

fountain

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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SECOND CLASS MAIL
REGISTRATION NO. 1651
P.O. BOX 1172 WINNIPEG
MANITOBA CANADA R3C2Y4
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"But whatever is good and perfect
comes to us from God, the Creator
of all light, and He shines forever
without change or shadow."

- James 1:17 -

APRIL 6, 1975.

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CIRCULATION: 6,700 COPIES

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 Pseudonyms may be used, but anonymous articles will not be published.

□ A STEP □

□ FORWARD □

□

□

We have invited a number of graduating students from the University of Manitoba to express their expectation and plans for the future. The following is a recorded summary of the interviews between them and the editors of The Fountain.

Mr. J. O. Economics
Nova Scotia, Canada

Q: Do you have any plan at the moment?

A: As far as it looks right now, I don't think I'll be doing what I'm training for. I have always wanted to be a pilot, and I'm going to apply for pilot training in the Air Force.

Q: How long would it take for the pilot training?

A: It takes about two to three years before you become a full-fledged pilot.

Q: After you are fully trained, are you going to stay with the Air Force?

A: Yes. And I would become an officer because I have university education. I would go into a higher rank than somebody who just joins the Air Force from high school.

Q: Why did you choose economics?

A: Actually when I started university I wanted to be a political scientist, but last year I decided that economics would be more enjoyable. It seemed more rewarding, especially at

a time when economics appears to be an important profession and everyone is worrying about inflation.

Q: But then you changed your mind again?

A: I changed my mind from studying political science to economics. But now I've changed my mind again to becoming a pilot.

Q: Do you think it is very competitive for Canadian students to find jobs when they graduate?

A: I haven't really started looking for a job yet. I guess I should. I have no idea really.

Q: For the next ten years or so, do you think Canada can still offer people secure lives and allow them to enjoy themselves?

A: I think so. Canada is very underpopulated and it has the resources to provide security for people.

Q: What do you think of the present economic crisis?

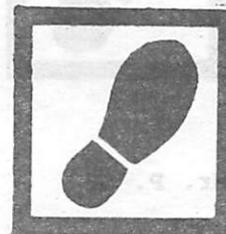
A: I don't think it's that bad yet. But we have to show some intelligent planning or else it'll get worse.

Mr. C. W. Microbiology
Malaysia

- Q: What are you planning to do?
- A: I think I'll go back home and try to find a job there.
- Q: When you first came to Canada, were you thinking of going back after you graduated?
- A: Yes, that's what I was thinking of.
- Q: What kind of job do you think you will do back in Malaysia?
- A: I really don't know, but I think I'll try to find a job in the hospital laboratories.
- Q: What's the situation in Malaysia concerning finding jobs?
- A: I don't think we've many problems there because the population there is small and I think there are not too many highly skilled people.
- Q: In what field do you think they need most people?
- A: Well, I think in certain fields of engineering and also things like agriculture.
- Q: Is the competition there concerning entering university very great?
- A: There isn't any university in my place, Sabah. But there is one in mainland Malaysia.
- Q: Do you think you have adapted to the Canadian culture so far?
- A: Well, maybe. I don't know. Well, I do like the type of life here, I guess. It's a fine and easy life. I think there are more opportunities; it is more peaceful here, I guess.
- Q: Do you find a close community of Malaysian students here? Do all of you often have activities together?
- A: Well, I get some friends who are studying here. They are staying in the same residence as I do too. And we spent most of the summer together. But I don't think we've many activities during the school term. We are more concerned with our studies.
- Q: What do you think about the economic situation in Malaysia?
- A: I don't really know. I think the economic prospect there is quite good.
- Q: Do you hear often about what's going

on in Malaysia?

- A: Not too often I guess, maybe once in a while. I don't know much about the conditions there from letter.



Miss J. G. Physical Education
Manitoba, Canada

- Q: What is your plan for the immediate future?
- A: Well, I have applied for CUSO (Canadian University Services Overseas). I won't be able to know the result in a few weeks, but that's my initial plan for the next 2 years.
- Q: Which area overseas do you have in mind?
- A: For a physical education major, there really aren't many openings. I'll be going to either the Caribbeans or South Africa, but I don't really care, because I'm all excited about the whole idea.
- Q: Why did you choose physical education?
- A: I came from a very small school and I didn't know anything about university or what I wanted to do. But I enjoyed physical education, so I simply tried and I really liked it.
- Q: What do you think of university education?
- A: Well, I think it's great. Coming to university and meeting people make you grow up a lot. I like the university life. I think one should go there for one's education.
- Q: Have you any future plan?
- A: It depends on how my 2 years with CUSO go. If I really like it, I might sign another 2 year contract. Or else I might come back to Manitoba and teach in a city school. But I don't really like to teach in a big school. I want to teach in a small school.



Mr. P. L.

Statistics
Hong Kong

- Q: What is your plan for next year?
A: Most probably I'll go into the pre-master program.
Q: You won't go back to Hong Kong to find a job?
A: I guess I'll stay here. But I may go back to Hong Kong for a while to see my family and relatives.
Q: Do you enjoy your subject?
A: It's hard to say. But I found out statistics is not very hard for me. You get your interest from high marks.
Q: After these three years, do you find university education hasn't met your expectation?
A: Well, I don't think so, because before entering university, I really didn't have any high expectation or ideal.
Q: Do you think Chinese graduates in North America suffer racial disadvantage because they belong to a minority group?
A: If the Chinese want to stay here, of course they should take the initiative to mix with the Canadian people with whom they work. You can't live happily if you isolate yourself socially.
Q: Do you think you'll have a better chance to secure a good job if you get a master's degree rather than just a B. Sc. degree?
A: I think so. And also, in terms of pursuing knowledge, I certainly can learn more if I go into the graduate program. The things that are taught in the undergraduate courses are only basic, and they are not of much practical use.
Q: Once you have found a job and have

got married, what other plans will you have?

A: Well, after I get married, I guess that's it.



Mr. L. L.

Engineering
Malaysia

- Q: Would you be staying in Canada, or do you plan to go back home?
A: As far as I can see, I am going to stay around and try to find a civil engineering job.
Q: Have you thought of going back to Malaysia? Would your family affect you in your decision?
A: Actually I have a brother who is working in Malaysia as a civil engineer. But as far as I can see, I want to stay here. As for my family, I think my parents would like to come over and see what they can do over here too.
Q: Do you have any idea of what the prospect is like in Malaysia concerning your field?
A: If I go home and try to get a job as a civil engineer I don't think there should be too much trouble, except that the government policy in Malaysia requires you to work for 2 years for the government in order to get a probational engineering paper. As far as I can see, they should need a lot of engineers around, especially civil engineers. The state I was in was Sabah, and they are having a lot of projects there like hydro-power projects and the renovation of the airport. So if people from Sabah who study engineering go back home, they should have opportunities to work.
Q: In Canada what is the job prospect for engineering students?
A: This year, the job prospect for civ-

il engineering is pretty good. Most of my Canadian classmates have got jobs already. There are 12 or 13 Chinese students graduating from the Civil department and I guess 5 of them have got their jobs. But... I haven't got mine yet.

Q: Before you came here, were you thinking of going back after you finished your studies?

A: When I came I was just thinking of getting my bachelor's degree and after that I would go home and find a job.

Q: What made you decide to stay here?

A: Partly it is due to political reason, and personally I prefer to try here and see what I can do as a civil engineer. After a couple of years, maybe I can really tell what I am going to do. Maybe I will want to go home or maybe I will still want to stay here.

Q: Do you think it's more secure here in Canada than back home?

A: Personally, I don't think it's a matter of whether or not you think Canada is a more secure country than Malaysia. Whether you work here or you work in Malaysia, you have to work hard and try hard. I don't think it is more secure here. In fact, after working here for 1 or 2 years, I may miss most of my friends from Malaysia who will have finished their studies and gone home. So I can't really say too much.



Miss J. T. Sociology
Hong Kong

Q: Why do you major in sociology?

A: I enjoyed it very much when I took it in my first year.

Q: Do you still like it now?

A: I still like it, but it doesn't help

me much in finding a job.

Q: What do you feel about studying in university?

A: Before entering university, I had the idea that university life would be very hard with an enormous amount of work, but it seems studying is even easier than when I was in high school in Hong Kong.

Q: What would you do after you graduated?

A: I would try to find a job. If I couldn't get one, then I'll go into the Master of Business Administration programme.

Q: Have you thought of going back to Hong Kong?

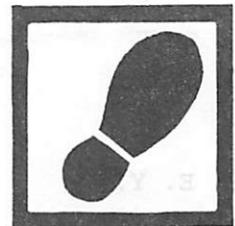
A: No.

Q: When you first came, did you intend to go back home after you graduated?

A: At first I did plan to go back, but then the Immigration laws were changed allowing foreign students to apply for immigrant status. And when I went back to Hong Kong last summer, the situation there was very unstable, so I decided to stay in Canada.

Q: Do you think that being a foreigner would hinder you in finding a job?

A: It would, but finding a job also depends on your personality.



Mr. G. S. English
Trinidad

Q: How long have you been in Canada?

A: Roughly 8 years.

Q: Do you have your family here?

A: Yes, I got married here 5 years ago and I have 2 children.

Q: What are you going to do after you graduate?

A: I hope to get into the education program. I think I'll go into teaching.

Q: Have you adjusted to the Canadian

life so far?

A: I think I have now. It wasn't very easy to start with. It was tough for a couple of years.

Q: What do you think about your future?

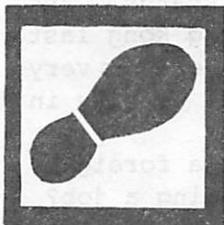
A: Well, it's pretty good. I am very optimistic about most things. But sometimes I think it's quite bleak too, because a B. A. degree doesn't have much weight nowadays.

Q: What do you think of the chances for foreign students to find jobs here?

A: I feel foreign students have some definite disadvantages. There are social problems such as racial prejudice.

Q: You want to secure a job first before thinking of other things?

A: Yes. If the prospect begins to look better in a year or two, I think I'll stay in Canada; if not, I may go back to Trinidad.



Mr. E. Y.

Pharmacy
Hong Kong

Q: Are you looking for a job at present?

A: Well yes, but I'm actually quite lost. The "job market" of pharmacy is quite good. I saw more than ten notices on job vacancies on the notice-board. There are many considerations when you start finding a job. For example, you may think you have been staying in Winnipeg for too long and you want a change. Maybe Winnipeg is really too cold. Perhaps Ontario is better. British Columbia is also quite warm. And if you have a girlfriend or boyfriend,

it will be even harder for you to make the decision concerning your working place. By the way, one of my classmates even suggested that it will be even better if you just work for a summer and then tour Europe and enjoy yourself.

Q: So far do you find mixing with the Canadians difficult?

A: In my first summer here I worked as a waiter. For the second summer I worked in both the hospital and the university. The people whom I worked with were quite friendly. I liked them. Yet I think discrimination does exist.

Q: Why did you choose pharmacy?

A: One of the reasons I guess is I like dealing with drugs. Actually studying medicine did appeal to me. But I did not like the kind of life that a doctor has to lead. Well, I didn't think I'd like to become a nurse either, so finally I chose pharmacy.

Q: In retrospect, how do you feel about your life here?

A: This is my fourth year in the dormitory. In my first year, I felt very lonely in this foreign land. The second year was my most happy year as I got many friends. In the third year many of my friends had gone, some of them going into medicine. Now in my final year it seems that I am as lonely as I was when I first came. There are many new faces whom I don't know. Moreover, when you are in your graduating year, all the time you will be thinking of securing a job. High grade points and academic gold medals no longer appeal to you as much. Also, in the fourth year you would lose the aggressiveness and determination which you had in your beginning year. Instead, you feel anxious and perplexed in searching for a job.

Q: Would you be staying in Canada?

A: I think I'll work in Canada for about five years, and then I may go to Europe. But I definitely won't turn to study medicine.

BE CERTAIN

"Hey, Ivy. Got your resumé drafted yet?"

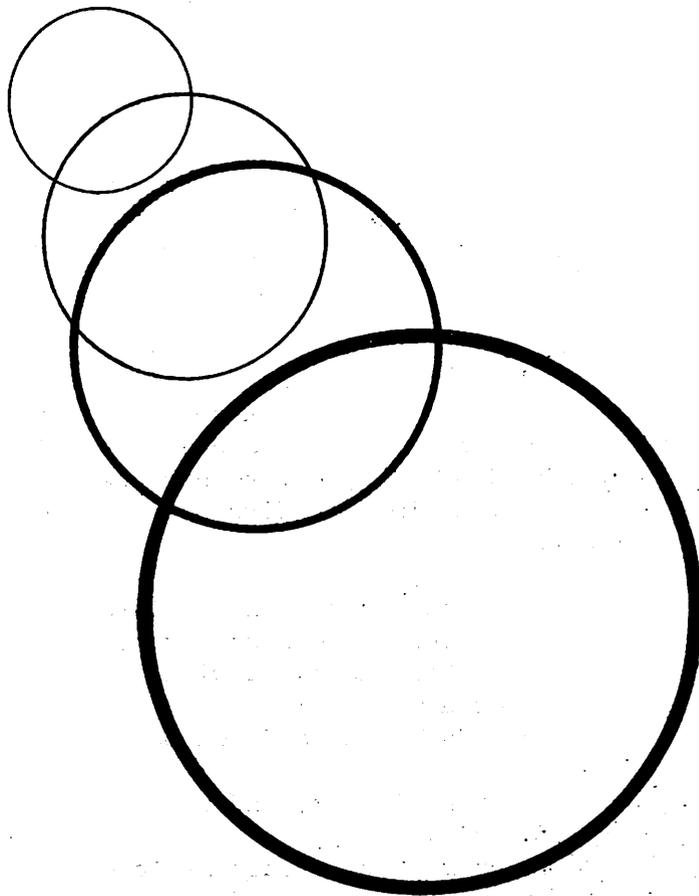
"Uh... not yet."

"We're going to sign up for an interview, are you coming?"

Studies...resumés...interviews... jobs...future... What's next! Should I continue for another year to get my master's degree? Or should I look for a job? If only I knew what I'd be doing after I graduated!

Who doesn't want to know about his future? Maybe this is the reason for the sudden booming of astrology and horoscope. Millions of people read the paper each day and a large number of them never miss the horoscope column. It is because it gives them a hunch as to what will happen and what they have to watch out for in the course of the day. Businessmen, students, housewives, doctors, policemen... people from all walks of life read them. To me, this indicates that men are anxious to know what is going to happen in the future. It seems that in this they find security.

Last year, I found that I was not



- Ivy Tong -

much different from these people. Who would like job hunting? Nobody. Many a time I asked God to reveal to me what my future would be, and tell me clearly what I should do after I graduated. Those were very perplexing moments. Financially I could go on for another year to get my master's. To my parents, it was such a waste for me to quit after I got my bachelor's degree and come out to work. Some say that education and degrees give us security in this world. But what could degrees promise me in this time of inflation and unemployment? Of course, if you learn something, nobody can take it away from you and they are yours forever -- if you have a good memory!

As a Christian, I knew that God has a plan for me and I didn't want to

interfere with it. But it is extremely easy to do so once my mind is set on certain things and I fail to look up to God for guidance. I tend to find a million things to justify my thoughts -- Bible verses, others' opinions. I had stumbled over this rock, big as it is, time and again. It seemed that I never learned! Many a time in following Him, I was distracted by the beautiful and transient things around me and wandered off unknowingly. So I told God that I would hand over myself to Him once again and let Him walk first and I would follow.

"They that wait upon the Lord
shall renew their strength;
They shall mount up with
wings as eagles;
They shall run, and not be
weary;
They shall walk, and not
faint.
Teach me Lord, teach me Lord,
to wait."

This song came as a good reminder when I was trying to decide what I should do after I graduated. It told me clearly to wait on the Lord, and those who wait would find strength. Not only this, but they will also find direction and be able to fly as eagles to their destination. To me, waiting does not simply mean sitting back and doing nothing. So I set forth and applied for a few jobs and started to plan my master's programme for the following year.

Waiting wasn't an easy thing. One ...two months went past and nothing happened. Then I got a letter from the Federal Government saying that they gave Canadian citizens top priority. Since I wasn't one I knew that I could count myself out. It really took a lot of patience and prayer. Then at the end of March I was offered a job, then another one, and a few weeks later, a third one. Each of them had its good prospect for the future. I prayed and committed the matter to God and I finally picked one. I told God that if it was His will for me to take the other

ones or go back to study, I would be willing to do so.

When my classmates learned that I got jobs all lined up for me, they commented that I would be secure and I wouldn't even have to worry about examinations. I asked myself: what would happen a year from then? Would I still be working on this job? My employer never mentioned that he was going to hire me for the rest of my life!

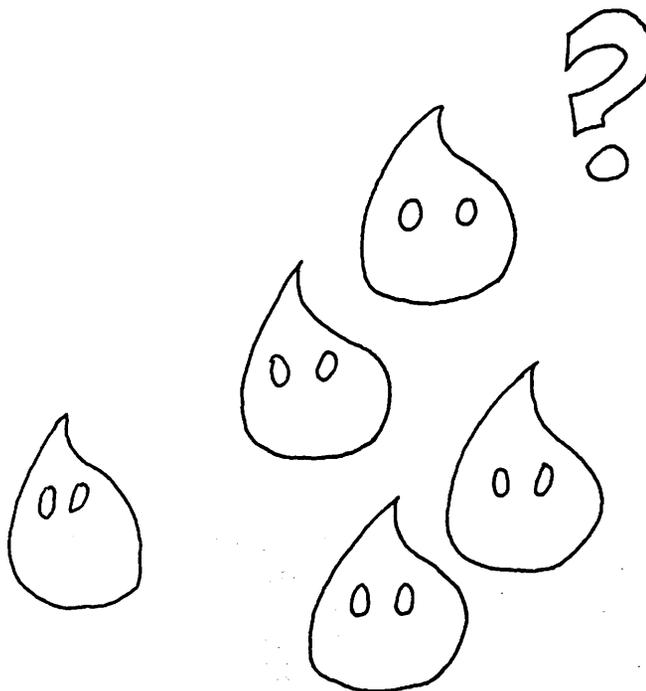
You may say that it doesn't matter whom you work for so long as you get paid. But what would the money I earn promise me? People say that inflation has hit every nation in this world. One also reads about various crises in the paper everyday -- energy, economic, political... In this ever changing world, I really don't know what I can expect next. Everything around me is changing: the value of money, my employers, the job market, prices of everything, stock market, heads of states and even the people I meet everyday. If any of these changes, people become disturbed if not frantic. What is the reason behind all this? I too would feel insecure if my security is based on these things. No, one's security should be based on something that will give one certainty, safety, protection and shelter and should be something that lasts and does not change with time. As for me, I have based my security on God alone and nothing else because He is the same yesterday, today and forever. No matter what happens around me, He is still the same. He still loves and cares for me and I can lay my trust in Him.

Every time I think about my past and how God has guided me, I cannot but feel more secure. He has promised never to leave those who are His nor forsake them.

Dear friends, if you are God's children, you are His forever. It is a secure relationship and none can break it. Don't think that your security depends on emotions or mood. Whether you feel secured or not, your relationship with God is certain. □

what's on Our minds?

Cim



If you watch TV shows such as "Let's Make A Deal", you will see the naked display of human greed. For a few thousand dollars or prizes that are worth as much, people dress, talk and do all sorts of things in the funniest ways. One may say: who cares to appear a little idiotic on the TV screen as long as he or she could win some cash or valuable prizes? After all, who can resist material gain that can make one's life much more comfortable and secure?

It is true that money can buy plenty of things. But among the things money cannot buy is one's life. We live with the premise that we are going to live tomorrow. This assumption may occasionally prove to be invalid. Aristotle Onassis died at 69, leaving behind him six hundred million dollars. King Faisal of Saudi Arabia was assassinated by his nephew. His wealth grew as fast as the millions of barrels of oil were pumped out from the ground. Both of these men were among the richest people in the world. They would certainly have paid to lengthen their lives if they could. Yet they died

just as the poorest man on earth would.

You and I would very unlikely be as rich as Onassis or King Faisal, and would not experience how they felt. It was too bad that they had not told the world how it was like to be really rich. However, there was a man who was as rich as they were, who had told us his personal experience.

This man was born king of a nation. He was well known for his wisdom. Once there were two women who came to ask him to settle a quarrel between them. These two women lived in the same house and each had an infant boy. One baby died one night. Both women declared themselves to be the mother of the living baby before the wise king. So the king ordered the living baby to be divided with a sword, giving one half to each woman. The true mother did not want the baby to die and conceded to let the other woman have the baby. The king thus identified the baby's true mother. This wise king was Solomon, the King of Israel around 1000 B.C.

Solomon was a learned man. He was

a writer credited with 3000 proverbs and 1005 songs. His fame was widespread and people came from afar for his advice. He was also a man of great wealth. Each year he received gold that worth about \$20 million, besides sales tax and profits from trade with the kings of Arabia and the other surrounding territories.

Solomon built up a great stable of horses with a vast number of chariots and cavalry -- fourteen hundred chariots in all, and twelve thousand cavalymen.

The most famous building Solomon built was the Temple. It was finished in 7 years.

It took 13 years for him to build his own palace. It consisted of various houses and halls: the House of the Forest of Lebanon, the Hall of Pillars, the Hall of the Throne, his royal quarters and a palace for his Egyptian wife.

In his reign, Israel was wealthy and populous. His nation extended from the Euphrates River to the land of the Philistines and down to the borders of Egypt.

Solomon was recognized as a great ruler, possessing many natural talents, and was extremely rich in material possessions, learning and experience.

Nevertheless he expressed a deep emptiness within him in one of the books he wrote, Ecclesiastes. Life, as he saw it, was futile and there was nothing that a man, great as he maybe, could do to change it.

"Vanity of vanities,
Vanity of vanities! All is vanity.
What advantage does man have in all
his work
Which he does under the sun?
A generation goes and a generation
comes,
But the earth remains forever.
Also, the sun rises and the sun sets;
And hastening to its place it rises
there again.
Blowing toward the south,
Then turning toward the north,
The wind continues swirling along;
And on its circular courses the wind
returns.
All the rivers flow into the sea,
Yet the sea is not full.

To the place where the rivers flow,
There they flow again."

A man with such wisdom, knowledge, wealth and accomplishment was so pessimistic. Life would be more disheartening for us who may achieve much less.

It is refreshing to note that one's life does not depend solely on material possessions. In the hot pursuit of wealth which may give us a sense of false security, we may easily lose sight of the fact that we have taken life for granted. There was a story about a rich man whose land yielded heavy crops. He debated with himself: "What am I to do? I have not the space to store my produce. This is what I will do," said he: "I will pull down my storehouses and build them bigger. I will collect in them all my corn and other goods, and then say to myself, 'Man, you have plenty of good things laid by, enough for many years: take life easy, eat, drink and enjoy yourself.'" But God said to him, "you fool, this very night you must surrender your life; you have made your money -- who will get it now?" That is how it is with the man who amasses wealth for himself and remains a pauper in the sight of God. King Faisal could not have agreed more to that.

"Life is more than food, the body more than clothes."

"Think of the lilies: they neither spin nor weave; yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his splendour was not attired like one of these. But if that is how God clothes the grass, which is growing in the field today, and tomorrow is thrown on the stove, how much more will he clothe you!... And so you are not to set your mind on food and drink; you are not to worry... No, set your mind upon his (God's) kingdom, and all the rest will come to you as well."

"For what will a man be profited, if he gains the whole world, and forfeits his soul?"

What should we set our mind upon?

from me...

Jim,

It's three o'clock in the morning. Outside the window the snow-storm has finally subsided, but the stormy thoughts that have been raging inside me since Christmas still haven't abated. Maybe I think too much, I don't know. Anyway, it brings me out of bed to write to you.

I glanced through the photo album and came to the pictures I took at my convocation last May. I remember I did send you one, didn't I? I saw myself smiling in the picture. I seemed to be very contented and happy. At last I got what I had been dreaming of for years -- a university degree. But I never realized that I would leave the "greenhouse" of university and plunge into the sad reality of unemployment. For several months I've been looking for a job, but in vain. It so disappointed me that I dared not look into the mailbox lest I should find another rejection letter. Day after day I walked up the desolate stairs leading to the manpower office. Each time my steps seemed heavier and heavier. I have applied for some jobs with my classmates who did not do as well as I did academically, but they got the jobs just because their relatives are working in those firms. They have stripped me of my opportunity of getting a job.

I lay in my bed; the four walls seemed to close in upon me. I was listening to the radio to the old familiar tune: "To dream the impossible dream, to fight the unbeatable foe, to try when your arms are too weary, to reach the unreachable star." Yes, it is a nice song to sing, but where can I get the strength to go on? How can I stand up to the inflating prices, the cold faces at the employment office and friends who have deserted me? There are so many people in this world who care about nothing but themselves. In pursuing their own goals, they are blind to the privileges and rights of others. In giving their relatives places in the firm, they ignore those who deserve to have the jobs. People want profits, so the prices soar up the sky. They want power, so they wage war. They kill for revenge, rob and steal money. Who are the victims? Everybody else! These very people have robbed the world of its hope. Do you see how unfair it is? They are taking advantages of others to satisfy their own desires.

Some people say life is a dream. I think life is a nightmare of a drowning man struggling alone for survival in a cold raging sea of reality.

The street outside is dark, silently lit by the glowing lights of the street lamps. It seems that I may never see the light of hope in the gloomy days ahead.

Maybe I have overburdened you with my problems. Maybe I am worn out by the grinding of the years. But I still cherish you as one of my few friends who will lend me their ears at all times.

Phil

... to you

Leng

Phil,

If I had a pair of wings, I would at once fly to you. Yet what empty words of comfort could I utter? What useless sighs of sympathy could heal the wounds of your heart? I know how you feel when friends desert you and people look down on you.

After I graduated a year ago, I was in the same situation as you are in now. I was really downhearted and discouraged after several months of fruitless job-hunting. As I look back, I like to compare my life at that time to a thermometer; my ups and downs varied according to the degrees of hardships in my surroundings.

But then I found Christ, and He seemed to have transformed me into a thermostat. He taught me to fix my hope upon Him, so that in spite of dire changes in circumstances, I could draw upon His power to maintain serenity within. Things might not necessarily improve. I still couldn't find a job until two months after that. But the memories of those two months have become the greatest treasure in my life, and I won't trade them for anything else in the world. During those two months I came to realize that loss or gain of material things in this world is of secondary importance, because material things don't belong to me forever nor can they satisfy the deep longings for love and friendship in my heart. On the contrary, my new relationship with Jesus Christ gave me the assurance that there is someone who cares, who is always by my side. I began to see things in a whole new perspective. He gives me strength and wisdom to face my problems and frustrations everyday. Even if I am unjustly treated, I can have the inner peace.

There are a lot of things we don't understand. We don't know why the wicked prosper, nor why the innocent suffer. But one thing we know -- God is still in control of everything. He delays judgment because of His love, because He doesn't want all to perish, but gives them a chance to repent.

Do you remember when we were small, we loved to roll a piece of paper into a hollow tube, and looked through it at the beautiful scenery of Hong Kong from Victoria Peak? But even the palm of a hand in front can block the whole view! Phil, don't let the present sufferings prevent you from experiencing the fathomless, eternal love of God!

Have you thought of applying to the firms in other cities for job? Maybe you can try and write to them.

Phil, behind the clouds the sun is still shining.

Jim

ideals & REALITY

- John White -

The words "capitalism" and "communism" are loaded terms. They are often used as terms of abuse. People who are communists talk about "capitalist pigs"; and people who are ardent capitalists talk about "filthy communists". I am not using these terms abusively in any sense. I want to discuss their central ideas. And I shall concentrate more on capitalism, simply because we live in a capitalist society and often take it for granted. I think we must beware of extreme emotions. We must beware of hating either capitalists or communists. Although it is true that among political theorists and those who ascend to government there are many corrupt figures, our attitude towards them should be one of warm concern. I have had personal contact with many communist students, and I know that they are men too and I reach out to them with a heart of love.

Pure capitalism and pure communism are ideas. They do not actually exist. Perhaps the country which tries its hardest to attain pure communism is China at the moment, but even there communism does not seem to be absolutely pure. And certainly in the West I cannot find any pure capitalism. It is usually capitalism mixed up with socialism and other things. And we may find many intermediate positions between

This article is a summary of a talk given by Dr. White at The Church of The Way, Winnipeg. The talk was originally entitled "Capitalism, Communism and Christianity."

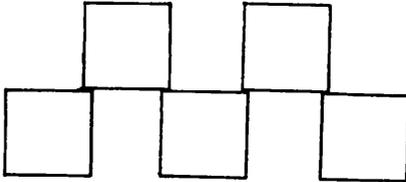
these polar extremes.

Let us look first of all at the basic tenets of capitalism. There are six basic facts which make up the capitalist theory:

1. Everybody has a right to own things. These things are referred to as "private property".
2. One can do with these things in any way so long as it does not damage others too much. One has a right to make contracts with other people.
3. Labour, or work, is good. Work is good because it leads to the production of goods and services.
4. Government interference is bad and if only the governments keep their interference minimal, things would work out of their own accord to the benefit of the individual citizens. The individual citizen would have more individual freedom and he would have a higher level of prosperity. This is known as "laissez faire" capitalism which is capitalism in its purest form.
5. Competition is good. Competition resulting from freedom will enable us to see what is morally right and what is morally wrong. Those businesses that fail deserve to fail. If someone goes bankrupt then it is his own fault. If

he had been more efficient and more competitive, he would have survived. 6. Capital can and should be used for the production of wealth.

In the eighteenth century, Adam Smith wrote a book entitled The Wealth of Nations. Smith was a rationalist. He was influenced by the agnostic Hume and he borrowed many theories from the French rationalists of an earlier period. It was Smith who popularized the modern idea of capitalism, and it was he who popularized the term "laissez faire".



What the capitalist theory and Adam Smith talk about is that the market sets the prices. This is known as the law of supply and demand. Exploitation will not continue for long if only the government will stop interfering.

Let us consider both the justifications and the criticisms of this theory.

One of the great justifications of it is that it exploits human greed and utilizes it to mankind's benefit. We are all greedy; we all want more, so the capitalist says. If only you will use the private property you have and work with it, or if only you learn how to get expert services, then you will get more goods. So our greed is being exploited by the system, such that everybody will be much better off financially.

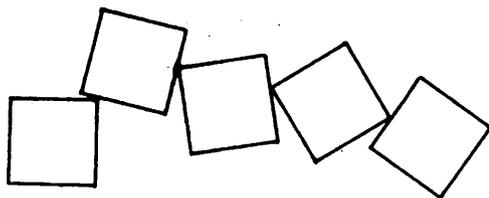
The second justification arises from the fact that capitalism equates success with goodness. Rockefeller I once made a very interesting remark. He was an expert manipulator of capital, a man with great ambition and vision, and he managed to secure the complete

ownership of the Standard Oil Company in New Jersey. He said, "God in His sovereign wisdom has given me what I deserve. I deserve it because I was strong enough to seize it, and the sovereign God saw to it that I get what was due to me." What Rockefeller was saying in fact is that "might is right". If you are strong enough to get to the top then you have a right to be at the top. That is rather thought-provoking. But might is not right and it never will be.

Let us think of the criticisms of capitalism. "Laissez faire" is a policy which does not work out to everyone's benefit. Let us look at an example. During the nineteenth century, as a result of the Industrial Revolution in Britain, factories were built everywhere. The new rich people, the middle class, began to get labour as cheaply as they could. What happened was that people were oppressed and one example of that oppression was the abuse of children. Some children worked for 14 hours a day. Some of them had the rather dangerous and responsible post of controlling the flow of trucks bearing coal through certain key points in the mines. It was the seventh Earl of Shaftesbury, a fervent Christian who was deeply concerned about this, who fought in the House of Lords in Britain until laws were introduced protecting those children. Yet according to the capitalist theory, if only Lord Shaftesbury and the government had left things alone, things would have worked out. Nowadays we would be terrified and horrified by such an idea.

If "laissez faire" capitalism means things will work themselves out, it does not seem to have done so historically. The reason that capitalism will never work is that it underestimates the depth of sin and greed in human hearts. It thinks it can harness and control human beings, but it cannot.

Let us now consider communism. The basic difference between communism and



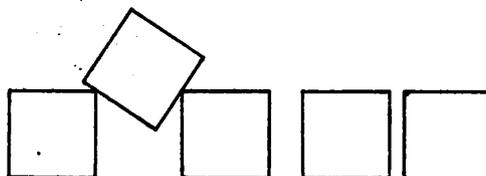
capitalism is that under communism no one has the right to own anything. The first exponent of communism was Plato. He noticed that people who got into powerful positions in government exploited their power to enrich themselves. So he decided that philosophers should run the government. He also decided that in order for them not to exploit their positions, they should not be allowed to own anything. The government would provide them a place to live in, but that would be the government's place. They would be given clothing once in a while. They would not be allowed to have any money and food would be given to them. Many savage tribes show perhaps the purest form of communism. I can think of one such tribe in Venezuela at the moment. All of the members of this tribe live in a huge house, and all the food is shared freely among them. Some Hutterite colonies are communist in this sense, though perhaps not to the same degree.

But when we speak of communism, usually we think of communism with a capital letter "C" -- we are speaking of what is called Marxist-Leninism, which is a political power of great magnitude. It is also an economic theory based on the supposition that the people should own everything. It also includes a view of history. You have probably heard of the Communist dialectic. The ideas of Marx and Engels were really borrowed from Hegel. Hegel talked about the thesis, the anti-thesis and the synthesis. By the thesis he meant that usually there is one basic idea prevailing in any given point of time. And then suddenly people begin to oppose this idea with an opposite

idea. The first idea is the thesis. The second idea is the anti-thesis. Then somehow they both come together and produce a newer and better idea which is called the synthesis. Marx said this is what is happening in history and he describes it as the "class struggle".

The interesting thing about what Communists to this day teach is that if only you will leave things alone, you will find that gradually through this dialectic process in history, a time of perfect freedom and perfect plenty will come. At that time no one needs to and no one will want to own anything, and there will not even be any government because the people will govern. This reminds us of Plato's utopia and Thomas More's utopia and all the beautiful pictures that man has painted down the ages.

Communism has at times produced improvement. Capitalists do not like to admit that, but it is true. For instance, after the revolution by Castro in Cuba, one thing that had stopped was corruption in government. Other people have talked of the clearing up of corruption in some other Communist countries. However, what we have not realized is that corruption is not a capitalist problem nor a Communist problem.



It is a human problem. When men get into power long enough, they become corrupt. And there are signs that corruption is happening in Russia just as it had in her previous regime.

Communist revolutions have often produced hope. How long the hope has lasted or will last is another question. And in non-Communist countries, we can say that whatever their motives may be,

young Communists do fight to defend the powerless and the poor.

Yet what are our criticisms as we look at Communism realistically? First of all, one of the basic ideas of Communism is that if only you will leave things alone, heaven will arrive on earth. The class struggle will fight itself out, and somehow there will come a time when everybody is ruling and there is no need for any form of government. But is there any sign of that happening? As we look at the oldest Communist country, namely the U.S.S.R., we see that the centralized government, far from diminishing and disappearing, has become stronger and more centralized. I think the same is true in China and I am sure it will be true elsewhere too.

It is also doubtful that Communism is economically workable. It seems that in Rumania and in Russia the governments have to create incentives so that the workers will work. In Russia, the need has arisen for the government to introduce a capitalist or semi-capitalist system in some of the factories. So it seems that Communism is not so economically workable as it claims to be.

In closing, I want to ask: why have these theories not worked? Why are they not practicable? Let me remind you of what the Bible says about man: "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately corrupt; who can understand it? I the Lord search the mind and try the heart." The problem with capitalism is that it underestimates human sin. The problem with Communism is that it seems to be unaware of human sin. It is unaware of the fact that human beings are fragile. Any country, government or political system is like a building. One builds buildings with materials. And if the materials cannot stand the stress, the building will collapse. The bricks with which we build society are human beings. But there is no political system that any man can devise which takes enough of

human weaknesses into account. Every society and every political view has broken down in time because people are human and sinful and cannot stand the strain.

The problem with the world, the Scriptures tell us, is man, not the theorists, nor the political views. I am not saying that those are not important. But we must face the fact that there is no solution to the human problem apart from Jesus Christ. And the solution He offers is not a political solution. It is a personal solution. He is not bidding us to create a new Christian state. When the time has come He will come back and He Himself will rule. He will cleanse those who are His thoroughly and He will bring all His enemies to worship and adore Him.

The heart of the human dilemma is the human problem. The reason why no perfect political system exists or can exist is because we all are sinful. Only God can deal with the basic material of which political structure is built.

OFFSET

We are grateful to the Lord for His provision in our purchasing of the offset machine. We have already received more than enough money for the machine fund. The extra amount will be transferred to the Fountain General Fund. We hope that brothers and sisters will stop sending us offerings concerning the machine. We once again thank our readers for their prayer and financial support.

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