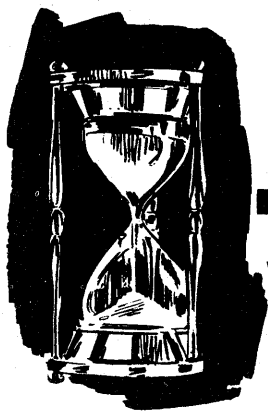


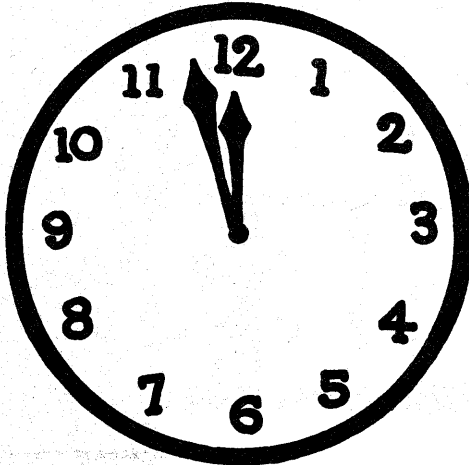
**The
TIME
Is
SHORT**



BY
RAY BRUBAKER

THE TIME IS SHORT!

“ But this I say, brethren, the time is short: it remaineth, that both they that have wives be as though they had none; And they that weep, as though they wept not; and they that rejoice, as though they rejoiced not; and they that buy, as though they possessed not;” 1 Corinthians 7:29-30.



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RAY BRUBAKER - COMMENTATOR
BOX 10475 ST. PETERSBURG, FLA. 33733

HOW TRUE IS THE BIBLE?



TIME magazine, in a recent leading cover story, asks the question: HOW TRUE IS THE BIBLE?

What about Adam and Eve, Noah and the flood, and Jonah and the whale? Are these true historical accounts or parables and myths?

Part of the controversy raging in the public schools of West Virginia relates to the casting of doubt upon the Scriptures along with books featuring obscenities that are almost unbelievable. (Excerpts from some of these books have been sent to me, so I know.)

Concerning ridicule of the Scriptures, Mrs. Alice Moore, a school-board member, has stated: "We object to books that ridicule a child's faith and treat biblical stories as fables."

Thus the controversy rages. But when Christians stand up for what they believe to be right, it gains only more support and not less.

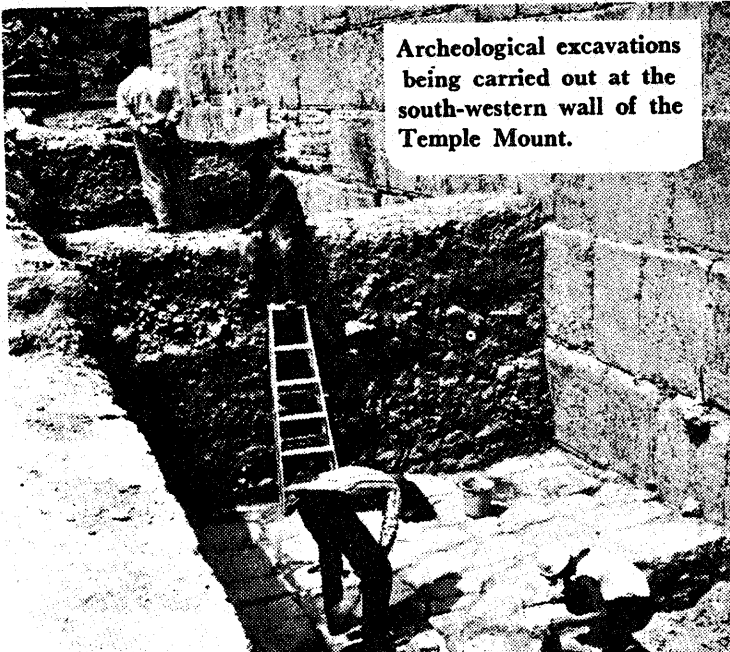
In California, attempts have been made in recent years to include the biblical account of creation in school textbooks. In 1972, the state finally did decide to adopt a compromise measure which would assert that the so-called evolutionary concept is not the only possible explanation for creation.

However, among the groups not satisfied is the Creation Research Society, an organization whose members believe in a literal, six-day view of creation.

In the midst of the raging controversy over school textbooks and the Bible itself, TIME asks: "What is the reason for the revival today of such fierce fundamentalism?" ----

In reply, it suggests that "Perhaps the cause is an increased need for spiritual security in a troubled world. It may also derive from the current distrust of science and disillusionment with rationalism." It could also be the current interest in the Bible with all of the various versions being marketed today which are best-sellers in bookshops across the country.

The belief that the Bible is the Word of God is a growing phenomena. Archaeological findings in Israel, it is noted, continue to turn up new evidence that the Bible is surprisingly accurate in historical particulars. Establishing physical settings of scriptural accounts and certain details of corroboration has enhanced its credibility.



Archeological excavations being carried out at the south-western wall of the Temple Mount.

Should the Bible be taken literally?

This is the question some would raise in a controversy that has raged for centuries. In fact, it was Satan himself who introduced the issue in the garden of Eden when he said to Eve, "Yea, hath God said?" You'll remember how Adam and Eve were told they could enjoy all of the trees of the garden and eat the fruit thereof, but of the tree in the midst of the garden (the tree of the knowledge of good and evil) they were commanded not to eat. The devil, appearing as a bright and beautiful creature allured Eve by saying: "God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil." (Gen. 3:5)

Ever since, of course, the devil doesn't want anyone to believe God or the Bible, for his desire is to exalt himself and to see all men condemned to hell with himself.

TIME magazine (12/30/74) comments on the growing controversy raging over the Scriptures. It notes: "Strict fundamentalists believe exactly what the Bible says. The more learned of them use concepts like "inerrancy," which means that the original text of the Bible cannot be wrong in anything it says because it was inspired, word for word, by an infallible Deity..."

In 2 Timothy 3:16, we are reminded that "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness."

Do you believe it?

Is all Scripture inspired of God? The word "inspired" means "God-breathed." Is God the author of this book that we call the Bible?

The Bible has withstood all of the attacks of the past; for if it could be proven that just one error were to be found, then the question might be raised as to what part should be believed and what part should be rejected.

However, when the original text is used, and all biblical themes harmonized, no one can be without the witness of the Spirit as to the inerrancy of Holy Scripture. As we read in 1 Cor. 2:14, "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."

The reason there are those who distrust, or disbelieve the Word of God is that they choose to be ignorant concerning it, or they have never been truly enlightened by the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit, Who is the author of the Word, will interpret the Word to our hearts if we will let Him.

Now the question is raised--Shall we accept a literal interpretation of the Bible?

Sir Isaac Newton wrote in 1710 A.D. that "About the time of the end, a body of men will be raised up who will turn to the prophecies, and insist upon their literal interpretations, in the midst of much clamor and opposition."

We do know there are some Scriptures that are symbolic as in the book of Revelation where these are explained as such. For instance, John's vision of a woman riding a beast that had seven heads and ten horns would appear as utterly ridiculous except that this was God's method of conveying truth. We read later, "The seven heads are seven mountains" and the ten horns are ten kings seen arising, and the woman is a great city which reigneth over the kings of the earth. Put the picture of the jigsaw puzzle together and you'll find this symbolic of the revived Roman Empire with headquarters in Rome. Already in Europe, there are nine nations which compose the Common Market countries that have pledged political union by 1980; and although the number of nations is seen changing, there should be at least ten



nations seen eventually uniting along with one to whom we refer as the Antichrist, who will form the last Gentile World confederacy.

Then there are some who ask questions like this: "Shall we keep the Sabbath?" By this it is meant, shall one worship on a Saturday?

We are encouraged to "rightly divide the Word" which means we are to know what the Bible teaches on the subject being discussed.

In the first place, Exodus 31:13 definitely defines the Sabbath as a sign between God and Israel. Here Moses is commanded, "Speak thou also unto the children of Israel, saying, Verily my sabbaths ye shall keep: for it is a sign between me and the children of Israel forever." So, today we find those who keep the Sabbath in accordance with this command by Moses.



Should Christians keep the Sabbath (Saturday)?

In recognition of our Lord's resurrection on the first day of the week, there are those of us who meet on a Sunday for worship. Which day, then, is correct? Here again, the Scriptures have the answer in Romans 14:5, where we read: "One man esteemeth one day above another; another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind. He that regardeth the day, regardeth it unto the Lord...."

In other words, it's not the day on which you worship that is the most important part of worship but whether or not your heart is right and you know Him in saving faith and are truly serving Him.

If you really love the Lord, you will no doubt be worshipping Him every day by faithfully reading His Word and through communion with Him in prayer. As to the day to attend services in a church somewhere, we are not to be in bondage to a time schedule, for this is legalism. Worshipping the Lord on Saturday in one part of the world will still find the same time to be Sunday in another part of the world.

The Pharisees loved to keep the letter of the law but their hearts were not right, so that whatever they did made no difference. To Nicodemus, our Lord said: "Ye must be born again!" That's what is truly important. On what day you worship is not the crucial matter, as some make it, but whether or not you love the Lord and are truly saved.

Another passage of Scripture that might be misunderstood is Luke 14:25, where our Lord says: "If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother and wife, and children, and his brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple." A literal reading and lack of understanding of this passage might teach us to hate our parents, but this is not the case.

A proper understanding of this Scripture leads us to see that our Lord was not teaching us to hate anyone, but that our love for Him should be so strong as to cause us to be willing to leave our closest loved ones on earth, if necessary, in order to serve Him. Natural affection compared to our love for Christ should be as if it were hate.

Take the disciples, for example, who apparently left their families, or did not have families, in order to be Christ's followers. We know Peter was married because the Bible speaks of Jesus coming to his house and healing his wife's mother who lay sick of a fever. (Matt. 8:14-15)

We are not told to hate for our Lord says elsewhere that to hate is as if we have committed murder. As believers, we are told to yield our all to Christ. In fact, in Galatians 5:24, we read: "And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affection and lusts."

Think that one through. Are you Christ's? Do you belong to Him? Have you put to death your lower nature with its evil dispositions and cravings? And what about your affections? Are they in subjection to God's perfect will for your life?

Sometimes an evangelist may be called away for months at a time. His desire would be to stay home with his wife and family; but serving the Lord demands that his love for his own family be secondary to his love for Christ.

St. Augustine once cautioned against this kind of literal interpretation of the Scriptures. Although he was a champion of biblical orthodoxy, he warned: "We must be on guard against giving interpretations of Scripture that are far-fetched or opposed to science, and so exposing the Word of God to the ridicule of unbelievers."

In I Cor. 7:29, we read: "But this I say, brethren, the time is short; it remaineth that both they that have wives be as though they had none; and they that weep, as though they wept not; and they that rejoice, as though they rejoiced not; and they that buy, as though they possessed not; and they that use this world, as not abusing it: for the fashion of this world passeth away."

Now we are of the opinion that there are some Scriptures which are more relevant today than they were in the Apostle's time. This is one of those Scriptures.

If Paul could write in his day, "Brethren, the time is short," then it is really short now!

In view of the time being short, the Apostle writes: "It remaineth that both they that have wives be as though they had none." Is this a reference to the over-emphasis given to the physical relationships between husbands and wives that we see today?

Our Lord cautioned in the parable of the Great Supper that there would be those who would make excuses and miss out on the time of feasting to be enjoyed when He returns and the saints are raptured into His glorious presence; for we read: "Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb." (Rev. 19:9)

The tragedy is, my friends, that not all who are called are chosen, and not all who are invited to this glorious time of feasting are found accepting the invitation. In the parable of the Great Supper, there is the husband who says: "I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come." Could it be that he was more wrapped up in his wife than in waiting for Christ's coming and so turns down the invitation to the wedding feast?

No wonder, in view of the shortness of time, Paul writes: "It remaineth that both they that have wives be as though they had none."

Incidentally, Augustine taught that marital relations for any other purpose than to bring children into the world was sin.

It is in view of the coming of our Blessed Lord that we need to know what the Scriptures teach with a literal view to heeding God's Word. This does not infer a legalistic keeping of the law but a right view to doing the will of God today.

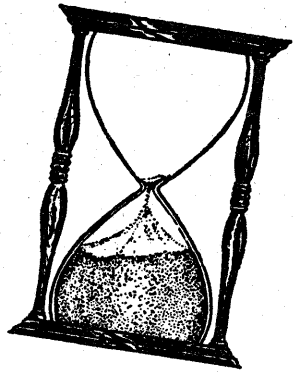
Concerning the Philadelphia Church, which represents born-again believers, we read: "Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth." (Rev. 3:10)

Beloved, believing that hour has come and the tribulation is at hand, our admonition is that we not only hear God's Word but heed it, not only believe its promises but keep its precepts in a way that shows we love the Lord and that we are looking for His coming.

Are you saved? Do you know Christ as your Saviour? Is He your Lord? Are you living for Him daily in expectancy for His soon coming?

Remember, He hath said: "Be ye ready also, for in such an hour as ye think not, the Son of man cometh."

Is Time Running Out?



NEWSWEEK magazine has observed: "Paralleling the rise of WOMEN'S LIB, the phenomenon of runaway wives starkly illustrates the re-examination of marriage and parenthood that is currently gripping the U.S."

This magazine notes: "Among its more striking manifestations are plunges in the first-marriage rate, now at its lowest point since the Depression." Also it is noted: "Equally striking is the rising number of marriages that split apart after the major child-raising chores are finished."

It is further stated: "Among couples married fifteen to nineteen years, divorces have doubled since 1960, while in the twenty-years-and-over bracket, they are up 56%. The percentage of women initiating divorce proceedings is also soaring."

Why is there an increasing divorce rate? Is it due to a lack of knowledge concerning what the Word of God has to say and a lack of respect for such authority?

Or could it be the over-emphasis on sex, along with the immodesty of our times?

A newspaper columnist received a letter from a wife who complained of an attractive friend of the family who was sitting in their living room with a modern skirt that came above the knees. Sensing that her husband was being emotionally drawn to this friend, the wife proceeded to ask her to come to the kitchen where she told this friend she shouldn't be wearing such clothes. As a result of this encounter, it brought friction between the two ladies, and the wife was writing this marriage counsellor to inquire if she did the right thing, or if she should apologize.

The counsellor took the position that dresses such as this friend wore were the style and that the wife should apologize for her actions.

Evangelist Billy Graham once wrote: "You can commit immorality by the way you dress. If you women dress purposely to entice a man to sin, then you are guilty whether the act is committed or not."

I wonder how many know that the Bible says that women should "adorn themselves in modest apparel." (I Tim. 2:9) If this is God's command, how will many answer in the day when they stand before the Lord?

Charles Finney, the great revivalist, once wrote: "Dress so as to show the world that you place no sort of reliance in the things of fashion, and set no value at all on them, but despise and neglect them altogether."

I can hear someone say, "That's old-fashioned!" But we would reply that in the day when old-fashioned principles were accepted, there was not the divorce, along with the immorality and immodest dress that we are seeing today.

It was the Apostle Paul who wrote: "But this I say, brethren, the time is short; it remaineth, that both they that have wives be as though they had none;" etc.

My friends, as we come nearer to the return of Christ, on one hand conditions will parallel the days of Noah and the days of Lot. There would be loose-living, "marrying and giving in marriage," with the world inflamed by lust and passion and even perversion. On the other hand, the lives of Christians should be characterized by pure and wholesome relationships, with the Holy Spirit giving victory over the flesh life. A Christian is one whose love for the Lord should surpass all human relationships as wonderful as they may be.

Thus, you have this exhortation by the Apostle Paul who writes in view of the shortness of time, "It remaineth, that both they that have wives be as though they had none."

This is not a distorted picture that would find a Christian living in solitary seclusion of some kind. Indeed not. There aren't happier, more adjusted people than Christian couples in whom the Holy Spirit dwells. Also the more dedicated to the will of God, the more evidence there is of the fruits of love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, and those characteristics that make for more pleasant family relationships.

As one modern-day commentator says of this passage: "The willingness of couples to take the vow to pursue a 'spiritual' relationship was a token of that extra-ordinary enthusiasm thought to exist at Corinth and manifested in their worship, in their contempt for the present age, and in their intense expectation that the Lord would speedily return."

Did you hear it?

It seems that we need more of this understanding of the work of the Spirit today which finds families devoted to doing the will of God enjoying life, while those who seek satisfaction in sexual pursuits seem discontent, always looking for a new thrill that is never there, and seeking excitement that doesn't last.

Now the Scripture gives some good advice here in this seventh chapter of I Corinthians which is largely devoted to the marriage relationship. For that reason we feel led to emphasize the aspect of truth, believing it is a neglected study as well as a needed subject for discussion.

Paul was not a woman-hater as some would have us believe. But he was a believer in standards of holiness that few would accept today, and which some churches might fear to adopt lest they lose their members.

For example, Paul declared in Romans 7, "For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth." He goes on to explain that only if the husband be dead is she loosed from the law of her husband. "So then if, while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress; but if her husband be dead, she is free from that law...." (verses 2-3)

Did you hear it?

Let's look at I Cor. 7:1-2 where we read: "Now concerning the things whereof ye wrote unto me: It is good for a man not to touch a woman."

The Apostle goes on to say: "Nevertheless to avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband."

These verses were instrumental in leading a well-known southern evangelist to be more careful in his relationships with other people. He relates how it was customary for him not only to shake hands with those who came forward in his meetings but also to give them a brotherly hug.

A fellow pastor admonished him, saying that a handshake was all right but an embrace was going too far. This disturbed the evangelist greatly, but then the more he thought about it, the more he decided the pastor was correct.

It was by reading this passage that he notes: "For a man to touch a woman, according to these verses, can lead to fornication." Even though a minister's intentions are noble in wanting to be spiritually helpful, putting his arm around those coming forward is "potentially dangerous." So he not only refuses to embrace in a spirit of brotherly love, but witnessing so many fellow ministers who have fallen into sin, he also cautions others not to be beguiled into actions that can only prove harmful.

He writes: "When you stop to think about it, there isn't a thing in the world to be gained by a preacher giving any woman more than a handshake. An embrace will add nothing to her spiritual discernment or growth. But it could do harm."

He concludes: "It is sad but true that many godly preachers have fallen into the sin of adultery. Now, something caused them to do it! Satan tempted them in some way! And, beyond question, Satan has sometimes managed to use a physical touch to arouse carnal desire. Now, I rejoice in every woman who comes forward in a revival campaign. Also, I try to shake hands with everyone. But I never let it go further than a handshake and, my preacher brethren, I recommend the same policy for you."

Whereas, women are excited by touch, so a man is excited by sight. So, as it is right and proper for a man not to touch a woman, it is right that she dress modestly and appropriately.

Men and women are like positive and negative current. Take two wires with electricity running through them. So long as they hang side by side there is no harm, but allow these two wires to touch each other and there is a sudden burst of sparks and heat. That's why wires are insulated to protect the wires from touching each other and causing damage. Similarly, that is why God has ordained that a man not touch a woman, and also why he has ordained that clothing be worn that is both modest and appropriate.

While we are on the subject of questionable practices we might mention birth control and abortion.

At a symposium conducted jointly by CHRISTIANITY TODAY magazine and the CHRISTIAN MEDICAL SOCIETY, it was the general conviction that where the Scriptures are not clear, there cannot be a clear statement issued on these subjects.



As concerns birth control, the conclusion arrived at emphasized a strong affirmation of the holiness of sex but rejected such views which might characterize some conservative Protestants, as well as early Church Fathers. Sex, it was determined, fulfils both the dual purposes of companionship and fulfillment, as well as pro-creation.

While we might agree to this principle that the Holy Spirit must govern the actions and behaviour of Christians, yet we do see where there is Scripture which would lead us to believe that the Lord will plan our families for us if we will let Him. We hear of family planning, but it does not compare to God's divine planning of our families.

The verse that comes to mind is I Tim. 2:15, which states: "Notwithstanding she shall be saved in childbearing, if they continue in faith and charity and holiness with sobriety." In other words, if a person seeks the guidance of the Holy Spirit he can be sure in all of his relationships that the Lord will guide him and his wife and give them the number of children that God has ordained for them to have.

When it comes to abortion, the Rev. Dr. Bruce K. Waltke of Dallas Theological Seminary contends that no Bible text forbids therapeutic abortion, and that under Old Testament law, the fetus was not regarded as a soul for the death penalty was not imposed for destroying a fetus (as in Ex. 21:22-24).

Again, however, there must be the realization that life is sacred and that the practice of abortion is one of the abominations of our times. The statement of evangelicals attending the symposium declared: (1)--The fetus is "an actual, or at least, a potential developing human life;" and therefore regard for the "value and sacredness of human life" requires "great caution" in prescribing an abortion. (2) Induced abortion should be used "only to safeguard greater values sanctioned by Scripture," either "individual, familial, or societal." (3) From the moment of birth the infant is a human being, with all the rights required by the Bible, and "infanticide under any name should be condemned."

Again it would be our observation that Nature has a way of providing miscarriage in the case of improperly formed fetuses. God has not delegated to man the right to determine who is to be born. Rather, a dedicated Christian should be able to leave this decision in God's hands.

Another modern-day practice that is questionable is the role of women to bottle-feed instead of breast-feed their babies. Where there are health reasons involved this can

be understood, but where the purpose of bottle feeding is only to preserve the physical contour of the woman's body, then we might question the appropriateness of such action.

In Romans 1:26 we read, for instance, of women who "did change the natural use into that which is against nature," referring to this as a vile affection. Any mother who is more concerned about her shape than her son or daughter's well being is guilty of this abomination if we understand this Scripture correctly. God has ordained that mothers be stimulated into the loving of their babies, and that their children learn the love of their mother through the breast-feeding process. No mother should be beguiled by the modern fashions and customs by being led into this error.

Finally, in life's relationships we should come to the one conclusion based on all of these series of messages--that the **TIME IS SHORT**, that we should not be caught up in worldly practices around us but rather live in view of eternal blessing and rewards.

Surely, at our Lord's return, it will be worth it all to know that our heart condemns us not and that we have confidence in the knowledge that we have ever sought to do the Lord's will.

As John writes: "And now, little children, abide in him; that, when he shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming." (I John 2:28)

Could it be that some may be ashamed of their lives when Jesus comes? Indeed, may we be found loving Christ and serving Him when He appears. For He hath said: "Be ye ready also, for in such an hour as ye think not, the Son of man cometh."

DIVORCE AND REMARRIAGE:



U.S. NEWS AND WORLD REPORT, in an article published in June, 1973, has commented on a sharp surge in DIVORCE in recent years. States this article: "Divorces--now at an all-time high in the U.S.--are becoming easier to get than ever before."

This magazine goes on to point out that one reason is the trend toward "no fault" divorces in which couples are allowed to end their marriages without blame to either partner and without long periods of prior separation.

A law that had been proposed in some countries like Sweden would allow for instant divorce. It would make marriage ceremonies unnecessary.

God help us. What is this world coming to?

With nearly a million couples getting divorced annually in the United States, one lawyer calls what we're seeing an "epidemic."

An article in the NEW YORK TIMES states: "At present, one in every three marriages ends in divorce, and there is evidence the toll is rising." It points out that in California there are "three divorces for every five marriages."

Another demoralizing trend growing out of the increased divorce rate is the number of couples living together unmarried.

The NATIONAL OBSERVER notes the number of couples living together apart from marriage in the period from 1960 to 1970 skyrocketed 700 per cent, compared with only a ten per cent rise in the number of married couples. This is according to U.S. census figures, and officials say the phenomenon is probably significantly under-reported. In other words, it is perhaps much greater than that.

My friends, how long can a holy God tolerate such infractions of His holy commandments? Perhaps the sad part of this is that the thinking of both pastor and psychiatrist is so conditioned to the "new morality" that such actions are condoned instead of condemned.

As Steven Roberts writes in the NEW YORK TIMES: "At a time when traditional sources of moral authority, from the church to the state, have lost much of their power, the psychologist can become a priest, preaching a gospel of salvation through personal gratification, and sanctioning almost any action needed to reach that state of grace, including divorce. For many, the concept of sin has been reversed. Once you were prohibited from indulging yourself; now you are scorned for not doing so."

Put it down in your little black book--GOD has not changed and neither has sin and its consequences changed. And as a result of man's disobedience to God's laws there is the inevitable judgment that is seen befalling mankind.

If the Scriptures make any truth clear, it is that sexual immorality will keep a person out of the kingdom of God. Listen to I Cor. 6, where we read: "Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived; neither fornicators (unmarried persons engaged in physical relations; nor idolaters, nor adulterers (married persons engaged in illegitimate extra-marital relationships) nor abusers of themselves with mankind (which relates to sexual perversion)...shall inherit the kingdom of God." (v.9)

How much clearer can the Scriptures be in revealing the Word of the Lord as given through the Apostle Paul?

Paul goes on to emphasize: "Now the body is not for fornication, but for the Lord; and the Lord for the body." (v.13)

When so much emphasis is placed on SEX, the Bible infers that this is the work of Satan in getting men's minds off the SAVIOUR. Of course, this isn't popular teaching--not even in the Church--but it is SCRIPTURAL. It is because men's minds are warped by the devil, and by the mass media, that they are today accepting concepts counter to the Word of God.

For example, here's a minister in a large denomination advocating those with sexual hangups, or those guilty about sex, going to see X-rated movies and meeting in groups to discuss all phases of sexual expression including perverted acts of all kinds. "It will relieve people from anxieties and fears," he notes, to speak openly and frankly about their sexual selves.

In fact, the denomination that he represents joined one of our State Universities recently in sponsoring what was called a Week of Enrichment. Here's what the course, taken by about ninety persons, consisted of, according to the newspaper. (NATIONAL OBSERVER, Aug. 17, 1974)

I read: "The course in sexual attitude reassessment begins with a blunderbuss explosion of explicit sexual materials: movies that some would term hardcore pornography, slides of famous erotic art works, fantasy movies, talk about masturbation, all accompanied by psychedelic lights and pulsating music. This explosion occurs in a large room equipped with dozens of big pillows. As persons sink into their pillows, they also sink into their fantasies and the core of their sexual selves. The atmosphere is womblike, designed to intensify sensuous feelings. Four-letter words are bandied about. No judgments are made."

Who is sponsoring this annual program? You wouldn't believe it but the American Lutheran Church, the nation's largest Lutheran denomination with a membership of 3.1 million members, is sponsoring this program in human sexuality together with the University of Minnesota Medical School. In its three years, with ALC support, the program has offered 7,000 persons a chance to explore their sexual hangups.

A Lutheran minister's wife who sat through the course which involved several hours of explicitly sexual films testified: "It turned me off for a time. I had to struggle with it. There were some things I did not want to accept. It was very difficult for me to view women engaged in sexual acts. But after thinking for a while, I realized this kind of relationship does exist for some people and I would need to accept it for that person, although I could not buy it for myself."

One council board member stated that the purpose of all of this is a sort of mind-conditioning to what he called a third level of advocacy, going from "Hey, sex isn't so bad," to "Hey, sex is pretty good," to saying, "Hey, sex is something that really should be celebrated."

The Rev. James Siefkes, a Lutheran minister who is a promoter of this Human-Sexuality course, relates it to "salvation," saying: "If I understand what the word salvation means, it comes from the word to salve, to heal, to make whole, to put back together."

Incidentally, the \$400,000 annual budget is partly financed by the Playboy Foundation of Chicago.

Is it any wonder we're seeing such vast moral deterioration when even the Church is caught up in condoning immorality and improprieties, with the consciences of men seared as with a hot iron?

Mary Linden Stein Walshok, author of BEYOND MONOGAMY, sees the day coming when parties will be planned with sex being the inducement to attend. She writes: "One can conceive of the day, for example, when large corporations will throw massive swinging parties in order to improve employe morale and productivity."



God save us from that day!

Is it any wonder in the midst of this sexual madness that the Holy Spirit causes us to see the need of purity and holiness in the day of Christ's return? The Apostle Paul, writing to the Thessalonian church, instructs them in the ways of human sexual behaviour. In the same chapter where mention is made of the rapture, when the saints are caught up to be with the Lord, we also read these words as recorded in the Phillips translation:

Listen. "God's plan is to make you holy, and that entails first of all a clean cut with sexual immorality. Every one of you should learn to control his body, keeping it pure and treating it with respect, and never regarding it as an instrument for self-gratification, as do pagans with no knowledge of God."

Then the Apostle Paul warns: "You cannot break this rule without in some way cheating your fellow men. And you must remember that God will punish all who do offend in this matter, and we have warned you how we have seen this work out in our experience of life."

The Apostle concludes by noting: "The calling of God is not to impurity but to the most thorough purity, and anyone who makes light of the matter is not making light of a man's ruling but of God's command. It is not for nothing that the Spirit God gives us is called the HOLY Spirit." (I Thess.4:3-8)



ANN LANDERS

A minister's wife wrote to Ann Landers, the newspaper columnist, as follows: "Dear Ann: I am married to a minister who is so 'morally pure' that he does not need to participate in the physical side of marriage. He tells me if I disciplined my mind I would not need sex either." She adds: "I have begged him to see a doctor, but he insists I am the one who needs help. When I suggested a marriage counselor he looked me straight in the eye and said, 'You forget, my dear, I am a marriage counselor.'" (He is)

She continues her letter: "This man is well-liked by his congregation and is an influential leader in the community. Whenever I bring up the subject, he tells me that Jesus satisfies all his needs and that I should pray for Divine guidance."

Finally, she laments: "Total abstinence might be fine for him but it is destroying me and I don't know what to do about it. Can you give me some advice?"

Well, Ann Landers replied: "Since your husband has articulated his position clearly, I think you should do the same. Tell him you don't believe in celibacy in marriage and neither does Jesus. Then see a lawyer and tell it to the judge."

It is deeply regrettable that Ann Landers should offer such advice. In the first place, the Bible does not condone divorce and especially over such matters as expressed in this letter.

In fact, it is in view of the soon coming of our blessed Lord that we are cautioned to restraint.

Listen to the words of the Apostle Paul: "But this I say, brethren, **THE TIME IS SHORT!** It remaineth, that both they that have wives be as though they had none...."

That's all of the verse we'll read for now, but how much clearer can the Scriptures get in calling for temperance in the marital relations bordering on abstinence.

The Apostle Paul does not condemn marriage. We read: "Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled." (Heb. 13:4)

On the other hand, that a person may serve the Lord without distraction, he advises women not to marry. Again we read: "The unmarried woman careth for the things of the

Lord, that she may be holy both in body and in spirit; but she that is married careth for the things of the world, how she may please her husband." (I Cor. 7:34)

His conclusion: "So then he that giveth her in marriage doeth well; but he that giveth her not in marriage doeth better." (I Cor. 7:38)

So marriage has its place, and the husband's role is to love and cherish his wife alway.

Yet, in view of the shortness of time there is this exhortation to avoid the pitfalls stimulated by advertising on television and books which emphasize the carnal, lustful feeding of the physical appetite which the world calls "love" but is in reality "lust."

In view of the coming of our Lord we need to examine our motives to make sure we are guided, not by lust but love--love for God, love for His Word, as well as love for wife and family, and love for one another.

Thus, our message -- BRETHREN, THE TIME IS SHORT! And it is a call to a life of purity and holiness in view of His unannounced appearing.

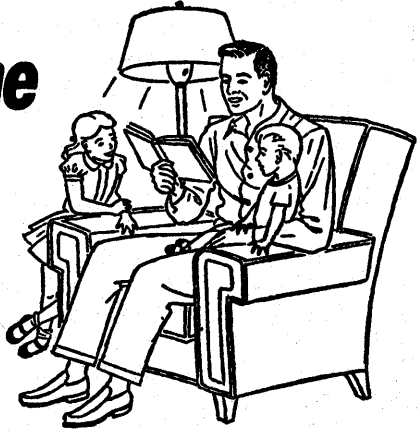
Again we're reminded, as Moses called the people to be ready, so we shout forth this message. Turn from your sin and find forgiveness through Christ's death on the cross for your sin. Then love Him, and live for Him daily. For He hath said: "Be ye therefore ready also, for in such an hour as ye think not, the Son of man cometh."

THE TIME IS NOW

to Make It the

Best Year

of Your Life



“Get back to the simple things in life,” advises Helen McHugh, chairman of the Family Income Management Section of the American Home Economists Association.

“We must decide what is really important if we are to get more out of life,” she notes.

For the future she suggests drawing up a three-point “necessity list.”

1. Things absolutely essential.
2. Things that carry great importance, but may be cut off for some time.
3. Luxuries not actually needed.

Now “buy accordingly,” she advises. Furthermore, “Make repairs instead of replacements. Take advantage of sale prices of stockable items. Avoid expensive, labor-saving foods.”

“Always take satisfaction from whatever you’ve achieved,” she notes, “no matter how small it may seem.”

Dr. Arthur Field, sociology professor, says there's only one way to make 1975 the best year of your life for getting along with other people--sit down and talk to them "from your heart."

Husbands might say to their wives, "Darling, let's talk about us, about our relationship, what we want out of life, what bothers us, our fears, our dislikes, our problems, our hopes for the year ahead."

Dr. Field maintains that once the first barrier of communication is broken down, the words of intimacy and confidence can come pouring out and a totally new in-depth relationship can be built.

Ask your children what they want out of life, what their problems are, what they think of you as mother and father.

At work, find out what your co-workers are thinking--learn about their goals and frustrations.

Dr. Field, a professor at Staten Island Community College, advises married couples to take stock with each other every two months. He suggests you keep in better touch with your friends, perhaps inviting them around more often.

Finally, Dr. R.F.Mines, college dean, says: "Never get discouraged!"

In the words of Scripture we might be reminded of Paul's words to the Galatian Christians, "And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not."

Many are wondering what's ahead. What does the future hold? How shall we plan to live in the days ahead? For some, these are frightening questions. For others, there is the quiet, discernible realization that the future is in God's hands.

A GALLUP POLL surveyed peoples of nine nations to discover some interesting observations for the future.

For instance 61% of Americans who were polled think that 1975 will be a "troubled year with much international discord." On the other hand, 69% of Britains who were interviewed predict trouble ahead.

In the United States, 29% said they think this will be a peaceful year, whereas in Britain, only 14% surveyed predict peace.

The results in other countries showed similar pessimism.

In Canada, over half of those interviewed (56%) see trouble ahead, with 30% predicting peace.

Sweden--41% see trouble ahead; 42% believe the year will be peaceful.

Uruguay--38% see trouble; 37% see peace.

Switzerland--36% see a troubled year during 1975; 52% see peace ahead.

France--31% see trouble ahead with 42% expecting a peaceful year.

India- only 26% see a troubled year; 41% see a peaceful

year.

The words of the Spiritual come to mind... "Nobody knows de trouble I see."

We've been commenting during several recent broadcasts on the Apostle Paul's letter to the Corinthians where he writes: "...this I say, brethren, the TIME IS SHORT; it remaineth, that both they that have wives be as though they had none; and they that weep, as though they wept not; and they that rejoice, as though they rejoiced not; and they that buy, as though they possessed not..." (I Cor. 7:29-30)

First, in view of the shortness of time the Apostle warns of having right values when it comes to human relationships, and particularly the marriage relationship. The Apostle is not condemning marriage for he goes on to say that to marry is not a sin, but to refrain from marriage may be better in order to serve the Lord without distraction.

Also, in view of the shortness of time we're told that they that weep should be as those who weep not!

The Psalmist David wrote: "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning."

There's coming a day when there will be no more sadness, no more heartache, no sorrow and no death. Should this not be an encouragement for all who weep now!

"Let them that weep, be as though they wept not!"

James writes concerning those who will weep and howl for their miseries that shall come upon them. The context would indicate that he is speaking of those living in the "Last Days."

Again our Lord pictures both the awful tribulation and eternal doom as a time of "weeping, wailing and gnashing of teeth." Indeed, how terrible to be unprepared for Christ's coming, or to be unprepared for Death, which ever should come first.

Only to the Christian can the admonition be given to refrain from weeping. In fact, there's coming a day when the Lord will wipe all tears away.

Again, in view of the shortness of time we are admonished: "They that rejoice, (should be) as they that rejoiced not."

That's an unusual exhortation, especially in view of Phil. 4:4, which states: "Rejoice in the Lord always and again I say, Rejoice." And there's I Thess. 5:16, which says: "Rejoice evermore."

There are times we are not to rejoice.

When the seventy disciples returned from their ministry to cities around Jerusalem, they rejoiced, saying: "Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name."

Our Lord replies: "Notwithstanding in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven." (Luke 10:17-20)

Lest our rejoicing be on account of personal accomplishment and tend toward pious pride, we are commanded to "rejoice not," but rather rejoice in the redemption of Calvary reckoned freely to the believer by Jesus Himself.

Rejoice not in your accomplishments and attainments. Rather rejoice in the Lord and in the power of His might.

Some wrongfully suppose that the Christian life is all fun and rejoicing. And we have no argument with those who emphasize the positive; for we do read that "the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost." It is joy to be a Christian.

On the other hand, in view of the lateness of the hour we are admonished to be sober, and that shows restraint.

Laughter is good but with restraint.

Dr. Sam Janus, psychiatrist mentioned earlier, says: "The most rewarding activity is laughing. If you keep laughing, 1975 will be your best year ever."

Well, we admit that laughter has its place.

In the sermon on the mount, our Lord said, "Blessed are ye that weep now; for ye shall laugh." Happiness is in store for every believer.

However, the Scriptures caution against foolish talking, jesting and joking which are not convenient. And in view of the coming of the Lord, Paul writes: "Let us watch and be sober!" (I Thess. 5:6-8) Likewise, Peter warns: "But the end of all things is at hand; be ye therefore sober."

In view of the day in which we live, facing the coming of the Lord followed by great tribulation judgments, the call of God is to sobriety. Think of your unsaved loved ones left behind at the rapture to endure the awful woes and plagues of coming wrath.

Centuries ago when Jesus walked this earth, a man named Publius Lentullus, who was then President of Judea, gave us the only known pen picture of our Lord. He wrote: "It cannot be remembered that any have seen Him laugh, but many have seen Him weep."

Think of it! Knowing He came to die for man's sin brought the sober realization of all that was involved in our redemption. Of course, we rejoice in so great a salvation. But our rejoicing should be with concern for those who are not ready to meet the Lord--not ready for the rapture.

Finally, in that the TIME IS SHORT we read that they that buy should be as they that possessed not.

What about our possessions? Are we living as though we

are going to be here forever? Or, are we living in view of eternity?

One Bible Commentary states that the sin of Sodom was not merely their open profligacy, but that "they bought, they sold," etc. as men whose all was in this world. (Luke 17:28)

Could this be the sin of our time when materialism has become the god of many?

What about our possessions?

When a rich young man came to Jesus inquiring: "What shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?" our Lord replied: "Keep the commandments." And he asked: "Which?" Of course, we're not saved by keeping the commandments, although we are reminded that the first command is to love the Lord with all our heart.

Then our Lord told him to sell all that he had and come and follow Him and he would have treasure in heaven. But we read how he refused to do so and went away sorrowful, having great possessions. (Matt. 10:22 & Mark 10:22)

Do you see how possessions can be our downfall?

At Pentecost, God did such a gracious work in the hearts of believers that we read how those in the early church "sold their possessions and goods and parted them to all men, as everyone had need." (Acts 2:45)

Some say this is "communism," but in reality it was the "old time religion" at work.

Modern communism is a selfish philosophy of hate and greed, demanding what you have--If you have more than I do, share it with me. Whereas, the practices of the early church found believers saying, "Because of the love of Christ, I share what I have."

In view of difficult days ahead it may be that Christians will be called upon to share their possessions. Our motto should be, "Let them that buy be as though they possessed not."

Let us hold fast our profession, but not our possessions.

Paul concludes his comments by saying: "But I would have you without carefulness," or "without cares."

Possessions often bring cares. That's why the rich are unhappy for they worry about fires, floods and unfaithful friends who could so quickly rob them of their riches.

According to the Greek, the Apostle Paul is saying: "I would have you to be not merely 'without trouble' but 'without distracting cares.'" (Jamieson, Fausset, Brown).

When many see trouble ahead, isn't it wonderful to be free from trouble and free from cares?

Why? Because we can live in the light of Christ's soon coming, wearing this life as a loose garment, waiting to toss it aside at the return of the Lord for His own.

Do you have that conviction today? Or are you like the man who said he wasn't looking for the Lord to come to take him to his heavenly home; he was enjoying his earthly home.

Friend, there's nothing in this world that begins to compare to the mansions our Lord has prepared. While some commit suicide when they lose everything in this life, the Christian knows his treasure is beyond where moth and rust doth not corrupt and thieves do not break through and steal.

THE TIME IS SHORT! Let's live in the light of eternity! Having come to Christ and finding forgiveness for sins, let us now live for Him, looking for His coming.

For remember, He hath said: "Be ye ready also, for in such an hour as ye think not, the Son of man cometh."

WHAT'S AHEAD?



PEACE

INFLATION
RECESSION



WAR?

A DEPRESSION

Isn't it great to be alive in 1975?

In spite of all the various predictions for this year of 1975, it's wonderful to know that "The future is as bright as the promises of God."

Actually, there are forecasts that are rather foreboding. Pat Garrard of the CAPITALIST REPORTER goes out on a limb to predict: "Sometime in 1975--probably by mid-year--the worst financial collapse since the 1930's will occur." He goes on to suggest: "For the first time in history, runaway inflation will precede--and overlap--a fullscale Depression. This is inevitable, and no man or government on the face of this earth will prevent it from happening."

We remember when Gerald Ford took over his office as President. At that time, in an address to the Congress, he stated: "My instinctive judgment is that the State of the Union is excellent. But," he added, "the state of our economy is not so good!" However, during his State of the Union Message, the President declared: "The state of the Union is not so good!"

While the economy remains a major factor in our nation's future, we have pointed out in recent broadcasts that it is the threat that exists in the Middle East that bears closest watching.

Senator J. William Fulbright, upon leaving office in Washington following his defeat in the election, declared that the Middle East is the number one problem facing the world today.

Only recently President Sadat of Egypt warned that the Mideast is a bomb ready to explode! He further asserted that it was his belief that Israel has nuclear weapons. The fear is that the next war may be a nuclear one.

Max Lerner, newspaper columnist, writes: "Thus, the signs in the Middle East today are ominously pointing toward another war."

These observations might prove most frightening except that for the Christian there is the knowledge from the Word of God that similar conditions would prevail at the time of Christ's Return. Jerusalem would be compassed about with armies; nations from the north would be preparing for an invasion of Palestine; and upon the earth there would be "distress of nations, with perplexity."

Is this not true of our world today?

But it is in the midst of these prevailing conditions that we read: "And then shall they see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory." Hallelujah!

And again, "When these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh."

For the true believer who is living for Christ, this is the greatest hour of all history as we await the return of our Lord. And for those not living for Christ, there is the forecast of coming awful great tribulation such as the world has never seen nor ever shall see again.

It is in view of dark shadows of depression and amidst threatening signs of a nuclear war, that we are led to cry out with the Apostle Paul, BRETHREN, THE TIME IS SHORT! How much time remains we do not know! Each passing day should find us rejoicing that we are still enjoying freedom. In spite of economic woes and physical hardships, we are living in the hour when the shifting clouds must make room for the sudden appearance of our Great God and Saviour Jesus Christ seen coming for His own. Is this not the Blessed Hope of believers?

While some anticipate going through the tribulation, it appears to us that the believer's blessed hope is not WRATH but RAPTURE!

So we echo again the words of Paul, "Brethren, the time is short!" Could it be that the appearing of our Lord is at hand? Is the rapture imminent? Is Christ soon to come?

Hallelujah! The very idea of seeing our Saviour and being "caught up to meet Him in the air" gives thoughts of joy and delight.

As the songwriter declares: "Oh joy, oh delight, should we go without dying."

It is in view of the Apostle's declaration that the TIME IS SHORT that we are left with these admonitions--not to despair, and not to become so engrossed with our loved ones, or occupied with the cares of this life that we should miss out on the glorious reality of rapture. At least, that is how we might interpret this message.

Let's read it: "But this I say, brethren, the time is short; it remaineth that both they that have wives be as though they had none; and they that weep, as though they wept not; and they that rejoice, as though they rejoiced not; and they that buy, as though they possessed not; and they that use this world, as not abusing it; for the fashion of this world passeth away." (I Cor. 7:29-31)

Did you hear it?

Today, with much of the emphasis on SEX, it's a different approach to read Paul's words: "It remaineth that both they that have wives be as though they had none..."

Someone has written: "Everywhere there is SEX, SEX, SEX...Sex in schools, movies, on TV, in slick (sick) national magazines, on college campuses, on Broadway, and EVERYWHERE else possible is all a part of the Satanic conspiracy to thwart the American dream and challenge the authority of Bible Christianity." (From MIDWEST TRUMPET by Larry Hance)

Likewise, in the MIDNIGHT CRY there is the warning that we face God's wrath on account of this obsession with Sex. The editor notes: "The days that were before the flood were characterized by open sex, total disregard for righteousness, and the results were violence, bloodshed and rebellion." He goes on to observe: "The preoccupation of the residents of Pompeii was sex. God wiped them off the face of the earth in a few hours."

The Scriptures remind us that Sodom and Gomorrha are an example of God's judgment to those who should afterward live ungodly. (2 Pet. 2:6)

Our Lord also reminded us that as it was in the days of Noah and in the days of Lot, when they married and were given in marriage, and when they "married wives" which indicated adulterous relationships, so would it be in the day of His coming.

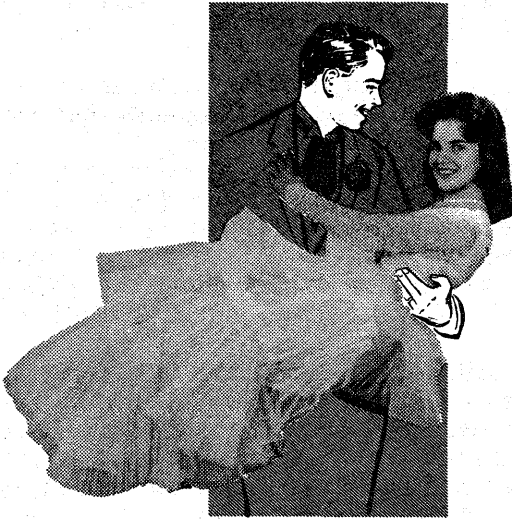
Again, he related the parable of the great supper to indicate the various excuses made by those invited to the marriage feast who would turn down the invitation.

The one said: "I bought a piece of ground, and I must needs go and see it: I pray thee have me excused."

Buying lots in over 4000 developments in the United States has become a billion-dollar business. Some buy swamp land and waste land. As George K. Berstein, Federal Office of Interstate Land Development, testifies: "It's a mystery. Why will anyone buy a piece of land sight unseen?" He observes further, "Nobody would buy a house that way, or an automobile, or a TV set!"

So you find this man in the parable, saying: "I bought a piece of ground, and I must go and see it." Was it true that he was buying it sight unseen? Or could it be that he was more interested in earthly real estate than in his heavenly state?

Likewise, you have the man in the parable who said: "I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come."



Could it be that he was more interested in the physical relationships of life than in the spiritual relationships?

I remember when I was pastoring, I invited a man to go to church on Sunday and he replied that that was the only day he had to work on his house. In fact, he said he believed the Lord smiled in approval because he was trying to accommodate his family by improving his home.

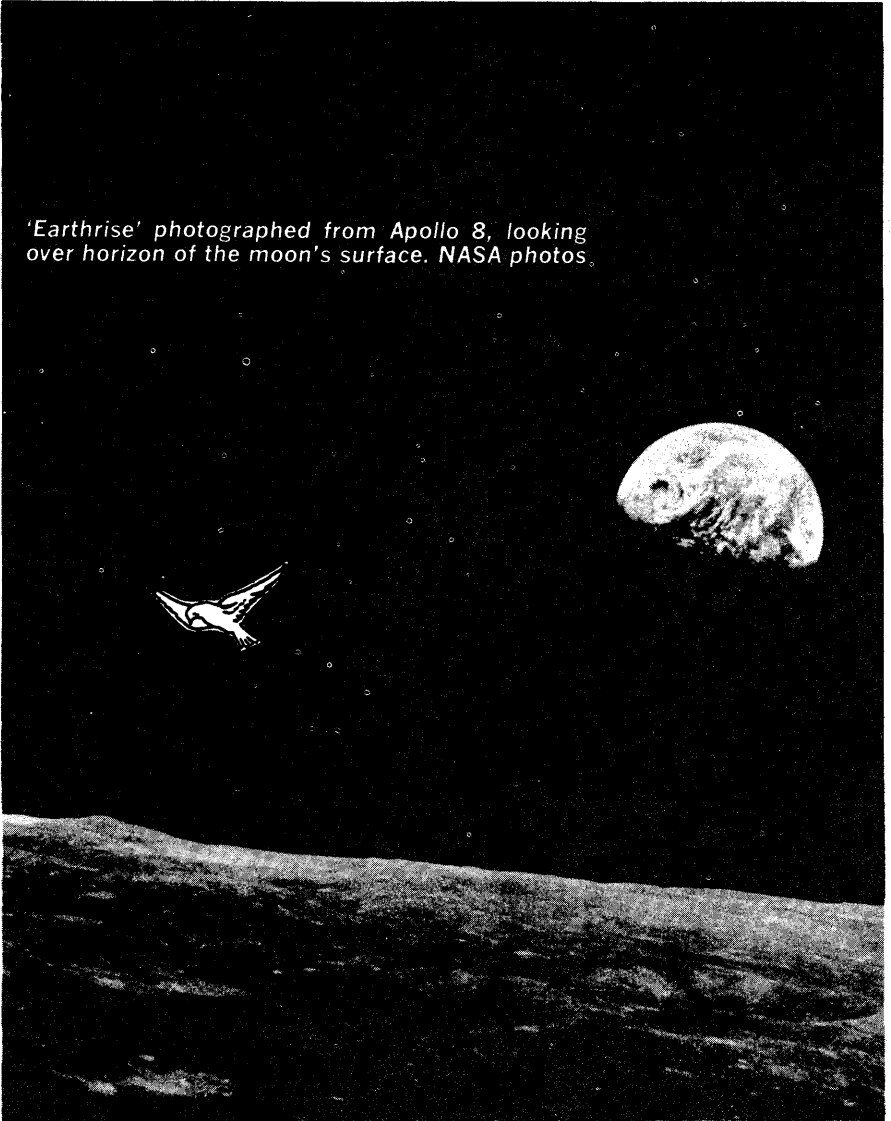
May God help us.

How many there are that I fear are going to miss heaven, and will not be ready for the rapture when Jesus comes,

simply because they were too busy to think of eternity.

Eternity, my friend, is forever. It is as though a bird carried a grain of sand from Florida's beaches to the moon

'Earthrise' photographed from Apollo 8, looking over horizon of the moon's surface. NASA photos.



and returned until all of our sand was gone and eternity was only then beginning. What a tragedy to waste precious moments of a lifetime in selfish pursuits of happiness and pleasures that are for a moment when we should be planning for eternity.

Wake up, friend!

Our Lord further warns in these words: "And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares. For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth."

Think of it! How many will be trapped by their loose living, their immorality, their over-indulgence in greediness and selfishness, their being occupied with the simple cares of this life and that day of Christ's coming finds them unprepared?

No wonder our Lord continues His warning, saying: "Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man." (Luke 21:34-36)

Are we watching? Are we alert to the signs of the times? Are we awake to the days in which we live with our Lord's return imminent? And are we ready should He come yet today? Do you know Christ as Saviour and Lord and are you living for Him in a life of holiness?

For, indeed, our Lord hath said: "Be ye ready also, for in such an hour as ye think not, the Son of man cometh!"