

The Good News

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Heart to Heart Talk with the Editor

SOME seem to think *God's* people never encounter difficulties, meet trials or tests, but are blessed continually with smooth sailing!

Because this great and important work of God, conducted through His called human servants, has had to survive a long and severe series of crises and tests of faith, a few used to conclude, "Well, if it has met with some trouble, and is in a crisis, I guess it isn't God's work after all. I guess God has deserted it." And then they proceeded promptly to desert it themselves, just when it needed their help the most!

Does the Bible teach smooth sailing for true Christians whom God is using? Did the men of God, whose lives pleased God, as recorded in the Bible, have only an easy time of it, or were they constantly meeting trials, tests, troubles of every sort—being continually forced to cry out to God for deliverance?

Listen to God's own instruction:

"MANY are the afflictions of the righteous: but the Eternal delivereth him out of them all" (Psalm 34:19).

"For I was envious of the arrogant, when I saw the prosperity of the wicked. . . . They are not in trouble as other man. . . . Behold these are the ungodly who prosper in the world; they increase in riches. . . . For all the day long I have been plagued, and chastened every morning" (Ps. 73:3-14).

"We must through *much tribulation* enter the Kingdom of God" (Acts 14:22).

"All that will live godly in Christ Jesus *shall suffer persecution*" (II Tim. 3:12).

"If we SUFFER, we shall also reign with Him" (II Tim. 2-12).

"For as the *sufferings* of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ. And whether *we be afflicted*, it is for your consolation and salvation, which is effectual in the *enduring of the same sufferings which we also suffer*" (II Cor. 1:5-6).

But is God unfair? Does He hate Christians and punish them, while He loves the ungodly and prospers them? *Not at all!*

There is great purpose in the trials, tests, tribulations, and sufferings the Christian must endure. For these are the very means of strengthening CHARACTER—of developing fine, upstanding, strong Christians.

God does not *bless the ungodly* with wealth—they acquire it usually in one or both of two ways: by setting their heart and mind on acquiring it, and following through this purpose to the exclusion of all else, until without realizing it, the pursuit of MONEY becomes the pursuit of their god, destroying the soul; or by dishonest means.

But God does bless those who seek Him *first*—not always with great money wealth, but always, in the end, with material prosperity they never would have had otherwise. "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God, and His righteousness," admonished Jesus, "and all these things (material prosperity in shelter, food, clothing, etc.) shall be added unto you." That is Jesus' PROMISE. God loves to see His servants prospering. So He says through David and John. He corrects and chastens every son whom He loves. He allows His true children to suffer much—to fall into troubles, difficulties, to face trials and tests for their strengthening. But if we *endure* these tests, hard though they may be—and if we seek *first* our God, His righteousness, and His Kingdom, putting material interests second in our hearts, then in His own due time God will always prosper His children even in a material way!

"But *we glory in tribulations* also: knowing that *tribulation worketh patience*" (Rom. 5:3). Therefore it produces GOOD in, and for us.

"My brethren, *count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations*"—alternate translation: "*trials*." "Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience" (Jas. 1:2-3).

"Beloved, think it not strange con-
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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Startled by Message

"I accidentally stumbled upon your program almost a year ago and was startled, delighted, and thrilled to hear God's truth as I had never heard it before. 'This is it!!!' I said to myself. 'Beyond a doubt these are the true prophets promised us in the last days to warn that the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand.'"

Woman, Lancaster, Pennsylvania

"I Have Chosen God"

"Thank you so much for your inspiring messages which I hear over WPIT. Without them my day is incomplete. I've been reading and working trying to overcome myself. I've quit smoking, using lipstick, profanity, etc., and I'm earnestly trying to keep the Sabbath against much bitter dissent from my husband—an unbeliever. He's one of the evolutionists Garner Ted is talking about. I have chosen my course—now my husband says he will leave me if I continue this 'fanatic' way of mine . . . and take my 2 girls ages 2 and 6 from me when he leaves. He has offered all types of worldly bribes if I would turn my back on this and go back to the Presbyterian way of life. I said he was asking me to choose between him and God. Naturally I have chosen God . . ."

Woman from Pennsylvania

Enlarged Glands Healed

"I went to the Feast of Trumpets at Victoria, Texas, with a very painful condition of enlarged glands under my arms and asked Mr. Jon Hill to anoint me. I was healed instantly, and it has never returned."

Member from Texas

"Dear Mr. Armstrong:

"My twelve-year-old daughter has been a member of your Radio Church for about a year now. Her conversion occurred while staying with relatives in Grand Junction, Colorado. The influence of her new-found faith on her is an inspiration to me. It is my sincere desire to learn more of the belief so vital in her life. It was suggested that I send for two pamphlets in particular: 'Why Were You Born?' and 'Divorce and Remarriage.' I would appreciate them very much and hope to learn more through your radio programs."

Woman from Santa Rosa, Calif.

Editor's note: She hasn't been baptized but it is marvelous to note the change in this young person, and the way her light is inspiring others.

their hair. Let us take the case of a woman who vows never again to cut her hair. Is such a vow binding? Let us suppose this woman is married to a *converted* man. If her husband does not disapprove of her vow, that vow is binding. If her husband disapproves, it is not binding. But it happens in many cases that women are married to *unconverted* husbands. If her unconverted husband when he hears of the vow doesn't disapprove, it becomes binding. Now suppose the woman were living alone. According to Numbers 30 she is held responsible for her vow. The vow is binding. There is no commandment in the Bible which *requires* a woman to cut her hair. God's ministers then have no authority to rescind her vow.

But suppose a man vows never to cut his hair and beard. Is such a vow binding? Notice the example that Paul gives us in the New Testament. "Doth not even nature itself teach you, that, if a man have long hair, it is a shame unto him? But if a woman have long hair, it is a glory to her: for her hair is given her for a covering" (I Cor. 11:14-15).

Here is the New Testament teaching. It is proper for a woman to have long hair, but it is a *shame* for a man to have long hair. In speaking of those who wear long hair, Paul states: "*We have no such custom, neither the churches of God*" (verse 16). It is not the custom in the ministry or the New Testament Church of God for a man to wear long hair. It is a shame to any man and a reproach to God before the world. It is the responsibility of God's ministers to enforce the practice that no man wear long hair in God's Church because it is a shame to do so. It therefore is the responsibility of God's ministers who are spiritually mature to rescind the vow of any man who has vowed never to cut his hair and beard. This man's vow is not binding in God's sight. In Old Testament times, men of course were permitted to wear long hair under certain circumstances (Num. 6). In the New Testament, according to Acts 18:18, the Jew Aquila wore long hair for a temporary period of time. The Jews in New Testament times *were allowed* to continue certain of the temporary customs of the law of Moses. Apart from this one particular permission granted to the Jews for a limited period of time, the Church of God has no such custom. Men are not to wear long hair today.

Yes, it's high time we understood the matter of vowing. God does not require us to take a vow. It is far better not to vow than to vow and not perform. Most people make rash vows.

They are not mature enough to know what kind of vow is a wise vow. Since God does not require a vow, God's ministers today can never recommend that you take a vow. But if you have taken a vow and your vow is binding, *you must perform it!*

Your Part In God's Work

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ferings were a most important part of their active service to God, they have sought to work extra hours or to get extra part-time work, and have in every *right and honest* way possible sought to employ their talents and abilities to *earn more money to put into the work of God!*

May God bless them for it!

Carnal men are always scheming to make more money in every way possible. They will miss sleep, meals, and drive themselves on because they worship *Mammon*.

How many Christians will show the same ZEAR in earning money to give to *Christ*?

Will YOU?

This is plain talk, brethren, but the time has come when those of you who are in God's own church should be told these things. God's servants around the world are doing our best to give ourselves *completely* to God in carrying out our part in His growing work. *Now all of you must do the same!*

We cannot count on outsiders or even our unconverted co-workers to put forth this kind of effort. But you converted brethren should have the *Spirit* and *power* of God to inspire you to shoulder more of the load!

Mr. Armstrong has spent many sleepless nights in concern and in earnest prayer during the seemingly impossible financial struggles God's work has had to go through. He has forced himself to write co-workers letters when he wished and prayed that it wouldn't be necessary. And God has *always* delivered His work!

But as this age draws to a close and God's work suddenly expands to the ends of the earth, *we must have more of you brethren with your whole HEARTS in this work.*

Our Lord and Master said, "Where your *treasure* is, there will your *heart* be also" (Mat. 6:21).

God grant that each of you will put your whole *mind* and *heart* into God's service, and present your *bodies* a "living sacrifice" to Him in every way. Earnestly seek how you may best serve God in a

more active manner and be an instrument He can use.

Neglect not the gift of GIVING. It is *vital* at this time. Take this as *your* opportunity and responsibility in God's work. Seek to exercise it more effectively. Go to *extra effort* and *sacrifice* for Christ! *There is no greater purpose in life.*

Hear, and understand, and ACT, that you may be worthy of Jesus' words: "Well done, thou good and faithful servant."

Heart to Heart Talk

(Continued from page 4)

cerning the *fiery trial* which is to try you, as though some strange thing had happened unto you: but rejoice" (I Peter 4:12-13).

Moses suffered affliction in order to lead the children of God, choosing this rather than the riches of the king's palace and the pleasures of sin for a season.

David suffered constant criticism and false accusation, his enemies continually tried to unseat him, and his trials were so great sometimes it seemed God would *never* come to his rescue—yet God always did! Truly these trials teach us to be *patient*—for it often seems an eternity before God finally delivers us.

God chose Paul to be an apostle of Jesus Christ, and the Lord said, "I will show him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake" (Acts 9:16). And late in life Paul wrote: "In all things approving ourselves as the ministers of God, in much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses, in stripes, in imprisonments" — (people probably would call Paul a crook, a racketeer, an imposter and a jailbird today)—"in tumults, in labors, in watchings, in fastings" etc. (II Cor. 6:4-6). Paul outlined more of his troubles and sufferings in II Cor. 11:23-28.

Perhaps a chosen servant of God may be called upon to endure more trials, troubles, and tests of faith than other Christians—but every Christian shall suffer persecution, and meet fiery trials, sorrows, troubles, tests of faith. All our readers who are Christians will understand. Let us not murmur or grumble. Let us have FAITH, and endure in our faith *patiently*. And above all, *let us pray one for another*, and help one another!

Brethren, continue to stand loyally by this great work of God now encircling the world! Let us continue to pray earnestly for one another, and we shall march forward through Christ to great victory!