

# Where Are YOU Headed?

*Your ultimate destiny may depend upon certain key factors  
in your daily life more than you realize.*

**W**HAT will YOU be doing exactly *one hundred years* from now? Will you then be a *king* or a *priest* in God's kingdom? Will you hold a position of authority over *ten cities*, or *five cities*, or will you perhaps just be a "doorkeeper"? Or will YOU even be there?

Just where are YOU really headed? Do you realize that you are right *now* in the process of determining your *eternal destiny*?

As I write this, my wife and baby daughter and I have just returned from a stay of over six months in Britain—helping to build up our church in London, England. Many new brethren over there have recently been added to our church—*God's church*. They have *repented* and been *baptized*. They have surrendered the human *vanity* and *self will* to God.

My wife and I had grown to love these people very much. When we left, many of them were in the "first flush" of zeal, interest, and love for God's truth.

Most truly converted people—including *most of you*—have started out with this initial zeal and love. But all too often this zeal slackens, and many brethren go through periods of time when they *bog down* spiritually. Sometimes this proves *fatal*!

What is the *reason* for this? What is the *prophesied future* for them—for YOU—for *all* who have surrendered to God's truth?

## Many Trials Ahead

The apostle Peter warned Christians of his day, "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the *fiery trial* which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: But rejoice inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings" (I Pet. 4:12-13). God's people are to be tried and tested by *persecution*, by *tribulation*, and by *Satan* himself.

Peter went on to show that these trials are part of *our judgment*. "For the time is come that *judgment* must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall be the end of them that obey not the gospel of God?" (Verse 17). We who have received of God's Spirit are in the Church of God—the *house of God*. We are *now* being judged!

Is the trial easy? Peter says, "And if the righteous *scarcely* be saved, where

shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?" (Verse 18). The natural tendency after being converted is to *bog down* and *lose* your original *zeal*. Do you think you can afford to "rest on your oars" for a while? Peter says that even the righteous will *scarcely* be saved! God tries us to keep us *alive* and *growing* spiritually.

The church at Thessalonica was told by Paul (II Thes. 1:4-5) that the persecutions and tribulations they endured were a token of *God's judgment*.

In Hebrews 12:6-10, we find that God *chastens* every son He loves so that we might profit thereby and eventually be partakers of God's own holiness. At conversion, we have only *started* on the road to becoming a *born* son of God. Let us *not* be "puffed up" with the precious knowledge that God is revealing to our church—His church—in these last days. We are only unborn "babes" of God, not yet even born of the Spirit as members of God's family.

Thus, we need *chastening* and *tribulation* to keep us humble and zealously *GROWING* as we should. We poor humans are inclined to overlook and justify our sins and faults. Too often, we think that we have "arrived" while our lives still contain *sin*. We forget that our goal is *perfection*—to be *like God*!

In I Corinthians 11:20-30, Paul is rebuking the Corinthians for taking the Passover in a careless and licentious manner. Because of this, many of them were weak and sickly—and many had died! The apostle continued, "For *if we would judge ourselves*, we should not be judged. But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world" (Verses 31-32). Because we do not "judge" ourselves as we should and *purge sin out of our lives*, God *chastens* us to wake us up and keep us *growing* spiritually.

How you respond to God's *instruction*—to God's *chastening*—will determine *your future*. Many of you reading this may become spiritually *lukewarm* and finally *dead* unless you heed this warning! It is up to *you*!

## What Will Happen

The condition God's people fall into is revealed in Matthew 25. Jesus here refers to Christians as "virgins"—those who have kept themselves pure from

the spiritual fornication of fellowship with false churches. They had *all* repented of the wrong ways of this world and had *come out* of this world to serve God. They *all* went forth to meet the bridegroom—expecting to receive salvation.

*But* some of them had lost the "oil" of God's Spirit. They thought that just knowing the truth, coming out of the world, and fellowshiping with God's church was *enough*. They had not been *GROWING* spiritually as had the other virgins. Perhaps they thought that they would just naturally get into God's kingdom because they were in the fellowship and love of the brethren who *were* spiritually alive.

Just knowing the truth and having fellowship with God's church is *NOT ENOUGH*!

You are either receiving more of God's Spirit each day through fervent prayer, diligent Bible study, and submitting your will *completely* to God that He may direct your every thought and action, *or* you are stagnating and spiritually *DYING*! *There is no middle ground*. The door to the kingdom was shut in the face of those who *thought* they were "saved," but had not yielded themselves to *grow* into more truth and to *practice* the truth more perfectly each day of their lives.

God's people will be in these two classes when Christ returns. Which class will *you* be in?

## Do Your Part

The fearful temptation to "do nothing" is described in Mat. 25:14-30. Jesus portrayed the two faithful servants who had put their talents and resources to *work* in His service, and the servant who had not.

Notice that the two servants who had received the most talents were more eager to use them. *It is even so in God's Church*.

Many of YOU feel that because you have no great talents or resources, you can *let down* and not do your part with the same *zeal* as others. You are *mistaken*! This parable shows that you ought to be using your talents just as much as other true Christians. This parable is a warning to *beware* of such a wrong attitude!

Each one has his part to do in God's

work. Perhaps your part is simply to *pray* for God's work and His ministers, to *study* that you may answer the questions of others, to *pay* God's tithe and cheerfully *give* offerings to His work, and to set a *shining example* of love and service to those about you. But are you doing these things with all your strength?

God's word shows that many of you will become *lukewarm* and will *fail* to carry out *your part* in God's work. How can you prevent this?

### Right Habits Are Vitally Important

Your destiny will be determined in a great measure by how well you practice certain virtues in your daily life. The zealous performance or careless omission of these duties is largely a matter of **HABIT**.

This is a *key* that can *build* or *wreck* your life!

You should get in the *habit* of kneeling down two or three times a day and *earnestly praying* to God—getting to know Him as your Father. This should be the most important *habit* of your life. Don't let circumstances break this habit!

*Studying* your Bible for a few hours each week is next in importance. Unusual circumstances may necessarily interfere with daily Bible study at times, but you *can* arrange to study the Bible for at least four or five hours each week. And this means the Bible *itself*—not literature about the Bible. Diligently and prayerfully studying God's word is a habit that will give you the *faith* and *understanding* you long for. Make it *your habit*!

An important habit which most of you *have not realized* is that of *fasting*. When you are faced with a special problem, when you are in a temptation or if you feel you are growing lukewarm, one of the surest remedies is to *fast* and *pray*. This subject will be discussed at length in future articles. But zealous Christians *should fast* at least one or two days during each month. This *habit* is *vital*!

Many brethren know it is God's *command* that we faithfully render tithes and offerings for His work, but they have not acquired the *habit* of doing this as they should. God loves a *cheerful* giver (II Cor. 9:7). If you are not in the *habit*, it may be hard for you to give cheerfully to the *most important work on earth*. Study the twelfth chapter of Luke. Here Christ is clearly and forcefully showing that your life is *not* made rich by the things you possess. Rather, your true wealth is what is laid up in heaven because your *pocketbook* as well as your heart has been converted to God's service.

Was Christ mercenary? *Decidedly not!* But He knew that if you weren't trying

hard to put more of your material wealth into God's work, your *interest* and *zeal* would soon *die out*. "For where your *treasure* is, there will your *heart* be also" (Luke 12:34). I stress this point because I well know that most of you have not been trying to make more money for the *purpose* of helping God's work. Some of our older brethren who fully understand the significance of this work and the times we are in work *extra hours* in order that they may *give more* toward carrying out the true gospel.

How important is God's work to you? This *habit* shows God that *you really mean it!*

### A Constant Practice

The very *basis* of real Christianity is that you *pattern your life* after Jesus Christ. He is our *perfect* example. We need to *study* God's word continually to know how to follow Christ's example.

A vital *habit* that can aid you marvelously in achieving this is the following: Whenever you are about to do anything significant, stop and ask yourself, "How would Jesus handle this situation?" Then ask *God* to guide you in *acting* as Christ would. This can alter the course of your life!

You *must* have studied God's word and Jesus' example for this to help as it should. But even trying this *as you learn* will bring you closer to God *every single day*.

This habit may be exercised before you walk into a room, before a party, before work, at the start of each new day. Just ask God, "How would Jesus act now?" Then, with God's help—*ACT that way!*

If you sow this habit, you should reap *eternal life*.

### The Result

According to prophecy, God's people will soon enter the period of the church of Laodicea. Many will not overcome the *trials* which God will set before us. They will not profit from His *chastening*. They will have fallen into *wrong habits*. Their condition will be **LUKEWARM** (Rev. 3:14-16). Christ will cast them out of His church unless they **REPENT**. They will not have been *watching* and *praying* that they might be worthy to *escape* the coming *tribulation* on God's people (Luke 21:36). Therefore they will be among those saints who will be permitted to **SUFFER** in order to learn (Rev. 6:9-11).

God's people will be divided into *two classes*: those who are zealously *growing*, and those who gradually become lukewarm. The first class will be protected during the tribulation and because they have overcome (Rev. 2:26), they will be given rule over the nations as kings and priests under Christ. The other class

will be allowed to *suffer* in this coming tribulation in hope that they might learn to *put God first*.

Your practice of the *habits* herein described will largely determine which class you will be in. You will need God's help to *form* and *keep* these habits. He is more than willing to guide you through His Spirit (Luke 11:13). And remember that the *regularity* of a *right habit* and *right attitude* makes it so much easier!

*Your destiny* is in your *own* hands. Remember that it is largely a *matter of habit*.