOW! They are IN MOTION. They do not stagnate.

You either GROW spiritually — in knowledge — in grace — in God's character — or you deteriorate back toward becoming a mere physical animal, to die in ETERNAL PUNISHMENT in the lake of fire!

But if God, and the things of God — His revealed knowledge — His law — His love — His WAY for you to live — are constantly *foremost* in your mind, your thoughts, your interest, then you are PRAYING ALWAYS — that is, in a constant SPIRIT OF PRAYER — a constant MENTAL ATTITUDE of prayer.

The contact with God must be *perpetual!*

This kind of Christian life — the only kind that truly is Christian — requires, as the Bible emphasizes repeatedly, zealous DILIGENCE. You must CONCENTRATE on it. You must be DEDICATED to it. It requires utter CONSECRATION. It requires total EARNESTNESS.

Yes, it requires the application of the other six laws of SUCCESS — education, in which the Bible is the main textbook; good physical health; DRIVE, or concentrated DILIGENCE and EFFORT; resourcefulness; sticking to it — enduring; and continual contact with, and the guidance, help and power of, GOD.

True spiritual mindedness is *not* a sticky sentimentalism. It is NOT a certain emotional mood. It is *not* the use of a certain religious phraseology, saying constantly,

"Praise the Lord," or, "Glory, hallelujah."

I have known many people whose TALK is so very "spiritual" — but whose hearts were as far from God as the prophet Isaiah described (Isa. 29:13).

Jesus Christ was a perfectly SPIRITUAL man. But He did not go about using such mushy language.

He was *not* a girlish, effeminate, sentimental or emotional weakling. He was a strong, virile, masterful, yet kind and gentle, MAN.

He possessed LEADERSHIP, STRENGTH, PURPOSE, SUPREME STRONG WILL — and yet these masculine qualities of strength and power were perfectly blended with wisdom, judgment, knowledge, understanding, justice and also patience, compassion and mercy. He was filled with PEACE, LOVE, FAITH.

And His WILL, strong as it was, was totally yielded and obedient to GOD. All this was the character of GOD.

He is our PATTERN. We must imitate Him — copy Him.

Look at the men of God in the Old Testament — Abraham, Noah, Joseph, David, Daniel, Elijah. They were all different from Christ in one respect — in which you and I must also be different — they had human weaknesses, and all did sin, yet these men all repented and strove to overcome.

But they were all men of strong PURPOSE, strong WILL guided by God; all possessed leadership, but also love and faith and a consecrated OBEDIENCE to the will of GOD. But they were not effeminate, sentimental men indulging in an affected, put-on, religious-sounding way of talking.

Look at the apostles Peter and Paul. They were the same. You don't find any of this pseudo "spirituality" in them — yet they were truly SPIRITUAL men, devoted to obeying God and serving the needs of the people.

But one thing to watch and guard against every second, in the way of attitude, is resentment, bitterness, hatred.

Don't let ANYTHING, no matter how unjust, make you sour and bitter.

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PERSONAL

(Continued from page 2)

That is the deadliest mental and spiritual POISON. We must LOVE even our enemies who perpetrate the greatest outrages — though we do not condone their evils.

If you ever think *I'M* wrong about anything, *don't get sour or bitter about it* — let GOD correct and punish me — vengeance is HIS, you know.

Resentment against me won't either punish me or benefit you, but it could consign YOU to *eternal* punishment!

Whether YOU believe it or not, I have come, by years of experience learning the HARD WAY, to have supreme faith that GOD will never neglect to correct or punish *me* wherever I deserve it! You may TRUST HIM to do it!

Remember what a GLORIOUS GOAL we have before us!

How GRATEFUL we ought to be! How our hearts ought to be FLOODED with love and gratitude to the great God for His matchless LOVE toward us.

I'm sure we don't grasp what a supreme price He paid to make it possible. He wants us to be CHANGED — to overcome and root out this debasing, rotten carnality we all have in us — and to GROW into His righteousness, that we may SHARE His GLORY.

And, you know, I believe God wants and *longs to* share the supreme GLORY that He has with YOU! Make it your supreme overall life VOCA-TION, and WORK HARD AT IT!

The Japanese spy who stealthily and secretly obtained all the information the Japanese needed to bomb Pearl Harbor said that he was not a very brilliant man, and learning came hard to him, BUT HE WORKED HARD AT IT, relentlessly, with zeal, and with purpose, and with diligence. He SUCCEEDED — in terrible DESTRUCTION — in plunging the United States into World War II — and, finally, in the ignominious defeat of his own nation.

Let us *work hard at our calling and mission* of being real Christians. We shall succeed, with God's help — in final and eternal GLORY! □

Gray Areas

(Continued from page 13)

you read without becoming disenchanted? Remember, it is designed to worry you, so you will have questions.

How long can you read pornographic magazines, watch violent movies, neglect your marriage, eat wrong foods? How long can you remain a "free thinker," less than totally committed to God and His Church?

How many Sabbath services is it "OK" to miss? Just how dark does Friday evening have to get before it is sundown for you?

In all these instances and in many others we could mention, there is perhaps a gray area. It may not be fatal at first. But it's only a matter of time before "longer" becomes "too long," "occasionally" becomes "often" and a "bit more" becomes "too much." Then, "seldom" becomes "never."

The gray areas are like the Mekong.

Maybe — just maybe — some of the river close to the Thai border is safe. But the farther you get out toward the middle, the stronger the current becomes. Suddenly, there is a point when you are no longer in control, although you may not realize it. But the communist soldiers know.

They are watching and waiting. They have you clearly fixed in the sights of their high-powered rifles, and their fingers are curling around the triggers.

Safe, sure ground

Not every gray area is as well-defined as the mighty Mekong. But all are potentially dangerous.

So Christ, through His servants, shows us how to be sure we stay on the safe and sure ground. It's the terra firma of sound doctrine, loyal support, unswerving commitment, humility, obedience and faith. We aren't perfect yet, and we all have our lapses — but don't let yourself stray too far.

If things start looking gray, take steps to get back *quickly*. Because out there somewhere, where the gray starts getting black, lurk Satan and his demons, waiting for you to take that one fateful step too far. □

First Year

(Continued from page 15)

to give a commendable explanation. Perhaps he will be given the opportunity to explain each Holy Day, in its season, to the class.

Next, explain to the teacher why your offspring will be going away with the family for a couple of weeks early in the fall semester. Explain your religious observances enough so their importance to you registers with the teacher.

Then, offer to bring back from the Feast site mementos that would be interesting for the entire class.

Finally, well in advance of your departure for the Feast of Tabernacles, ask for advance homework for your child. You want to keep your child current with his class during the trip.

Promote your child's education

The school staff — particularly your child's teacher — desires the approval of both you and your child. Genuinely praise those teaching methods that are right and sound. Show your appreciation for the teacher's efforts on behalf of your child — put the teacher at ease (Prov. 18:24)

By the time the fall festivals arrive, you, your child and the teacher should be friends. Your son or daughter will be launched in a positive direction into education.

If you have tackled the school challenge properly, you need never fear that your child will be swept off into false beliefs. Your genuine concern, imaginative alternatives and proper training will pay enormous dividends.

Your child will successfully rise to the challenge of each day's class assignments. He will develop confidence and be better able to cope with life's challenges as well!

Further, he will never lack a warm circle of admiring classroom friends. And who knows? Perhaps the greatest joy in the end will be that a teacher, a classmate or another parent might tune in to the *World Tomorrow* broadcast. All because you correctly introduced your child to his first year in school! □