

CHAPTER 11AM I RIGHT AND READY TO GO DOWN THE ROAD WITH DELIGHT?

I am on God's road of rightness. I am convicted and convinced that it is the only way to go (Chapter 8). Others may or may not choose to go down this road, and I want to be of help to them (Chapter 9). I realize that my journey is far from over. I have not arrived at the finish line yet. God is working to create a masterpiece and a finished product. I am in the process of walking with God down the road step by step, stage by stage (Chapter 10).

As I travel down God's road I must keep on it and keep at it. I must learn to enjoy the process and to delight in each stage of my journey. If the educational process is to be worthwhile and satisfying, then the child must enjoy the first grade, then the second grade, then the third grade, etc. Even though I have not finished my education, I am learning to love each grade and each subject. Every day is a new learning experience! Suppose someone said, "I refuse to enjoy school until I'm in High School!" How sad! Those who don't learn to love the 7th grade will probably not enjoy the 11th grade either! You must move through school for better or for worse. Whether you are ready or not, time marches on (see page 57). Will you enjoy it or not? It can be fun and full or it can be flat and failing. The process of going to school can be a FRIEND or FOE, a DELIGHT or a DISASTER. Which will it be? You must go through the schooling experience. The question is, HOW will you go through it?

Am I RIGHT and READY to go through God's school of life (learning to live, learning to be, learning to relate to God, to myself, to my world and to others)? Am I seeing right, thinking right and acting right? How is my sight? my attitude? my action? my reaction? Is my journey through my teens a learning and a loving to learn?

Learning does not always seem like fun. Learning often is difficult and requires effort and work and study and repetition. Learning is not always what we would like or want. Think of the young student learning his multiplication tables--going over the same things again and again in what seems like ENDLESS REPETITION! Is that something that can be enjoyed?

Paul learned something in Philipians 4:11. Was it easy

for Paul to learn this (see verse 12 and remember that Paul was in prison when he wrote these words)? \_\_\_\_\_

Should I expect to enjoy the learning process? Should I expect to enjoy the results of learning? (Is it worthwhile to know how to multiply?) Can I really take delight as I am learning?

Think of the planting of seed. The farmer must work and toil and plow. He must plant the seed. He must patiently wait. TIME is needed to reap what is sown. So, the human heart is as the soil and truth is as the seed. The truth is heard and received. Then it works on us, in us and for us as we are learning. The result: it becomes part of our very being! The truth is a real part of us and its TRUENESS guards us, guides us and governs us.

The full and final results of school and growing up do not find their place until later on as an adult when I begin to put to work all the experience of those years of learning, whether in business, work, home, hospital or whatever.

Consider the building of a home. Constructing a home is one thing; living in it is something else. A finished home is a delight to live in! Is it very much fun living in a home without a roof? without heat? without running water? with sawdust everywhere? And yet, should there not be enjoyment in building it? Why or why not? Should the builder say, "I'm not going to enjoy any of this work until the home is completed! Then I'll enjoy it, but not until then!"?

Suppose your family was preparing to take a trip to the ocean. Preparing for a trip to the ocean is not the same as being there. But preparing is part of the experience that will get you there, and it should be an enjoyable experience. The ocean is fun. Getting to the ocean should also be fun. Eating a picnic lunch is enjoyable. Is it also enjoyable to pack a pack a picnic lunch? Why?

The person training for an athletic event (a track event, skating event, or whatever) must work and train and exercise and sweat and practice day after day, week after week, month after month, year after year. Finally at the end of a long and hard road there comes the gold medal. Was the work, training, exercise, sweat and practice enjoyable? Why or why not?

Consider an artist working with his brush on the canvas. Does he paint drudgingly (as if bored and hating what he is doing)?

Does his enjoyment of the painting come only when he is finished? Is it possible to enjoy the process or can he only enjoy the product?

How can I enjoy the learning process? How can I learn to love learning? The following 5 D's are needful:

① You must Discover your ignorance. That is, you need to find out where you really are. Where are you on the road (see diagram on pages 28,34,56 and locate where you are on this road)? Find out where you are, what you know and what you do not know. "And if any man think that he \_\_\_\_\_ anything, he \_\_\_\_\_ yet as he ought to know" (1 Corinthians 8:2).

Take a good, realistic look at yourself and discover where you are, why you are (noting your age, grade, etc.), and what is really there for you to learn and to understand.

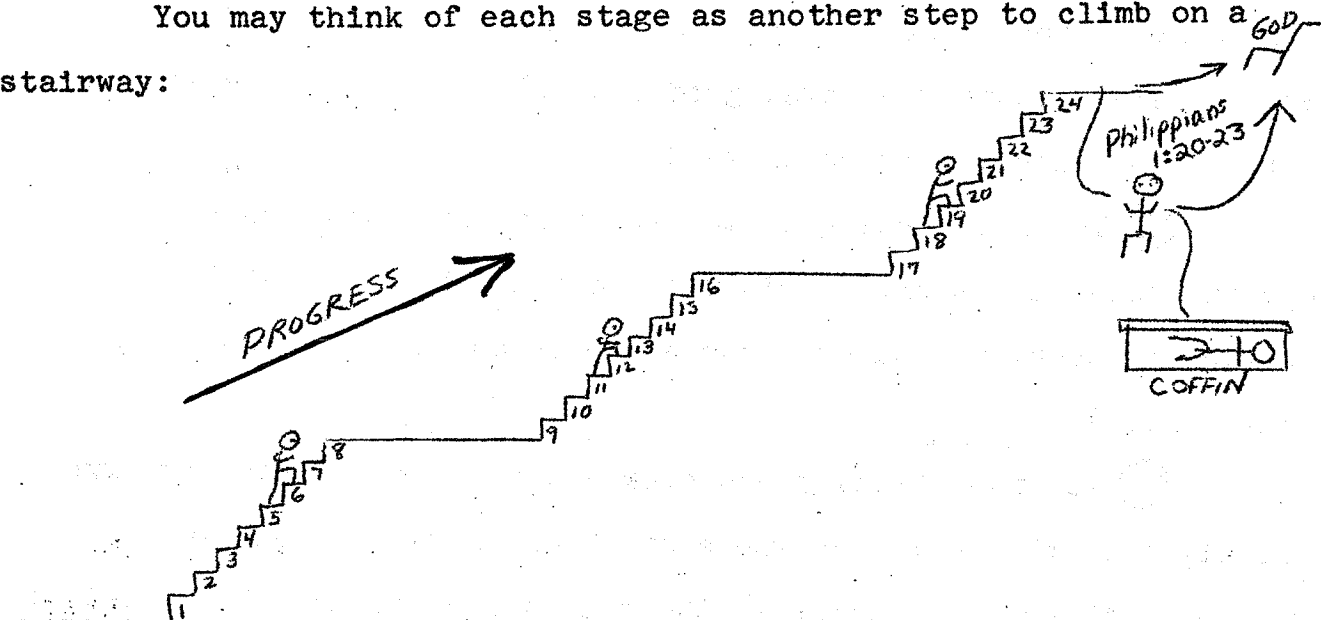
② You must Determine to tackle and face this hour, this day and this situation. Don't run and hide, but keep at it and tackle the problems and challenges one by one as they come (see Romans 12:2).

③ You must Develop and grow and increase as you move from one stage to the next. As there are GROWING PAINS (sometimes growing children have pains in their legs and perhaps elsewhere), so also there are KNOWING PAINS. Not every child goes through growing pains (or hurts). In the same way, some young people seem to breeze through school without much pain or difficulty. For others it is a hard struggle, and going from one stage to another is often hard and often hurts. Some have great difficulty with arithmetic or math; others have trouble with English; some do well in class but find it very hard to play sports in gym because they are not as skilled or talented physically as others; some find it easy to talk and to socialize; others do not. DON'T LET DIFFICULTIES, HARD PLACES AND HARD THINGS STOP YOU FROM TRUSTING AND TRYING TOMORROW (see Lamentations 3:19-27).

④ You must Delight in your developing and in your learning at each stage (see Psalm 37:4,5,23-27). Just as the artist delights at each stroke of the brush and the athlete delights in each day's training, so you must delight in life's daily lessons and trials.

⑤ You must Desire the next stage (the next day, the next month, the next year, the next exercise experience of your soul) in order to make progress and to advance. Time moves on and you must move on. You can look ahead without fear and dread: "Take no thought (be not anxious, don't worry) for TOMORROW" (Matthew 6:34).

You may think of each stage as another step to climb on a stairway:



Each step brings you higher up and makes it easier to see and gives you more to see. To make progress as you should, three things are needed: the right attitude, the right atmosphere and the right action.

### 1. The Right Attitude

My attitude should be as follows: "This hour is for me. This is an hour of time which belongs to God which has been given to me. I want to be THANKFUL for it and in it and through it. God has a purpose and a process to awaken me and to mold me and to cause me to know Him and to be learning of Him and from Him (Matthew 11:29--

"take My yoke upon you and \_\_\_\_\_ of or from Me"). God does and God will supply all my \_\_\_\_\_ (Philippians 4:19). As I take each step I must never forget that I am an A \_\_\_\_\_ for Christ (2 Corinthians 5:20)--representing Him, living for Him, speaking for Him."

I represent Christ in a hostile world, and thus I must have:

## 2. The Right Atmosphere

Are believers IN the world (John 17:11,15; Philippians 2:15)? \_\_\_\_\_ I am IN the world, but I am also IN the Lord God (2 Corinthians 5:17; Romans 8:1). A diver is IN the water (and under the water) but he is also IN a diving suit which has tanks containing the air from above. So also the believer who is in the world is also in the Lord, having and receiving the air and atmosphere of heaven.

Jesus said, "in the world (the world and its system with its sun and air, its warmth and cold, its persons and problems, its sin and suffering and swearing, its nice people and its not so nice people, etc.) ye shall have tribulation (trouble, pressure): but be of good cheer, I have \_\_\_\_\_ the world." <sup>7</sup>(John 16:33) Not only are you IN the world, but in the first part of John 16:33 Jesus said that you are "IN M\_\_." If I am a believer (one who is believing), then I have access to the God of heaven and earth and I can live in His atmosphere and under His government.

## 3. The Right Action

I must continue to face and tackle life right where I am each step of the way. All the things that I need and all the things that I find missing, such as (go to the next page):

wisdom and knowledge for my ignorance

strength for my weakness

companionship for my loneliness

guidance for my walk and talk this day

God's working to win over my self working which is wrong in thought, in words, and in what I do

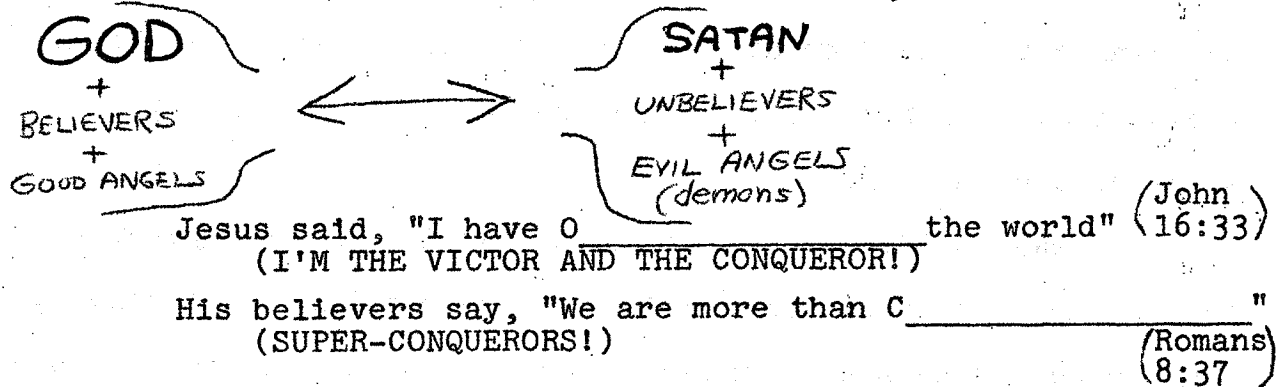
The more I realize these needs, the more I will realize my need for the God who can supply these things.

As I continue to act right and walk right as I go from step to step, I must remember four things:

1) Life's Journey is a CONTEST.

There is a constant contest of right vrs. wrong; truth vrs. error. There is victory and defeat; winning and losing:

THE GREAT CONTEST (see 1 Cor. 9:24-27; Gal.5:16-23)



2) Life's Journey is a CONFLICT.

It is a battle of words and wits, hurts and harms, kill and killing (Ephesians 6:10-18; 2 Corinthians 10:3-5; Galatians 5:7).

3) Life's Journey is a CONCERN.

The people, problems and pressures around us tend to make us worry and be anxious (see Matthew 6:25-34; 10:26-39; Philippians 4:6-7), but...

4) There is CONFIDENCE and COMFORT.

Paul said (even during a difficult time when he was in prison), "I am CONFIDENT (convinced, assured, fully persuaded, certain) of this very thing..." (Philippians 1:6). Paul knew for sure that God was working (Philippians 2:13) and that He would continue that good work which He started, and He would someday complete that good work. Because of this, Paul and every believer is comforted and should be able to say, "Thank you!" "In EVERYTHING (in every situation of life, in every stage and as I take each and every step) G \_\_\_\_\_ T \_\_\_\_\_!" (1 Th.5:18).