

# Sisters All!

Dear Martha,

With little Freddie off to school now, things must be pretty quiet around there. You will have lots of time to get settled in your new house and arrange everything as you like. Your description of your living room sounds lovely, and that kitchen must be a dream. It will indeed facilitate the extra entertaining required by Steve's position.

In your new state of prosperity, I can see that it could be easy, as you say, to get into the "rat race" you have noticed among your friends. Money is important, but it has a tendency to crowd out other intangible values that may be even greater. "Where does one draw the line?" you ask. That is a real problem, and there is no simple, ready answer.

We had a discussion on this subject in our Bible class several Sundays ago. The lesson (Mark 8: 14-21) concerned an incident that occurred soon after Christ's feeding of the four thousand. The Pharisees had been arguing with Jesus, as usual, and were demanding a "sign." He walked out on them and went off in a boat with his disciples. Imagine His dismay at finding them also arguing, and over--of all things--a shortage of bread!

No doubt they were embarrassed when He broke in with an admonition to "beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, and the leaven of Herod." What did that mean? Buy bread from neither the Pharisees nor the government? Hardly. Jesus would not waste breath on that sort of advice. He was trying to point out a lesson, although they had a hard time seeing it.

The Pharisees were always taking Him to task for His practical, kindly aid to the poor. They were legalistic and otherworldly. On the other hand, Herod's party members were practical to a fault. They forsook faith and principle to compromise with the Roman government and stay in power. Neither the Jews nor the Romans respected them.

Both sides have their counterparts today. There are those who advocate that we return to the rigorous simplicities of great-grand-mother's time. The ordinary comforts and amenities of life are "frills" to them. They believe it is good for the minister and his family to get along on hard scrabble. "Puts his faith to the test," they say solemnly, over their Sunday chicken dinners.

Quite the opposite point of view is held by modern "Herodians," who make no attempt to conceal their mad scramble to get ahead. Their aim is to have the latest, the newest, and the best. It is a game they can never quite win, but they keep trying.

Jesus was profoundly concerned that His own followers should not drift into either extreme in the management of their lives. Their tendency to worry He dismissed at first, unable to believe that they could be genuinely anxious about necessities after such recent demonstrations of His ability and willingness to supply their needs.

Naïvely, they supposed that all financial problems would be solved, once they could see the next meal ahead (or get the house paid for, or finish school, or get out of debt). Jesus looked beyond, to the greater dangers that threaten those who feel financially secure. However, He found His disciples still on the "next meal" level, unable to grasp the implications of His warning. He had to be content with reminding them that their bread supply was safe enough—"Do ye not remember . . .?"—and leave it to succeeding generations to catch His deeper message.

There is no Christian economic formula for the individual or for society. In this complex world, no one can even tell you which expenses are necessities and which are luxuries. But I believe that Christ would have us, first,

## AN INEXHAUSTIBLE SOURCE

After preaching the gospel for forty years, and after printing the sermons I have preached more than six and thirty years, reaching now to the number of 22,000, in weekly succession, I am fairly entitled to speak about the fullness and the richness of the Bible as a preacher's book. Brethren, it is inexhaustible. No question about freshness will arise if we keep close to the text of the sacred volume. There can be no difficulty about finding themes totally distinct from those we have handled before; the variety is as infinite as the fullness. A long life will suffice only to skirt the shores of this great continent of light. In the forty years of my ministry I have only touched the hem of the garment of divine truth; but what virtue has flowed out of it! The Word is like its Author—infinite, immeasurable, without end. If you were ordained to be a preacher through eternity, you would have before you a theme equal to everlasting demands.—C. H. Spurgeon.

## DID YOU KNOW?

During each hour of last year 1,050 volumes of Scripture were circulated throughout the world by The British and Foreign Bible Society.

The Canadian Bible Society requires contributions of \$3,000.00 every day of the year if it is to meet its obligations to Canada and the world.

The Scriptures have now been circulated in 1,185 languages.

A Braille Bible for the blind costs \$100.00 but the Bible Society provides it for \$10.00 or less.

Scriptures in Braille are now available in 34 different languages.

One of the most effective ways to take the Gospel to the world and to make new believers strong in the Faith is to place in their hands a copy of the Word of God.

## THINGS I WISH I HAD KNOWN BEFORE I WAS TWENTY-ONE

That a man's habits are mighty hard to change after he is 21.

That a harvest depends upon the seeds sown.

That things worth while require time, patience, and work.

That you cannot get something for nothing.

The value of absolute truthfulness in everything.

The folly of not taking older people's advice.

That what my mother wanted me to do was right.

That Dad wasn't an old fogey after all.

More of the helpful and inspiring message of the Bible.

The greatness of the opportunity and joy of serving a fellow man.

That Jesus Christ wants to be my Saviour and Friend.

—Adapted.

avoid getting frantic about finances, remembering instead that He knows our needs, and cares. Then, having provided for the essentials, we should be free to seek and cultivate the highest values in life, using the funds we have as a means to that end.

"We are HIS people, and the sheep of HIS pasture." As long as we think of ourselves and our possessions as belonging to God, we will not be slaves to materialism in any of its forms.

For all these things do the nations of the world seek after; and your Father knoweth that ye have need of these things. But rather seek ye the kingdom of God; and all these things shall be added unto you.

—Luke 12: 30, 31.

Your loving sister,

Mary

The King's Highway