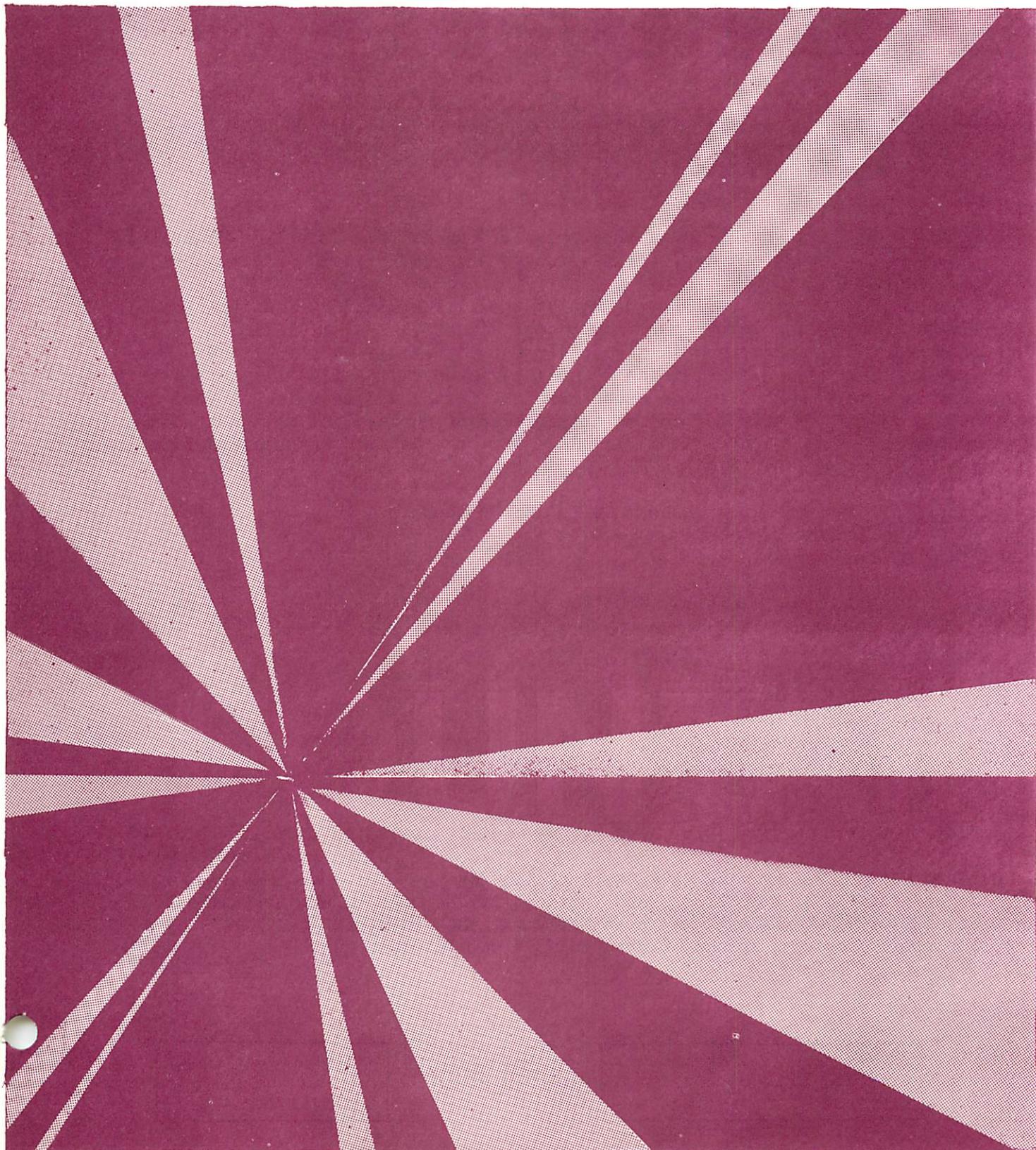


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# FOUNTAIN

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THE FOUNTAIN is published once every six weeks. It is supported by free-will offering from Christian friends who have the burden to see the Word of God reach as many as possible. We depend on the all sufficient grace and providence of the Lord to meet our every need. The magazine is free of charge and is sent upon request.

OUR AIM is to unite all Christian brothers and sisters who have the same burden to preach the Gospel unto all nations. We preach none other than Jesus Christ and Him crucified.

WHAT WE BELIEVE The Bible is the basis of our faith. We believe that the whole Bible, every chapter, every verse as originally given is inspired by God.

"You (Jesus) are the Christ, the Son of the living God." (Matthew 16:16)

"Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." (I Timothy 1:15)

"And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved." (Acts 4:12)

"For by grace you have been saved through faith; and this is not your own doing, it is the gift of God -- not because of works, lest any man should boast." (Ephesians 2:8,9)

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"Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, says the Lord of hosts." (Zechariah 4:6)

"When He saw the crowds, He had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. Then He said to His disciples, 'The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; pray therefore the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest.'" (Matthew 9:36-38)

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# Christian Realism

Death is the painful but sure fate of everyone alive. It appalls the hearts of most people and as a result, it is very often not dealt with positively. Many avoid even the thought of it, thinking they are still young. Many entertain the hope that with the aid of modern medicine, death could be postponed to a much later date. But like it or not, it is a matter of time when death strikes.

It may be asserted that only life has meaning while death is void of it. If that is the case, the meaning of life is open to interpretation. Some may live to satisfy their ego, to prove themselves to be better than the people around them. Some may think that since life is transient, immediate pleasure is the only benefit. And some may even harbour the noble motive that their lives are for improving the world. But all have failed to see life in its total context and have misinterpreted its meaning.

If death is equivalent to an endless sleep, it is most tragic to be human. For man has a mind capable of perceiving an eternity.

But life does not end with death. Jesus, God the Son, has conquered death by dying on the cross, and resurrecting from death. Only in knowing and accepting the eternal life through Jesus can the view of life be complete. Life can then be viewed in its proper perspective. And death can be dealt with positively and realistically.

EDITORIAL



"For what is a man advantaged, if he gain the whole world, and lose himself, or be cast away?"

- Luke 9:25-

"I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly."

- John 10:10-

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We welcome written contributions both expository and evangelistic in nature. Articles may include testimonies, short reflective prose, stories, biographies, book reviews, Bible studies, topical discussions, poems, translated works and news of Christian groups. Please avoid adopting a didactic approach. The name and address of the author must accompany all contributions. Pseudonyms may be used, but anonymous articles will not be published.

# CHRISTIANITY — A FORM OF ESCAPISM

- Ken Blue -

Minister  
at the  
Church of The Way,  
Winnipeg

I understand how sincere people can make this charge. Prior to my conversion to Christ a few years ago, I made it myself. To many people, religion of any brand seems unrealistic. Common sense and our training in school teach us to be skeptical of anything other than empirical answers to life.

The Bible tells us that the Gospel of Jesus Christ cannot normally be appreciated or understood by people because it is a mystery (Ephesians 1:9). This does not mean that Christianity is a puzzle or difficult to understand; it means that it is impossible to understand. The secret of the Gospel of Christ isn't something we could ever figure out on our own, it must be revealed to us. Once it has been revealed to us it suddenly makes sense. Now we find ourselves questioning the sincerity and intelligence of our non-Christian friends because they can't see it as we do. Now, rather than suspecting that Christianity is escapism, we find it to be the most intense reality imaginable. We are now in the thick of a dynamic relationship with the God of reality.

Those making the charge of escapism against Christianity can be forgiven their mistake -- they have no way of knowing. The person of Jesus Christ is the key which unlocks the mystery of the reality of Christianity. Until

one meets Him, one will never know. The Bible tells us that the Gospel seems foolishness to man. We shouldn't be surprised when we are accused of being escapists.

Those who defend the dignity and truth of Christianity have an added difficulty because there is widespread confusion as to what Christianity really is. One of the problems is that when many people talk about Christianity, what they are really talking about is counterfeit Christianity. It looks like the real thing on the surface so it is capable of confusing the issue. Let me at this point say clearly what I am not referring to when discussing Christianity. I do not mean mere cultural Christianity or Churchianity. This phony is occupied more with subjective social concerns rather than with realistic spiritual needs. It is a pseudo Christianity which provides a form of religion but no force. It is not plugged into the dynamic which is the life of real Christianity. Unlike true Christianity which is a 24 hour a day, 7 day a week adventure, Churchianity is a once a week obligation for appearance and conscience's sake. This Sunday Christianity need not face realistically the needs of men and the commands of God so long as it appears to. If people mean this when they say Christianity is a form

of escapism, we must agree with them.

What I mean by Christianity is a personal relationship with God, or more accurately, with God through His Son Jesus Christ. The clearest way of defining Christianity is by pointing to the historical person of Jesus.

There is a basic misunderstanding among many, even Christians, regarding Christ's relationship to Christianity. The common misconception is that Christ came to start a new religion, and it came to be known as Christianity. This is not true. Christ Himself said, "Think not that I have come to abolish the law." He came rather to fulfill what had gone before. He came to focus all the revelation of God which had been accumulating throughout history from the start. He came not to start a new religion but to be the visible image of what up to now had been only shadows. Christianity then is God focused in Christ. Christ isn't the founder of Christianity. He is Christianity. The Christian Church now is the body of Christ. That is to say it is the present visible image of the now invisible Christ, just as He was the visible image of God the Father.

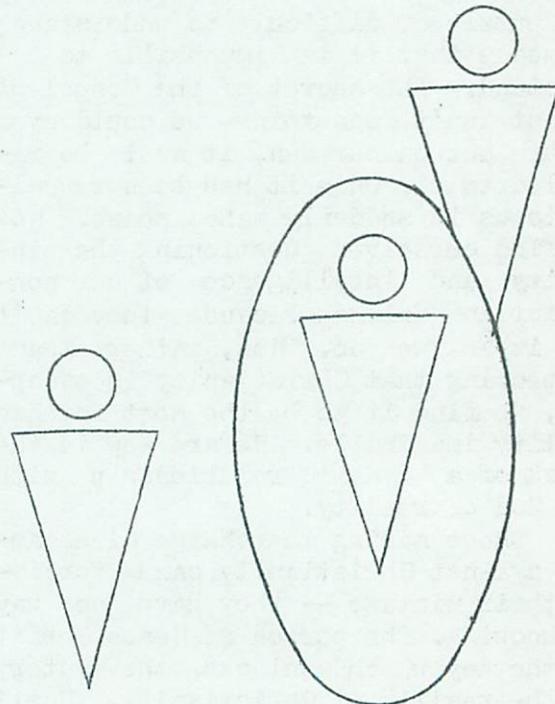
A way of simplifying the issue before us then is to ask, "Was Jesus an escapist?" If so, then Christianity is a form of escapism by definition. In order to determine whether or not He was an escapist, let's look at Him. Jesus was a responsible member of His community, making useful practical things for people out of wood. This seems to be meeting life where it is, providing He had other interests. All work and no play is escapism of a sort. History however reveals to us that Jesus was a balanced realistic personality. In addition to being an obedient thoughtful child and a hard worker, He also attended parties. At one wedding party He provided the wine for the guests when the host had run out of his supply. He was evidently enjoying Himself. He obviously approved and wished it to continue. When people needed a table or a glass of wine, Jesus provided. History further records for us that when people needed sight

or hearing or life itself, Jesus met the need. When comfort, assurance and forgiveness were necessary, Jesus responded positively and decisively. Far from being an escapist, He was a profound realist.

It is true that He was always talking about His Father in Heaven and His Kingdom not being of this world. He encouraged people to put their faith in unseen realities. This does seem to the modern mind to be the habitual diversion of mind to imaginative activities, a good definition of escapism. But there is all the evidence to suggest that there was concrete reality behind what He practised and preached.

He performed miracles of the highest order, controlling the forces of nature and death itself. He said that these things He did in the realistic here and now were dependent on the unseen realities He spoke of. It was like proving the reality of electricity by the presence of a glowing light bulb.

Jesus predicted His own death and resurrection and they happened as He said they would. The reality of His



resurrected body which He presented to hundreds of witnesses speaks to us of a reality of life beyond our mortal scope. It's real historical fact alright but the meaning of this reality must be revealed to us. We don't comprehend it unaided and are tempted to back down, and call the whole business escapism.

But the issue is still Jesus. He met life head on. He took and gave full measure for 33 real years. The one who calls Jesus an escapist is a confused person. The one who says Christianity is escapism does not understand its relationship to its indwelling Lord. Christianity does what Christ did, is what Christ was.

To say that Christianity is not escapism is not to say that Christians do not escape. They clearly do. Christians escape the frustration of powerlessness and meaninglessness which is a reality for modern man. Ultimate meaning is provided the Christian through his relationship with the Creator and Sustainer of meaning. The Christian escapes the reality of death because he is indwelt by the immortal God. He escapes true moral guilt be-

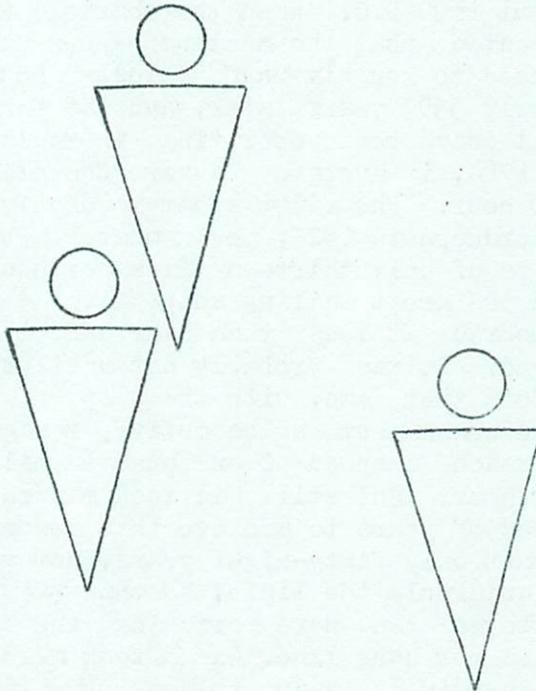
cause he has been forgiven in Christ and there remains no basis in fact for that guilt.

Is Christianity a form of escapism then? If we take the common dictionary definition of escapism and the true definition of Christianity, we find them mutually exclusive. All this may be too academic for some so I offer my own experience as evidence.

Ever since I was young, I can remember having a pragmatic turn of mind. I was attracted to things which worked, that which could be trusted. My attitudes about life were determined to some degree by my education in California Universities and my service in the U.S. Army. In time it seemed to me that every system of logic, every religion, and every philosophy had a flaw. They each came apart at the seams at one point or another. Nothing I had been exposed to met with reality at every level. Everything that one could believe in, it seemed, was escapism at some time. Then at a moment of great need I met Jesus Christ as Lord, total reality in Himself. He didn't say, "I will show you the way". He said, "I am the Way". I was not given a new set of values or an airtight philosophy. I was given new life which touches reality at every level.

Since becoming a Christian seven years ago, I have travelled extensively, attended schools in four countries, competed on international athletic teams, smuggled Bibles behind the Iron Curtain, been arrested for it and imprisoned, worked as a labourer, lost loved ones through death, got married and stayed married, and now I minister in a large church and face the dull routine matters of everyday life. I say with no hesitation that each experience has been met aggressively and realistically. My performance as a Christian has been at times a great disappointment to both myself and God but failure was never due to escapism. A Christian is not allowed that indulgence.

Christians are to face life realistically as Christ did.



**C**HANGE is the word for this day and age. Today we face ever-increasing demands in every aspect of our individual life, physical and mental alike, to live up to the word "change". Consciously and subconsciously, we can feel this accelerating thrust which perhaps started at the turn of the century. Being caught up in this strong current, we begin to wonder where we are now.

If we think of change we will think of mobility. It is common to talk about turnover rates nowadays. For instance, people always move between metropolitan areas. It is not surprising, therefore, to find that American families migrate from one city to another on the average of once every five years. As a result, the social environment has become a dynamic one to the extent that is beyond our imagination. Of course, this has not taken the increase of urban population into consideration. According to Edgar de Vries and J.P. Thysee of the Institute of Social Science in the Hague, today world urban population is increasing at a rate of 6.5 percent per year. (1) This figure means that within eleven years, there will be a doubling of the earth's urban population or more concretely, four or more new "Toykos". Besides the drastic increase in urban population, we have to adjust constantly to new social contexts. Personal associations with friends and objects are being constantly intruded by unfamiliarities. As a result, there are fewer objects that we can relate to, and there are fewer people with whom we can really have heart-to-heart communication. In a totally new context, we will again ask, "Who are we?" "Who am I?"

Another prominent change we can observe is in technology. From the "Modern Times" of Charlie Chaplin to

# WE SHALL NOT BE MOVED

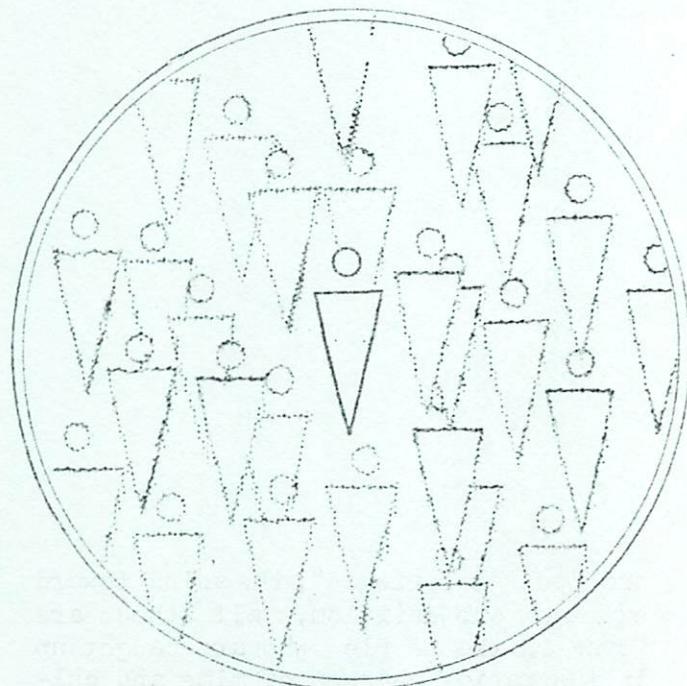
- Dedicated to the crew members of the spaceship EARTH -

Benjamin Ng

the ingenious "2001 Space Odyssey" of Stanley Kubrick, we can see the portrayal of a sudden burst of technology which is plunging forward to the point of no return. This accelerating thrust can be illustrated by our modes of travel. In 6000 B.C. the fastest transportation available to man over long distance was by camel caravans, averaging eight miles per hour. It was not until about 1600 B.C. when the chariot was invented that the maximum speed was raised to roughly twenty miles per hour. Nearly 3500 years later, when the first mail coach began operating in England in 1784, it averaged a mere ten miles per hour. The first steam locomotive, introduced in 1825, could muster a top speed of only thirteen miles per hour and the great sailing ships of the time laboured at less than half of that speed. It was probably not until the 1880's that man, with the help of a more advanced steam locomotive, managed to reach a speed of one hundred miles per hour. But still, it took man thousands of years to achieve that record. It took only fifty-eight years, however, to quadruple the limit, so that by 1938 airborne men were cracking the 400 miles per hour line. And it took merely another twenty years to double the limit again. And by the 1960's rocket planes approached the speed of 4000 miles per hour and man in space cap-

sules were circling the earth at 18000 miles per hour.(2) This sudden development of technology puts man in an awkward position in that he was not aware, not only until recently, of its consequences such as pollution and depletion of natural resources which only promise a frightening future. This thrust puts into everyone's mind the question of survival which generates much anxiety. It has surely stripped the sense of security and balance off man.

As university students, we always feel the threatening pressure of the explosion of knowledge. If we draw the graphs of the increase of knowledge and travel, we can see a remarkable resemblance between the two. For thousands of years, man has been storing knowledge. However, there was a sudden increase of knowledge with the invention of writing. Another leap was the invention of movable type in the fifteenth century by Gutenberg. Books were produced at the rate of 1000 titles per year. By 1950, four and a half centuries later, the rate had accelerated sharply to 120,000 titles a year. By 1960, a decade later, the rate approached the prodigious figure of 1000 titles per day. According to biochemist Philip Siekevitz, "What has been learned in the last three decades about the nature of living beings dwarfs in extent of knowledge any comparable period of scientific discovery in the history of mankind." Today, the United States Government alone generates 100,000 reports each year, plus 450,000 articles, books and papers.(3) Everyday we are confronted with new concepts, new discoveries, new formulae and new philosophies. This gigantic load of information is being put to us in our classrooms, our offices and our homes through mass media daily until it upsets our intellectual appetite.

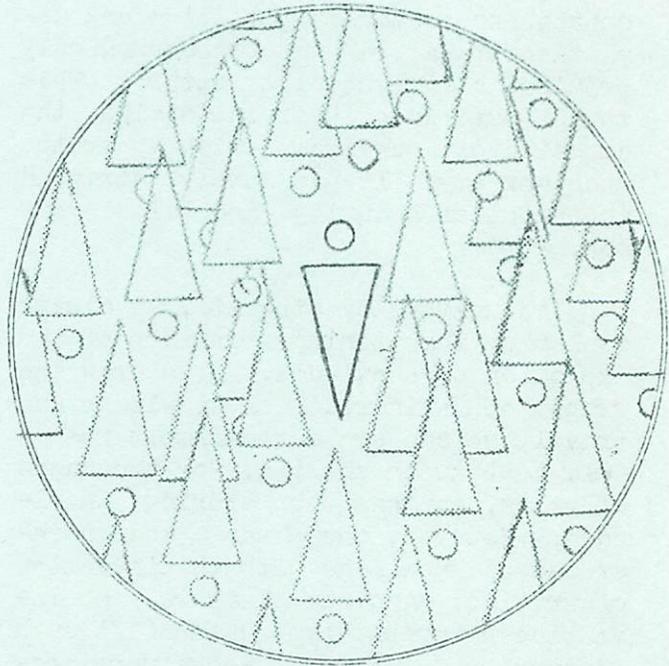


With this accelerating thrust, the concept of time is inevitably changed. Events that happen in a day can mean a month in the past century or a year in the long past historical times. This magnifies the gap between the older and younger generations. Another interesting fact which is partly brought about by mass communication is that distant societies with different backgrounds are being drawn closer together as if they were next door neighbours. What happens on one side of the globe will be made known to the other side in the split of a second. People are made aware of the existence of a whole range of cultural values, ethical standards and philosophies. We experience new challenges to our own culture everyday. This contributes partly to the concept of relativism, a basis for new morality. Absolutism becomes alien. This activates permissiveness in our society. Nobody knows what is right or wrong. Man has lost his direction and becomes maladapted not only physically but psychologically as well. The interest in hallucinogenic drugs, the enthusiasm for astrology and the occult, the search for truth in sensation, ecstasy

and "peak experience", the swing toward extreme subjectivism, all these are found in the people who are caught up in the rapid changes of time and cultural interaction.

This is where we are. Where do all these point to? Where do they lead us? One fact we should notice is that these changes have been brought about suddenly without our awareness. We do not know how we have been caught up in this overwhelming current. It had been carrying us swiftly and smoothly all the way down through decades until it overrode us to the point of no return. The imbalances in our macro- and micro-environment, the upset in our eco-system, the exploitation of natural resources, the weakening of our social consciousness, the disintegrating family structure, the loneliness and meaninglessness of life, all these resulted in this current can only suggest a catastrophe in the operation of our "spaceship".

A student in my dormitory came to my room one night. He picked up my guitar and sang a few tunes. Though there were no words, yet I could sense the frustration inside him. He suddenly broke down and his singing turned sour. With tears in his eyes, he said, "I don't know where I am going." Are



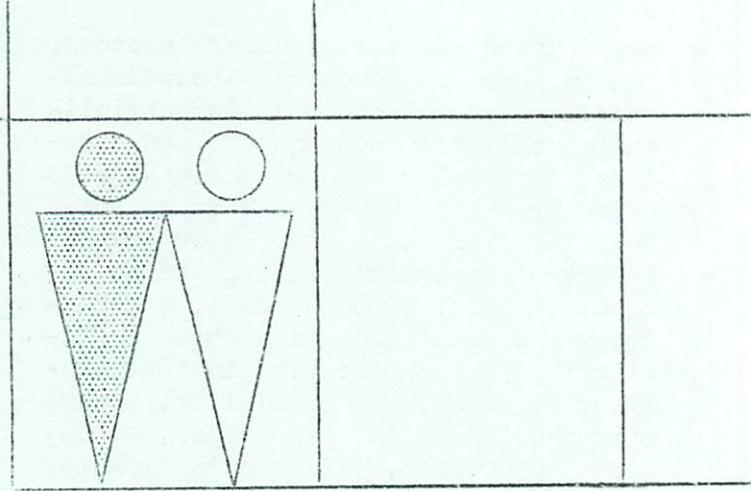
we asking the same question today? Being constantly overloaded with information, bombarded by physical and mental stresses, overstimulated, we may wonder the meaning of our existence. Where is our hope? New philosophies only promise intellectual exhaustion; science at best only promises a brighter tomorrow. But what about the meaning of our existence now?

There is one who promises a meaningful life, one who can give us stability in this everchanging world. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever. He is the rock that we can anchor in. He will give our life a new order, and a new harmony.

Footnotes:

1. Alvin Toffler, Future Shock, p. 23
2. Ibid., p. 26
3. Ibid., p. 31

# MAN RE-CREATED



- LENG -

Since the turn of the twentieth century, science and technology have been advancing with rocket speed. Countless new discoveries and inventions have been achieved which enable man to enjoy life to the extent that he would never have dreamt of several decades ago. Televisions, radios, stereo sets and even cars are no longer the privileged properties of the well-to-do's. Now everybody with an average income can sit cosily at home watching a ball game taking place on the other side of the globe, listening to broadcasts from stations several hundred miles away, or enjoying Beethoven's ninth Symphony. Travelling is so fast that man begins to realize the world is so small. Machines and especially computers are much more efficient than man, so that he can have more time to do other things. Antibiotics and new methods in medicine give a bright prospect of a prolonged life. Educational standard has also been raised a lot. Many countries have compulsory primary and may be, secondary education. Going to universities is no longer the privilege of a few either. The world is quite proud

of the fact that the percentage of the illiterate has been decreasing. To top it all, the satisfaction of man's ego was climaxed as he witnessed the first man walking on the moon a few years ago. Yes, it seems that there is not much that he cannot do. In fact, many humanists believe that, if given enough time, utopia can be brought about on earth. Let us look at some current issues to see if utopia is any closer now than in preceding ages.

The outbreak of the two World Wars within twenty-five years, and the explosion of the atomic bomb in Hiroshima shook the confidence of those who were looking forward to universal peace. So they set their hope on the United Nations which was supposed to serve as an instrument to maintain world peace. But before long news of the Korean War, Vietnam War and Middle East War reached their ears. In 1969 the Soviet military buildup on Chinese border at the peak of the Sino-Russian quarrel heightened the tension. Everywhere are wars and rumours of wars. Do science and technology help? They only increase the horror of warfare because we know too well the destruc-

tive power of the nuclear weapons. Man has been so concerned about the advancement of science and industrialization that the consequence of careless disposal of chemically loaded waste products never came to his mind until it was too late. A report in 1972 by an international team of scientists headed by D.L. Meadows, the computer expert of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, said that continuous expansion of population, pollution and industrial production, or any one of the three, will end in disaster before the twenty-first century comes.

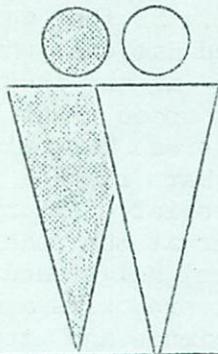
Another problem of increasing eminence is the shortage of fuel. Man has been exploiting the source of energy and is so obsessed with his own desires that, as an essay in Time magazine puts it, he has not got the common sense to realize the result of his exploitation. Furthermore, to our dismay, man has gradually become the slave of machines. In some mines, workers have to take shifts to work 24 hours a day to keep the engine running.

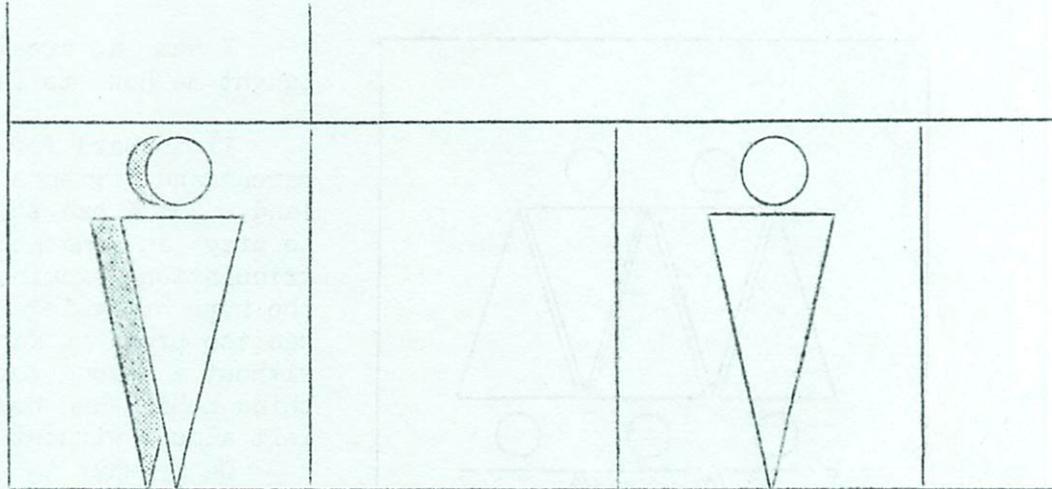
What about education? Can it bring about utopia? In the States, many college student demonstrations for racial equality and against the Vietnam War turned into bloodshed and violence. An educated man may not necessarily be more upright, but he can surely become more hypocritical and "smarter" in committing crime. One of the largest and most complex drug systems ever discovered in the United

States was organized by Dr. Timothy Leary who was a Harvard University professor in the 1960's. Selfishness and greed still rule man's heart and with them fear reigns. From 1960 to 1969, population in the United States rose by 13% whereas violent crime was up 131%. There were 14,900 murders (up 66%), 301,000 robberies (up 180%), and 308,800 aggravated assaults (up 130%). No wonder a housewife in Manhattan carried a pistol around for safety reasons.

The older generation engages itself in the pursuit of material well-being, be it money, status, or whatever. Yet the men who have "made it", in the end, only find life empty and meaningless. The younger generation sees the phoniness of materialism, so it takes hedonism -- pleasure as the chief purpose of life. The indulgence of youths in drugs, promiscuity, alcohol and the like is driving them down the road of self-destruction. Indeed they cannot find real satisfaction in life either. Although the advance in medicine can prolong life, thousands of people every year seek to take their own lives because they cannot find anything worthy to live for! Interesting enough, the most affluent country in Asia, Japan, also has the highest suicidal rate. The same is true in Europe where Switzerland, being the most affluent country, tops the scale of suicidal rate. So even though man can conquer the moon, he cannot solve the problems immediately around him or even within himself.

What is the root cause of all the problems man is facing today? Someone has well said, "The heart of the problem is the problem of the heart." As Jesus puts it, "From within, out of the heart of man, come evil thoughts, fornication, theft, murder, adultery, coveting, wickedness, deceit, licentiousness, envy, slander, pride, foolishness." (Mark 7:21,22). The thoughts inside are manifested in man's outward actions. The underlying cause of the "sickness" of our society is the sinful human nature. But it was not so intended when God first created man.





God created Adam in His own image, imparting to him the qualities of the attributes of God which make man superior to all other living things. Some of these qualities are the ability to love, intelligence, rationality, creative capacity and free-will. Man was created so that he could have fellowship with God, and he was given the authority to have dominion over (to govern and take good care of) the rest of the creation (Genesis 1:26). However, when Adam misused his free-will and chose to disobey God, he sinned. We only have to look at human history to be convinced that his descendants have inherited this sinful nature. Not only have they disobeyed God, many even deny His existence. Thus the Bible says, "And since they did not see fit to acknowledge God, God gave them up to a base mind and to improper conduct. They were filled with all manner of wickedness, evil, covetousness, malice, full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, malignity, they are gossips, slanderers, haters of God, insolent, haughty, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents, foolish, faithless, heartless, ruthless." (Romans 1:28-31) Man is still in God's image, but the image is greatly distorted. The object of his love has been changed from God to himself. To satisfy his own desires, he exploits nature and his fellowmen with the aid of his intelligence and creative ability, lead-

ing to energy crisis, pollution, wars and crime. He tries to improve himself by his own efforts or by education, but his efforts fail miserably, and education only provides him with a civilized garment, while his inner self is still as corrupt as ever.

When man looks at this messy world, he cannot help wondering, "What is the meaning of life?" Yes, unless we go back to our Creator and have fellowship with Him, we can never know the purpose for which He created us. Only He, the Life-giver, can give us a new life with a new heart. But how can we, as sinners be acceptable in God's sight without violating His righteousness? God hates sin, but He loves sinners. He has provided a wonderful way of reconciliation by sending His Son, Jesus Christ, to die and pay the penalty of our sins. "For our sake He made Him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God." (II Corinthians 5:21) Christ experienced every aspect of being a human, but since He is God, He remained sinless and could redeem all who repent and accept Him as their personal Saviour. They can become a new creature, no longer under the bondage of sin. Christ will live in them and manifest His life through them, so that the true image of God can be restored in man. Only then can man fulfill the purpose for which he was created, and only then can he find true meaning in life.

I was a dreamer. But God has taught me how to face life and live.

It is hard for one to leave one's parent and friends to go to a strange land. But I had to. I was too proud to stay in Hong Kong to repeat my matriculation examination or to give up the hope of going to university. I was too proud to face my failure. So without a second thought, I left everything behind and headed for Canada. I left almost without a drop of tear.

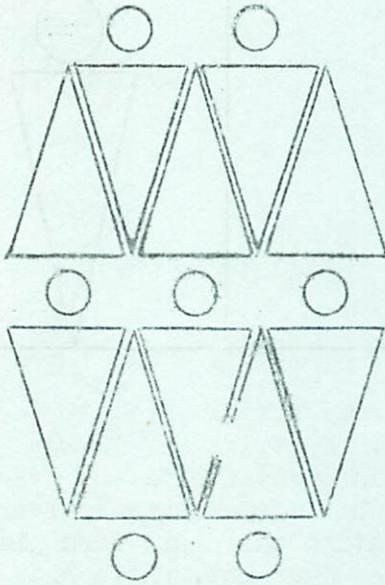
On my way to Canada, I was confused, not knowing whether to feel happy or sad. All my loved ones were far away and I was not sure what the future would hold for me. Yet I anticipated the new challenges that I would have to face. I thought of the new friends that I would make and I longed to meet my sister on my way to Winnipeg. For I had not seen her for two years.

I was overwhelmed with excitement when I arrived at the University. Everything was so strange and so new! I hardly felt homesick at all. I attended all kinds of activities and parties and enjoyed myself with the new friends I made. There was so much freedom and so much fun! Now that I was far away from my parent and my friends, I could change as much as I liked to without worrying about disappointing them. I was free from all the responsibilities and obligations that had been heaped upon me. I was free to rule my own life!

But, was I free? Deep inside I knew I was not. When I started to disregard all the principles and values that I had previously held, and even my God, all I was left with was a vacuum. I had lost my direction. And I started to feel the external pressure closing in upon me.

"Everybody on the floor is going to that party. Why aren't you?"

Friday. The dormitory was so quiet on Friday nights. People either went home or went out on dates. What



I  
DARE  
NOT  
FACE

- Cynthia Chan -

should I do?

Strangely enough, I still felt like an insecure adolescent who did not wish to be left out by his peer group. I was indeed tossed about by social pressures.

I thought about the God in whom I had believed. Now He seemed so distant. I did not know what to do. Now I wished I could grab Him by the hand to prove to myself that He was living. But I knew that was absurd. I was in a dilemma. I could not deny my past experience with Him, and yet I could not feel His presence now. In a sense, I was getting tired of the Christian way of life and I wanted a change. I wanted to be free and do everything on my own. God was so abstract! Why bother? And yet I could not dismiss Him from my mind. How painful it was when I struggled between trying to believe in someone whom I was not sure of and trying to give up believing in someone whom I had known to be true.

Then I read something about the existentialist understanding of man. I had not known that so much of my thinking was influenced by this philosophy.

"When a person comes to feel that God is dead it is as if he has come to the brink of a great abyss, whose unfathomable darkness fills him with terror... The overcoming man is able to find a way not of escape from the abyss, but beyond it... (This) means courageously to accept that life has no meaning... then one has to choose for oneself how to live. This too is an anguishing thing to do, because one is at that point master of one's own destiny, and making a decision without any guiding principles at all. The choice must be absolutely personal, with no reference to the advice or help of others. Though terrifying, it has to be done if a man is ever truly to live... So man becomes God. (He) is answerable only to himself... The man who

thus grasps the abyss and finds his own freedom is the superman." (What is Human p.74,82) I found myself facing the abyss and experiencing the same despair described in the passage. But was my God dead?

Meanwhile, I discovered something more about myself and that deepened my grief. "What would I do even if I were certain that God is true and real?" I asked myself. "Probably nothing much." How I hated myself when I suddenly realized the kind of person I was -- indifferent, apathetic, mediocre. I knew that even if I had known what the Truth was, I would not be the kind of person who would risk his life for the Truth. I would not hate a person too much, and I would not love a person too much either. I was just one of the most ordinary people who lived day in and day out in their own little circles, never caring about what was happening in the world. But I had longed to be different, to be extraordinary, and to be "above the crowd". I had dreamt of becoming a great person even when I was a child. I was shocked now to find myself the exact opposite of my own ideals.

One night I was studying. But I could not concentrate. So I decided to take a walk in the chilly autumn air.

"How can a person like me direct my own life? I am so undependable. I can turn out to be the person whom I hate. And am I sure that I can really depend on myself when the storms of life sweep over me? Can I be a superman? Am I qualified to be my own God?"

"God, (if you are there) I dare not lead my life on my own. I know the kind of person I am. Please take my hand and walk with me. Be my guide through life's journey."

Then I went back to my studies, and was startled to find that I could concentrate for the first time in a while.

From then on, my attitude changed. I permitted myself to re-enter the Christian circle. Nothing spectacular happened, but through the small things in daily life, God time and again showed me that He was a living God and that He cared for me.

However, I remained a dreamer. I was unable to face the monotonous routine of daily life and the everpresent loneliness which was so hard to drive away. I immersed myself in studies for a while. Then I turned to an active social life. Later on, I entered into an exclusive relationship with a boy. I also tried hard to live up to my own aspirations. I tried to be honest and in so doing, I lost a summer job. I invested much of my time and energy in preparing the programmes for the gospel tour of my church choir. I was enjoying myself. And my heart was indeed thrilled when I saw that God did back me up as I tried to be true to my belief. But I was yet to learn that all along I was using those activities and relationships as the means to escape from reality. I did not face God as He was. I merely sought to lose myself in those dramatic experiences.

With the termination of my relationship with the boy, I was forced to face reality, cold and cruel as it was. I dreaded to go back to my room at night after the day's work. I dreaded the loneliness enclosed within the four walls. What should I do? Social activities would not help -- I had tried them before. Work harder? But still, I had to go back to sleep. Furthermore, I found that actually that relationship had not helped. It was exactly loneliness that I was escaping from and now I was back to where I started. I was in no way better equipped to face it.

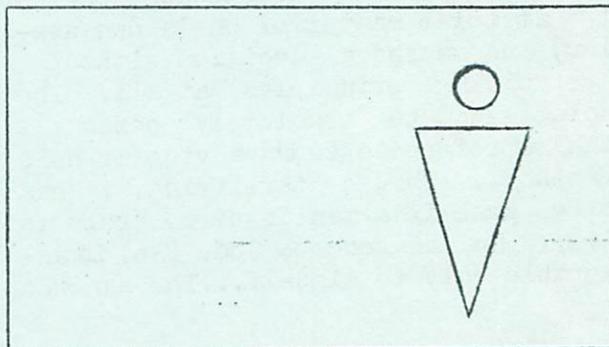
I gradually realized that there was a basic issue in life that I had to face all by myself, and unless it was settled, I would forever be feeling

that something was missing and it was futile even if I used all kinds of method to fill the vacuum within me. The issue was: my relationship with God. I had to come to God alone, all by myself. This relationship could not be accomplished by another person's help or even by doing lots of work for God.

All along I had failed to see that God was so great that He could fill my loneliest moments with His presence and love. I had failed to acknowledge Him as the sole resource and meaning of my life. Instead I rushed to other people and things for help. I ran after dreams and dramatic experiences to find the solution. But it was finally forced upon me that unless I could face God alone, I could not face loneliness, I could not face life realistically, and I could not have a healthy relationship with other people.

I am now learning to come to God and spend time with Him alone, to pray to Him, to study His Word, to share with Him my joys and sorrows, and to adore Him. I find that He calls me to taste life in its fullness; its lonely hours, its ecstatic moments, its solitude, its anxiety as well as its agony. He calls me to face all of life courageously and joyfully because He will go through all of it with me.

I had been an escapist, unable to face my real self, unable to face failure, loneliness and the routine of daily life. God allowed me to try out every method I could find and see for myself that they did not work. Then He shows me that I can face reality only if I come face to face with Him.



# ACROSS THE GULF



I was thrown off balance

I reached out  
towards

Golden apples with a dazzling hue  
Fleeting joys that forever seemed to elude

I willed to obtain  
strived to attain  
my way

Aspired  
Challenged  
I dared

Forbidden?  
Rebel! .

I couldn't  
I shouldn't  
(How I hate to admit it)

Limitations  
Frustrations  
My ego shattered

I poured out my heart  
Who understood?  
Across the gulf  
Who stretched out his hand?

Had I wings, I would be far away  
There, a nest in the wilderness  
There, away from stormy blasts



When I awoke  
My troubles were still with me

Exhausted  
Futile  
Chasing after wind

In quietness  
I came to my senses  
I understood

There  
In the sanctuary  
I saw His face  
I saw The One  
Whose  
Loving kindness  
Understood all

Wilful rejection of  
The One  
Who died in my place  
Is  
Denial of grace

So I trust in Him  
Who plans my way  
In Whose likeness I was made

That the void in me  
May only be filled  
With His image

Awakening  
Apples faded  
Joys synthetic



Aspire  
Challenge  
I dare  
Not by power  
Nor by might  
But by the Spirit  
Of Him  
To Whom  
Nothing is  
Impossible

Frustration cease  
Whenever I seek  
Him Whose  
Love steadfast  
Satisfies

Exchange  
My good  
which is but filthy rags  
With  
His best

Now  
Across the gulf  
I stretch out my hand  
Good news to share with  
Searching, struggling fellow-men  
"Look what I've got  
Life in its fulness  
Through  
A Saviour who changes not"

- Ronnie -





# REALITY IN TOTAL

- Lawrence -

Albert Camus, the famous twentieth century Existentialist thinker, presents a thought-provoking and vivid picture of human life in one of his writings called The Myth of Sisyphus. Sisyphus is described as a man condemned by the gods to roll a rock to the top of a mountain. Yet every time when the rock reaches the top, it falls back to the bottom. Thus Sisyphus is in fact ceaselessly doing an unfinishable task, a hopeless labor. One would think that Sisyphus is being overwhelmingly tortured by this absurd, eternal and dreadful punishment. Yet this is not the case. "His fate belongs to him. His rock is his thing... If there is a personal fate, there is no higher destiny, or at least there is but one which he concludes is inevitable and despicable. For the rest, he knows himself to be the master of his days." Sisyphus is actually an hero, because he ~~accepts~~ the inevitable courageously and he enjoys what is absurd. In this sense, therefore, he is not the victim of his fate, but the master of it. "The universe henceforth without a master seems to him neither sterile nor futile. Each atom of that stone, each mineral flake of that night-filled

mountain, in itself forms a world. The struggle itself toward the heights is enough to fill a man's heart. One must imagine Sisyphus happy."

Young intellectuals today despise escapism. They show scorn to those who adopt a passive attitude towards life, those who say that this world is absurd and meaningless, and that the tremendous problems and sorrows that have to be encountered in their everyday life are too much for them. These young intellectuals on the contrary espouse a sincere attitude towards life. They treasure their contingent existence in this world, and they are prepared to meet every challenge, and to taste both happiness and sorrows honestly. They say that exactly because the world is imperfect that they are thrilled. They are convinced that the very dignity and meaning of being a man lie in that he faces reality courageously. Hence, like Sisyphus, they can call themselves master of their destiny, not the victims of it.

However, if reality is authentically meaningless and purposeless, if this world really does not provide any hope for individual human life, indeed if it is not meant to give any, then

even the highest degree of courage will only enable a man to become a "tragic hero". He may walk truly on his road of life, but he does not know where he is going. It may be replied that he does not need to know. It may be asserted that his only responsibility is to be true to himself while he lives, and that he should treasure his own life span and live authentically exactly because life is transient. Indeed, this view of life is correct and most admirable, if reality is just all that man himself perceives.

The Apostles' Creed that Christians recite so often begins with the words, "I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven and Earth.." Christians believe that there is a transcendent, personal, and all-loving God who is God of the universe. Man is sinful, estranged from God, condemned, and that man cannot save himself by his own efforts. Yet in stating clearly the deplorable situation of man, God does not shatter man's dignity. Contrariwise, He so loves man that He sent His only Son Jesus Christ to die in man's place, thus satisfying the

punishment of man's sins. Henceforth, man's dignity can be restored. Anyone who acknowledges what Christ has done and accepts Him as personal Saviour and Lord will have his sins pardoned. He will be reckoned righteous in the eyes of God and he can have the privilege of becoming even the child of God.

Man indubitably should have a passionate zeal for life. He should respond to reality realistically. But it is most tragic for a man to determine to be a "tragic hero" like Sisyphus. For he will have already taken the correct initial step in seeing life as it is, and yet what he sees is but part, not the whole, of the total picture of reality, in which meaning and hope are found in Christ.

Christians also face happiness and sorrows in the world. They also deal with what this world offers them positively. Yet they do not have to live with just cold comfort. There is no tragic heroic undertone in their lives. It is not because they have got a channel by which they can escape from reality, but because they have got reality in its totality. □

## FINANCIAL REPORT

Financial Report for The Fountain, 1973

<u>Details</u>	<u>Receipts</u>	<u>Payment</u>
Balance from 1972	78.72	
Offering		
from Winnipeg	4038.26	
Offering from outside Winnipeg	3867.64	
Paper and ink		4700.84
Postage		1693.52
Cover printing		465.71
For Far East edition		837.35
Rent basement for printing		144.00
Envelopes		247.70
Miscellaneous		200.92
(Deficit)	(305.42)	
	8290.04	8290.04

Financial Report for  
the Digest To You

<u>Details</u>	<u>Receipts</u>	<u>Payment</u>
Offering		
from Winnipeg	3425.51	
Offering from outside Winnipeg	1901.30	
Printing cost		4760.59
Postage		93.00
Surplus		473.22
	5326.81	5326.81

# ANNUAL REPORT

- A translated and adapted version of the Secretary-General's Annual Report published on the Chinese side of Volume 8 Number 8 of The Fountain -

Every generation has its own witnesses for the Truth, witnesses who stand against the hostile waves of the prevailing ideological currents to uphold what they are convinced is the Truth.

In this day which is characterized by moral permissiveness and relativism, the message of The Fountain has become more and more urgent; only Jesus Christ can save man from his sins and give him meaning and direction in life. For the battered and disillusioned young generation of today, The Fountain wants to bring the good news that Jesus Christ is the fountain of life.

For The Fountain, the year 1973 has been a year for rededication. It has been a year of waiting for the Lord's guidance in doing greater things for Him.

In 1972, we received a total of about 1000 letters from the readers. Yet for the latter half of 1973 alone, we received 800 responses. Among these, 15 non-Christians indicated that they wanted to know more about Christ, and there were 20 who accepted Christ as their personal Saviour and Lord. As for Christians, 72 persons indicated that they would like to dedicate their lives to the Lord, and another 17 persons would like to rededicate themselves to their Master. We sincerely hope that brothers and sisters in Christ will pray for these young people, and also that the Lord will do greater work with the coming of a new year.

Because of the lack of manpower, the co-workers of The Fountain had decided to put the publication of the Far East Edition to a temporary stop, starting from Volume 8 Number 3. As a result, the magazine is to be distributed directly from Winnipeg. At pre-

sent, a few brothers and sisters are taking up the follow-up work of the Far East in Hong Kong, which includes correspondence, fellowship and mutual encouragement with the readers. We thank the Lord that He has been blessing this work, and we are again assured of His presence among us.

In 1971, we published The Star-Seekers, the second digest of the magazine. 40000 copies were printed, and they were nearly all given out within a very short time. Now we have only a small number of the book left in Hong Kong. In 1972, we published the second edition of the first digest To You. 50000 copies were printed, and now only a few thousands are left. In the publication work of the digests, we have been convinced that we have to rely totally on the Lord's guidance, and that we need support from brothers and sisters everywhere.

In the past year, the co-workers of The Fountain had been waiting for further guidance from the Lord with a prayerful heart. We feel the need to spread the Gospel more effectively, and we have been considering the changing of the present printing method by mimeographing to other more sophisticated methods. Though we have been collecting relevant information concerning this matter, we feel that it is imperative for us to seek spiritual guidance from the Lord in this technical issue.

The current political and social upheavals in the world have already given an insinuation that the second coming of the Lord is at hand. We pray that the Lord will continue to impart to us His love for the lost ones, and that He will also be the Lord of The Fountain.

## READERS

In 1973, 1000 readers have been added to The Fountain. At present the distribution of the magazine concentrates mainly in North America and South East Asia, with Hong Kong and Canada bearing the highest rates of increase. Yet, in comparing the number of our readers in the States with the number of Chinese staying there, we still deem the distribution of the magazine in the United States unsatisfactory, and we hope that more people there can be exposed to the magazine this year.

## CIRCULATION

To cope with the rapid increase in the number of requests for the magazine, we started two years ago to make use of computers to compile our mailing list. In view of this, we hope that our readers in S.E. Asia can give us their address in English and by printing clearly so that circulation work can be done more efficiently. And in order to avoid magazines being repeatedly undelivered, we have to delete from our mailing list the names of those readers who have changed their address without notifying us. Also, a few months ago we tried to update our mailing list. This concerned those readers who have been receiving The Fountain for more than two years. This is meant to facilitate the work of circulation and we apologize for any inconvenience that might have arisen regarding this matter.

## EDITORIAL WORK

In recent years The Fountain has been experiencing a persistent lack of articles and we feel uneasy about the fact that the editors often have to be the major writers. We heartily welcome contributions from brothers and sisters outside Winnipeg. Because our readers are mostly young people, we would like our writers to avoid the

didactic approach. We welcome articles which are spiritually uplifting and which are relevant to our faith today. The final decision of publishing an article will be made prayerfully by the editors. We trust that the Lord will be pleased if we have the sincere motive to glorify His name.

The editors are now trying to form an information and data centre, and we welcome our readers to contribute to us stimulating and interesting books (or their titles) and magazines, or other sources of materials.

## CORRESPONDENCE

The correspondence, or follow-up work, forms a very important part of the overall work of The Fountain. At present, we have three co-workers in Winnipeg and two in Hong Kong taking up this service. And they are in real need of books and other materials for follow-up purpose.

## PRINTING

At present we have two mimeographs for the printing work. Although one of them is already worn-out, we thank the Lord that He has carried us through all along. On the day of compilation of every new issue of the magazine, there are usually 50 to 60 brothers and sisters coming to help in compiling, stapling, checking and packing. The joy of serving the Lord together is really tremendous.

## FINANCE

Owing to the increase in circulation, the total expenditure for each issue of the magazine has now reached 900 Canadian dollars. However, we have been receiving regular offerings from Fellowship groups, Bible-study groups and individuals in various places, and we thank the Lord for His provision. May the Lord give the vision of literature work to more Chinese Christians, and may He raise more workers for His service.

## CAMPUS WORK

We thank the Lord that He has put the burden in the hearts of brothers and sisters in a few universities to distribute every new issue of The Fountain on campus. We are surely aware of the advantages of distributing the magazine in a more direct and personal manner within the campus circle. We would be very glad to communicate with those readers who feel the urge

to share the distribution work of The Fountain in this specific way and we know that if we depend on the Lord, He will give us strength, wisdom and courage.

Like many of our readers, the majority of the co-workers of The Fountain are students. The Fountain belongs to every one of us. May we grow together in the grace of our Lord!

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## ANNOUNCEMENT: NACOCE '74

The North America Congress of Chinese Evangelical 1974 (NACOCE), is to be held at Wheaton College in Wheaton, Illinois from August 26 to 31 this year. Its theme is "Motivation and Mobilization".

The general goals of NACOCE are:

1. To promote spiritual unity and cooperation among Chinese Churches and Bible Study Groups in North America.
2. To coordinate Chinese Christian Ministries, i.e., to join individual Chinese Christians together to plan strategy, to utilize spiritual gifts of individuals to serve the Lord and to fulfill in a responsive way the Great Commission of our Lord.
3. To enhance effective ministry among Chinese Churches and Bible Study Groups.

NACOCE has a personnel profile as follows:

Chairman, Rev. Moses Yu (于力工 牧師); Coordinator, Mr. Stephen Yeh (葉潤身先生); Promotion Committee Chairman, Rev. Thomas Wang (王永信 牧師); Program Committee Chairman, Rev. Fred Cheung (張子華 牧師); General Affairs Committee Chairman, Mr. C.W. Lam (林仲偉先生)

NACOCE expects one thousand delegates to this landmark Congress. For delegates travelling from the East and West Coasts, chartered flights have been arranged. Two-way fare from San Francisco to Chicago will be \$138.00, two-way fare from New York to Chicago, \$81.00. Registration fee is \$15.00. Room and board is \$50.00.

Total budget for NACOCE '74 is \$30,000 from which \$4,000 will be set aside as a scholarship fund for the students and young people who will be future church leaders. NACOCE needs both prayer and financial contributions from local churches, bible study groups, and individual Christians.

For further details, please write:

NACOCE '74  
P.O. Box 4568  
Chicago, Illinois 60680.

# YOUR DECISION 剪寄之頁

Date 日期 \_\_\_\_\_

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Sex 性別	M. 男 <input type="checkbox"/>	F. 女 <input type="checkbox"/>	Education 學歷	University 大學 <input type="checkbox"/>	High School 中學 <input type="checkbox"/>	Others 其他 <input type="checkbox"/>
Age 年齡	10-20 十至二十 <input type="checkbox"/>	21+ 廿一或 以上 <input type="checkbox"/>	Occupation 職業			

我不是基督徒,但希望進一步認識基督的真理,請與我通信。  
I am not a Christian, but I want to know more about Jesus Christ. Please correspond with me.

讀此刊後,心受感動,我願意信耶穌,接受祂為我的救主,請為我禱告。  
My heart is moved after reading this magazine and I would like to receive Jesus Christ as my Lord and Saviour. Please pray for me.

我是基督徒,讀此刊後,心中受主愛的激勵,願將自己完全奉獻給主,求主帶領我一生,請為我禱告。  
 I am a Christian. I would like to dedicate my life to Jesus Christ and trust that He has a plan for my future. Please pray for me.

我是基督徒,但曾冷淡,現將自己再一次奉獻給主,請為我禱告。  
I am a Christian, but have turned away from God. After reading this magazine I would like to rededicate myself to the Lord. Please pray for me.

我是基督徒,樂意在此事工上有份,附上獻金 \_\_\_\_\_ 元為「泉源」之用。  
I am a Christian, and would like to support this work of God. Enclosed is \$\_\_\_\_\_. (支票收款人應為「The Fountain」. Please make cheque payable to The Fountain.)

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Please send me \_\_\_\_\_ copies of "To-You".

請按期贈閱「泉源」 \_\_\_\_\_ 本,地址如後。  
Please send me \_\_\_\_\_ copies of The Fountain regularly.

我已遷居,舊址如右:  
I have moved. My old address is:

Attach address label here.  
請寄回住址貼條

請勿再寄「泉源」給我,地址如右:  
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若親友為非基督徒,請在姓名後加註「信」二字  
For addition requests, please use another sheet of paper.  
如空格不足,請用另紙。