June 2 67

AMBASSADOR COLLEGE

BIBLE CORRESPONDENCE COURSE

Reaping God's Blessing

LESSON 46

What our STUDENTS SAY

Reminiscent

"I want to thank you for all you have done and are doing for those of us that are students of the Correspondence Course. After all these years of receiving the lessons, I know we tend to take them for granted — this knowledge that is so dear and life-giving. I remember how thrilled I was when they first started to come .... I started them with a Bible that was given to me when I was 10 years old. I can't tell you how thrilled I was when that book came alive and began to breathe."

— B. E. S., Hillsdale, New Jersey

• *Better rekindle that "first love" so you won't take them for granted anymore!*

Prays to Remember

"Today, I received for the first time, the more descriptive [illustrated] Bible Correspondence Course. It sure does thrill me to know just WHAT we humans must learn to even know God, for I learn more each day through your course, and I AM GRATEFUL.

"Being on Lesson 31 causes me to realize how little I still know, but I'm praying very sincerely that God will let my mind RETAIN all I do read and study.

"May God help you and your staff to get the word to the people as only your Correspondence Course can do — for the lighted way becomes so clear after your lessons."

— M. L., Overland, Missouri

"Little Miracle"

"Last October, 1964, I wrote asking for special prayer to help me overcome my fear of conceiving a child because of a previous miscarriage. A few short weeks later, I discovered I was pregnant. For a while we thought we might lose this child, also, but when doubt crept into my mind I prayed. I thought you would like to know our son is nearly six months old, and his doctor says he is one of the healthiest babies he's ever seen. We call him our little miracle, and if it be God's will, we hope to have more little miracles."

— Mother, Tulsa, Oklahoma

Prayers Are Answered

"Your Bible Course has caused me to read much more of my Bible, and from my reading

(Please continue on page 15)

AMBASSADOR COLLEGE
BIBLE
CORRESPONDENCE COURSE
LESSON 46

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About Our Cover . . .

A reaper harvests golden wheat grown in God's earth. Because of faithful Abraham's *TRUSTING OBEDIENCE* to God, his descendants today have *unwittingly* reaped the great blessings of God! Now these blessings are *diminishing* rapidly. God is beginning to *punish* modern-day Israel — and all the world — for its mounting sins. Soon there will be widespread famine and starvation! This lesson shows how *you* can be delivered.

H. Armstrong Roberts Photo

HOW TO PRAY *EFFECTIVELY!*

WHY don't more prayers get RESULTS? Has God "*gone* way off somewhere"? The fundamental reason why the prayers of most people are *not* being answered today, is that they do not KNOW the *true* God!

Most people think of God as a vague, far-off, indefinable something. They don't know that GOD IS THE ACTIVE, *LAW-GIVING RULER* of the universe!

They have forgotten that God *reveals* Himself in His Word, the Bible, and that He shows us the *kind* of God He is. God reveals to us *how* we should OBEY Him, and what He has PROMISED to do for us if we call upon Him in sincere, *believing* prayer.

Believe and OBEY the Bible

Can we really take *God's* Word literally? Does God *mean* what He says?

Jesus certainly thought so! He said, "Thy word is TRUTH" (John 17:17). The apostles constantly taught and acted as if God's Word were *literally true.*

To get RESULTS from your prayers, you must *believe in the God of the Bible.* Believe His Word is *truth.* And be willing to *act* on God's Word and His commands.

The apostle Paul was inspired to write: "But *without faith* it is IMPOSSIBLE to please him: for he that cometh to God must *believe* that he IS, and that he is a REWARDER of them that *diligently seek him*" (Heb. 11:6). It takes *faith* to know that we will receive what we ask for in prayer, but it also takes *obedience to God* to PROVE that our faith is active and *living!*

That is why the apostle John said: "Whatsoever we *ask,* we receive of him *because we KEEP HIS COMMANDMENTS,* and DO those things that are *pleasing in his sight*" (I John 3:22).

Faith and actions — *obedience* — go hand in hand. If we say we have faith in God and don't really *act* on it by OBEYING our Creator, our faith is *worthless* — it is DEAD! (Jas. 2:20.) Abraham proved he was faithful — that he had dynamic, *active* LIVING FAITH — by his unquestioning obedience to God (Heb. 11:8). And as we learned in Lesson 43, the faith *of* Christ, which we so desperately need in order to obey God, is a *gift* of the Holy Spirit which we receive after baptism! (You should definitely *review* this vital lesson in relation to these two lessons on prayer!)

We need to thoroughly understand that the Bible is a *written contract* between us and the Creator. What God has promised *in the Bible,* He WILL perform. God will *unfailingly* do His part when we beseech Him in prayer — IF we *faithfully perform ours!*

Our Perfect Example

Jesus Christ set a *perfect example* in all things that we "should follow his steps" (I Pet. 2:21). He lived a full and abundant life — a life filled with *love* and *power* from God. He knew how to keep in contact with, and draw upon the *supreme power of the universe!*

Can you imagine Christ acting as if God had "gone way off somewhere"?

Yet that is the *exact attitude* displayed by so many "Christians" today. Most people do NOT completely rely on God to *heal* them when they are sick, to *rescue* them from disaster, and to *bless* them in material as well as spiritual things. Do *you?*

The disciples saw that Christ, unlike most people, actually *expected* God to intervene and heal the sick, cast out demons, and even to quiet a storm on the sea when He prayed. They, too, wanted that kind of *intimate contact* with God.

By His fruits, they knew that Christ understood *the correct way* to draw close to the Eternal God, and to call upon His power to help in every pressing situation.

That *key,* that *correct way* to call upon God's power, is something you and I should be utilizing *every day of our lives!* Its use will put new *meaning* and *power* into our lives!

But this "key" has been *incorrectly* employed by many people of many different religions. Remember that Christ is *our example.* He knew how to use this "key" perfectly. His way *gets results* because He knew HOW TO PRAY *EFFECTIVELY!*

Christ Teaches HOW to Pray

1. Did Christ's disciples specifically ask Him to *teach them* HOW to pray? Luke 11:1. What did Jesus proceed to instruct them? Verses 2-4. Were His instructions what is commonly called

today the "Lord's Prayer"? Where else do we find these same instructions? Mat. 6:9-13.

COMMENT: Christ's disciples asked Jesus the way to establish *right contact* with God. Then Christ gave them a *type* or *pattern* — an OUTLINE, or *skeletal framework* — of a prayer that will *get results.* A prayer around which to build our *own* prayers.

2. Did Jesus tell His disciples to repeat this example prayer *over* and *over* again, or were they to pray in a *similar way* — "after this manner"? Verse 9. Didn't He just tell them NOT to *repeat* the same prayer all the time? Verse 7.

COMMENT: Notice that Jesus Himself did not call this the "Lord's Prayer," as men have done, or in any manner encourage His disciples to *memorize* this particular prayer and repeat it over and over. He had just forbidden them to do that with other prayers.

Rather, Jesus said: "After this manner, therefore pray ye . . ." He said this was the *manner* or *outline* for them to follow in their prayers.

Jesus was not setting down the *exact words* we should repeat over and over — but outlining the *correct approach* to God in prayer and the basic things for which we should pray. "Pray *thus,*" not "Pray *this,*" was Jesus' plain instruction!

In that light, then, let us notice and analyze this *perfect example,* this *inspired approach* to prayer as revealed by Christ Himself.

To Whom Should We Pray?

1. How did Jesus begin His example prayer? Mat. 6:9. Are we to pray to the FATHER? John 16:23.

COMMENT: Jesus came to reveal the "Father" to mankind (John 1:18). And He *always* addressed the FATHER in His prayers. He set us the *example* to follow! However, it would not be wrong to *also* address Christ on occasion in prayers.

We must also come to God as "*our* Father" since He brought *all* mankind into being. We ought to feel a deep sense of personal *love* and *closeness* to Him who gives us every good and perfect gift, who protects, provides for, and guides us as we *yield* to His will — and who *intervenes supernaturally* if we cry out to Him for help.

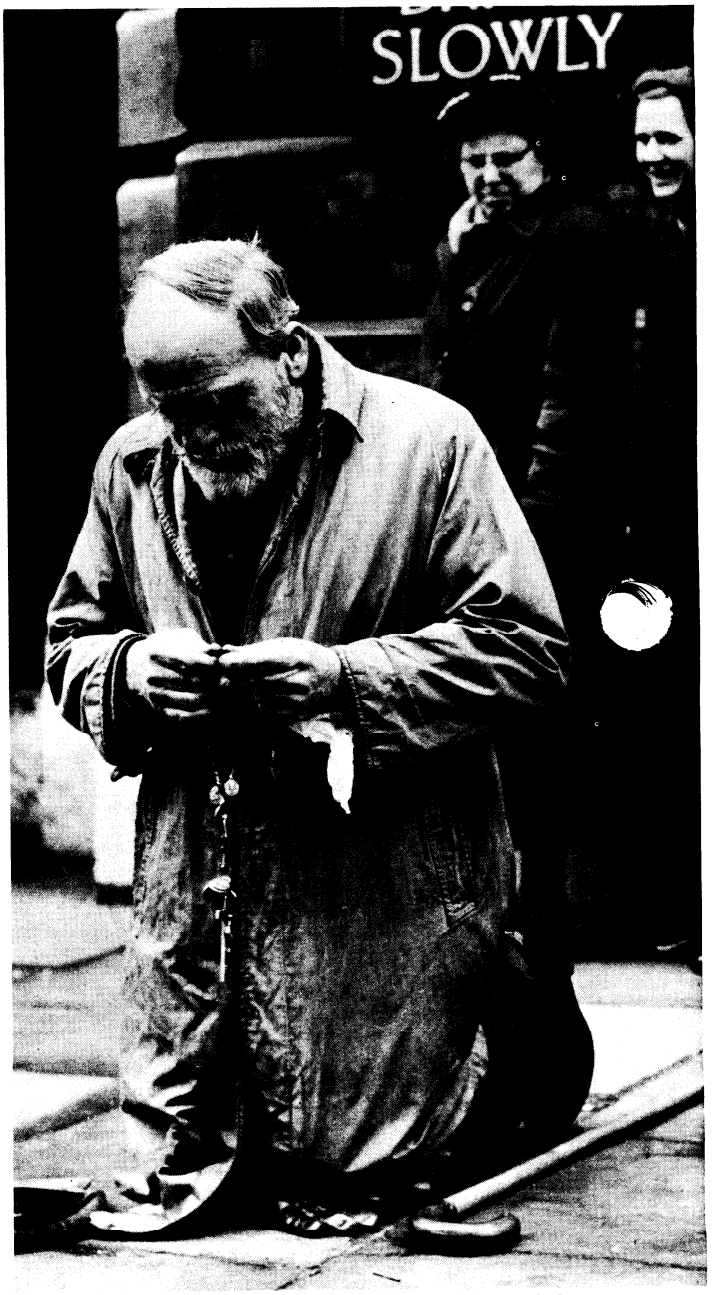
This Father-son relationship is very *personal.* Such a private and intimate relationship is much closer and should be *more real* than the physical relationship we have with our own fathers, or sons of the flesh.

2. How is this close relationship stressed by the apostle Paul? Rom. 8:14-16.

COMMENT: The word "Abba" means *Father,* showing that the meaning of this intimate relationship of Father and son is *doubly emphasized,* if we are truly the *spirit-begotten* sons of God!

3. *Where* does Jesus say the Father resides? Mat. 6:9.

COMMENT: Christ said that our Father is in



Wide World Photo

PRAYS FOR PEACE — Oblivious to others around him, this British subject kneels for 10 minutes just opposite No. 10 Downing St. — the official residence of the British Prime Minister. His one-man prayer crusade with rosary has been going on daily for *four* years — yet there is no real peace in the world!

"HEAVEN." When we pray to "Our Father," we should always realize and recognize *where* God is. He is in heaven from which the whole universe is governed by His Spirit of power!

When you address the Father in your own personal private prayers, realize that you have a *personal* audience with the Supreme Ruler of the universe! People value very highly a private audience with one of this world's rulers. Think how much greater is *our privilege* of coming daily to the very throne room of the universe — to *talk* with the Ruler over all!

It is in *heaven* that God's throne, the heavenly temple and the new Jerusalem are located. Seated at the right hand of the Father is Jesus Christ. Then there are the twenty-four elders seated on thrones round about them. And the Cherubim and Seraphim, the living creatures and multitudes of holy angels are also present! (See Revelation, chapters 1, 4 and 21.)

With such magnificence as this, we are still able, through the *name of* JESUS CHRIST, to approach daily unto God the Father! Addressing our prayers to our Father in *heaven* and realizing what this really means, should make us very humble and thankful for this great privilege. It should help us to ask ourselves as Paul did, "What is man, that thou art *mindful* of him?" (Heb. 2:6.)

4. Are we also to "hallow" the Father's name when we pray to Him? Mat. 6:9, last four words. How do we "hallow" God's name?

COMMENT: As we begin our prayers, we should not only address and think of God as "our Father," but begin by *praising* and *venerating* His name — His office — His character — His beneficence.

God's name — and *all that it stands for* — is to be held in absolute reverence! Our deep *respect* and *awe* for our heavenly Father should be TOTAL! God's name will someday be *our name* if we overcome and are *born of God.* THAT NAME CARRIES AUTHORITY TO RULE. It must always be respected!

5. How did David — a man after God's own heart — address God in prayer? Ps. 18:1-2 and 104:33.

COMMENT: This attitude of *praise*, worship and *adoration* is something that draws our attention to the *true* God. It enlarges our own human faculties to appreciate and fully sense the great Being with whom we are in contact, and to whom we are praying as "our Father."

"Thy Kingdom Come — Thy Will Be Done"

"Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven" (Mat. 6:10).

This section of Jesus' prayer outline is perhaps the *most overlooked* and MISUNDERSTOOD OF ALL. For praying "thy Kingdom come" is asking that God's literal GOVERNMENT be set up on this earth through the return of Jesus Christ, as King of kings and Lord of lords!

It is praying and longing for the time when God's holy and righteous LAW — as embodied in the Ten Commandments — will be the actual standard for daily life everywhere. It is asking that God's *character* — His *law* and His *love* — be written in our hearts and minds here and now, in preparation for a part in the coming *world government* of God.

It is yearning and aching for the time when real PEACE will be restored — when the desert will blossom forth as a rose. Then there will be no more starvation and want — in the prophesied time of the "restitution of all things" (Acts 3:19-21).

This section of your personal prayers, of course, will normally be the longest and most detailed. Here you should ask God to help you *understand* and SURRENDER to His will — *the will of your very Creator!* You should ask Him to help you *study* and *understand* the Bible.

You should ask God for His divine help in bearing the "fruits" of the Holy Spirit: *love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance* or, better translated, SELF-CONTROL (Gal. 5:22-23). *Ask* Him for — and *exercise* — these spiritual attributes.

Also, ask for His help, inspiration and guidance in expressing love, joy, warmth and affection to all your fellowmen. Ask Him to help you be long-suffering and gentle. Ask for *meekness* and *humility* and for the power of SELF-CONTROL over your temper, weaknesses and lusts!

Beseech God to help you *yield* your will to Him and to grow spiritually so that you may say with the apostle Paul: "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but CHRIST LIVETH IN ME: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by *the faith of* [not merely faith *in*] the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me" (Gal. 2:20).

Ask God for this LIVING FAITH of Jesus Christ to *trust God totally* — to KNOW that His way and His law is right — and that He stands behind and *backs up* His will, His laws and His promises to those who serve Him!

Through *fervent prayer* — through this type of *earnest meditation, surrender* and *study* of your Bible — learn to literally WALK WITH GOD as did Enoch, Noah, Abraham and Christ.

When you pray "Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done, . . ." *understand* the meaning of what you are asking, and *do your part* that the tremendous MEANING of this request may become a reality in the future *government of this earth,*

OVERFLOWING BLESSINGS

"Blessed shall be the fruit of thy body, and the fruit of thy ground, and the fruit of thy cattle . . ." (Deut. 28:4). God pours overflowing blessings upon those who *trust* and obey Him!

H. Armstrong Roberts Photos

The Blessings of God

"And all these blessings shall come upon you . . . if you *OBEY* the voice of the Lord your God" Deut. 28:2, RSV.

in the lives of all men everywhere, and in your own personal life, character and spiritual growth and power.

Ask for Your Needs — Confess Your Transgressions

1. What is the next petition of Jesus' prayer outline? Mat. 6:11. Can we ask this in confidence if we are seeking *first* God's Kingdom and His righteousness? Mat. 6:33.

COMMENT: Although certainly not put first, this request is necessary — and we can sincerely ask God to supply our *daily* needs as long as we are seeking first the *spiritual* things of God.

Jesus did not say that we are to ask for tomorrow's bread *today!* God supplies us our needs oftentimes on a day-to-day basis, and not for a long time in the future. This ought to show us that we should not expect more than what is required for today. But if God does give us provisions for a longer time, we should be *very thankful* and grateful.

In these personal requests, you can break down the details to fine points and ask God to guide you to do *your part*. At this time all our physical needs for the day such as shelter, food, clothing and other *needs* may be mentioned. God knows of these needs even before we ask Him (Mat. 6:8). However, He has not promised to automatically supply what we do not ask for.

James tells us that some people do not receive things because they *don't ask* for them, and then sometimes when they *do* ask for things, they do so for reasons of *lust* and *greed* (Jas. 4:2-3). We should ask for our *real needs*, and not just what we would like to have.

Believingly ask God to intervene where necessary that you may live the kind of life you ought in order to be a "light" to others.

2. Is our "*daily bread*" DUAL? Mat. 4:4. Did Jesus say He was the *spiritual* "bread of life"? John 6:35.

COMMENT: Come to God through daily *prayer* and *Bible study* and He will supply your *daily* spiritual needs as well. You have more daily need of *spiritual food* than even of physical food — but God promises you both, if you will only *ask* Him.

3. Are we also to ask forgiveness of our sins? Mat. 6:12. And should we be forgiving toward others? Same verse. Compare with Luke 11:4, first part.

COMMENT: All of us sin daily in one way or another. We need to sincerely *recognize*, and REPENT of our daily sins, our shortcomings and our innate REBELLION against the laws of God and man, and then ask God to *forgive* us. Remember to ask that "OUR," not *my*, sins might be forgiven. Learn to be concerned for others, to have proper love and compassion for them.

Also remember that you may ask God's forgiveness *only if you first forgive others*. When you kneel before God in prayer, never come before Him with feelings of bitterness, resentfulness, or hate toward others. If you cannot first rid yourself of these feelings, ask God to *clean you up* and replace the spirit of *hate* with His spirit of *love*. God's love is charitable, and patient with others. It is a wonderful feeling to know that you hate no man!

Pray for Deliverance From the Devil

1. What is the last request of Jesus' example prayer? Mat. 6:13, first part. But doesn't the Bible elsewhere state that God does *not tempt* anyone? James 1:13. Is it the Devil and his demons who are walking about, watching for the chance to *tempt*, and even DESTROY us, when we are off our guard? I Pet. 5:8.

COMMENT: Jesus' statement in Mat. 6:13 is more correctly rendered from the *original* Greek as follows: "Bring us not into *sore trial*, but deliver us from the evil *one*." *God tempts no man*, but He DOES *permit* us to fall into trials and troubles of our own or Satan the Devil's devising, *if we are not keeping close to Him and seeking His guidance and help.*

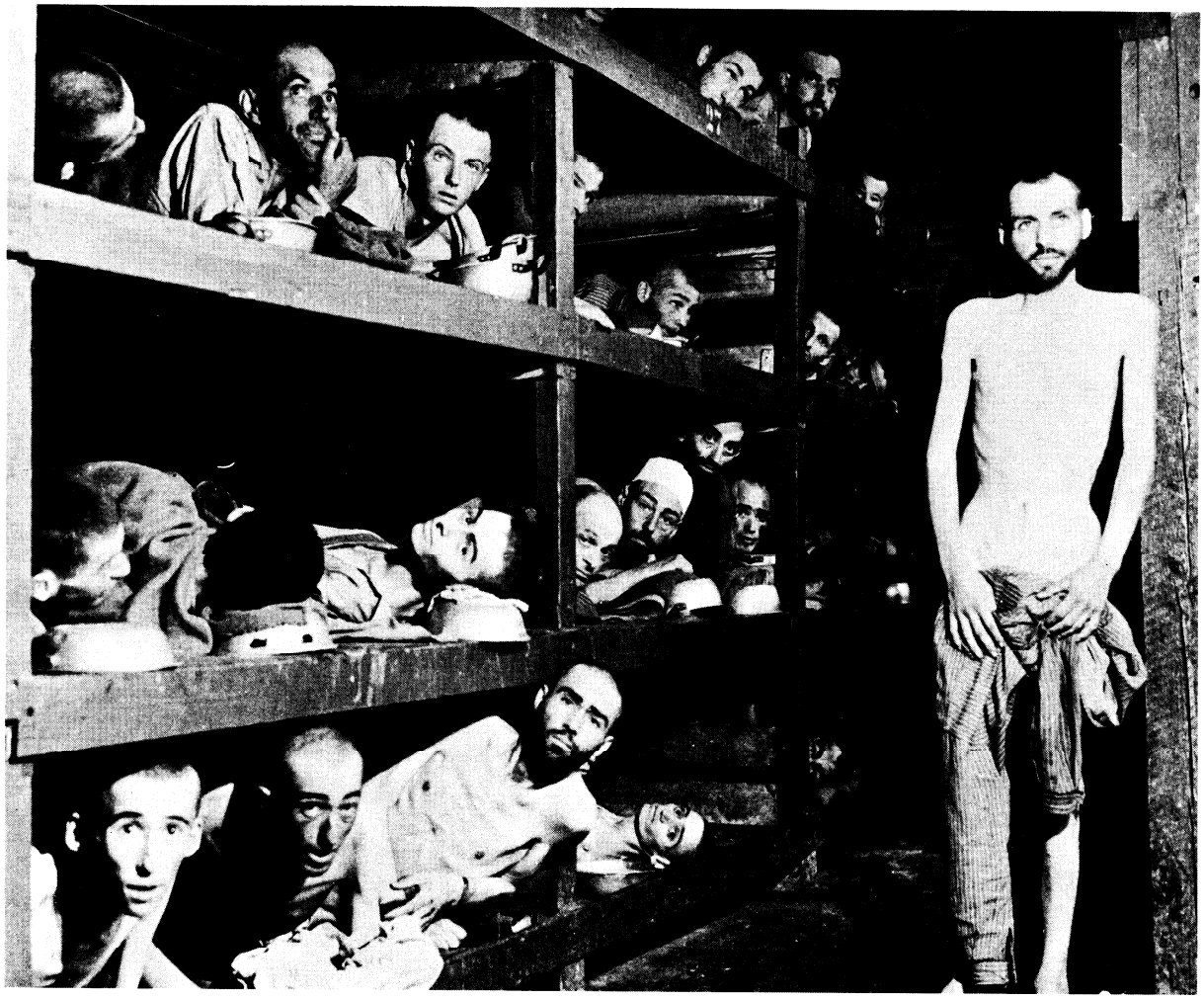
We should constantly pray that He would not permit us to be *brought into*, or *partake of*, any *sore* or severe trial or temptation — that He would give us the spiritual *power* to master any wrong desires and DO His will daily.

2. Should we ask God to *correct* us daily so we will not fall into "sore trial"? Jer. 10:24.

COMMENT: God teaches us many things in various ways. When we do not learn these lessons as we should, when we are unresilient and not pliable in the hands of the Almighty Creator, He must take more *drastic* action.

That drastic action may be to *lead* us into a situation where we are sorely tried in *severe trial*. We need training, chastening, molding and fashioning. We must ask God for this chastening, for this training, and we should ask for it DAILY. However, let us also ask God that we will LEARN the necessary lessons NOW so that He will not find it imperative to lead us into *sore trial* either now, or during the terrible period of severe trial immediately prior to Christ's return.

One important way to escape such sore trial is to pray daily, and earnestly, so that we will be spiritually strong and learn these important lessons now!



Wide World Photo

"SORE TRIAL" — These emaciated slave laborers lived in the Nazi concentration camp at Buchenwald during World War II. Many had died from malnutrition before U. S. troops entered the camp in 1945. God admonishes us to pray for *correction daily* in order to learn our lessons NOW — so we won't have to experience similar "sore trials" during the great tribulation!

Close With Praise and Adoration

1. How did Jesus say we ought to close our prayers to the Father? Mat. 6:13, last part.

COMMENT: As Jesus' inspired *outline* of prayer begins with praise and adoration of God, so does it close. This reminds us, again, *to whom* we are praying and the CHARACTER and OFFICE of the true God who rules over the nations of men! Note that this verse is in the *inspired* original Greek New Testament. It is *deleted* in the Latin Bible for obvious reasons.

A wonderful example of this inspired instruction regarding the opening and closing of a prayer is found in the prayer of Daniel, when he cried out for deliverance of the people of Judah (Dan. 9:3-19).

2. How did Daniel begin this prayer? Dan. 9:4. What was his heartfelt appeal to God at the close of this fine prayer — a prayer which was *heard* and ANSWERED? Verses 18-19.

COMMENT: Not only praising God's name, His *office* and *authority*, but having this right ATTITUDE of total *repentance*, *submission* and *obedience* — this is another vital "key" to answered prayer!

Close your prayers with a sincere acknowledgement — in a spirit of *worship* — that all real and lasting GLORY and POWER belongs to God, and that the right to all *government* authority and *kingship* belongs to Him who *CREATED* us all in the first place!

Finally, as Jesus shows by this example prayer, we are to *affirm* that what we have prayed is so, and that we really *mean* it by concluding with "AMEN." Amen simply means "be it so."

Jesus' *outline* of prayer contains vital "keys"

to help you in your prayer life. *Use them daily!* You don't have to ask all of these things in each prayer, but you certainly ought to *begin* each day praying "after this manner."

Two Things to Avoid

During Jesus' "Sermon on the Mount," and before giving His disciples the outline of prayer, He made two vital points *clear.*

1. Did Jesus caution His disciples not to pray just to be *seen* and *heard* of men? Mat. 6:5. Was this the way the Scribes and Pharisees prayed? See Mat. 23:14. *Where* did Jesus say true Christians should do their praying? Mat. 6:6.

COMMENT: Jesus cautions us to commune with our heavenly Father "in secret." He clearly shows that it is absolutely *wrong* to make long prayers in front of others to "show off" as did the Scribes and Pharisees. Preachers and "deacons" who delight in doing this are *disobeying God!*

Jesus' plain teaching shows that we should do our *personal* praying in *private* — in the privacy of our inner closet or room, without others present. IF we follow this instruction, Christ promised that when our Father in heaven sees us praying in *secret,* He will reward us OPENLY! (Some modern translations wrongly delete the word "openly." It IS in the original *inspired* Greek.) If you expect God to hear your prayers, you *must* follow this simple and clear instruction!

2. And have you ever heard certain denominations *repeat* prayers over and over again? Does Jesus also warn us not to *repeat* our prayers? Mat. 6:7. Is this the way the *heathen* pray? Same verse.

COMMENT: The "Now I lay me down to sleep" and other types of *memorized* prayers violate this clear teaching! Memorized prayers — including the "Lord's Prayer"— soon lose their meaning and sincerity. And God says such prayers will *not* be heard!

Nowhere in the entire New Testament is the "Lord's Prayer" repeated. The apostles didn't repeat it over and over again. Jesus gave it only as a pattern or example after which we could fashion *our own* prayers.

This world's churches are in absolute *error* when they practice repeating *any* prayer over and over again each week. Avoid this error. *And try not to return thanks in the same way at the table every meal.* When you pray, don't just "rattle off" so many words. *Think* about your blessings, your needs, and *pray from the* HEART!

Remember you are praying to the Supreme GOVERNOR of the entire universe! Don't insult

Ambassador College students pray to our heavenly Father in the privacy of specially built, soundproof prayer booths.

Ambassador College Photo

Ewing Galloway Photo

PRAYER WHEEL — This Tibetan priest is shown holding a prayer wheel. The belief is that each revolution of the wheel sends a prayer wafting off to their gods.

your Creator by saying the same things to Him every time you pray. Rather, enter His presence with *respect* and *awe*, and put your entire BEING into your prayers. You are praying to your great *Father* in heaven — the Author of *love* and *mercy*, *wisdom* and POWER. Don't forget this when you pray!

Don't Be Ashamed to Pray

We should be careful not to pray "to be seen of men." *But* does this mean that we should be overly secretive — as if we were *ashamed* — when we pray?

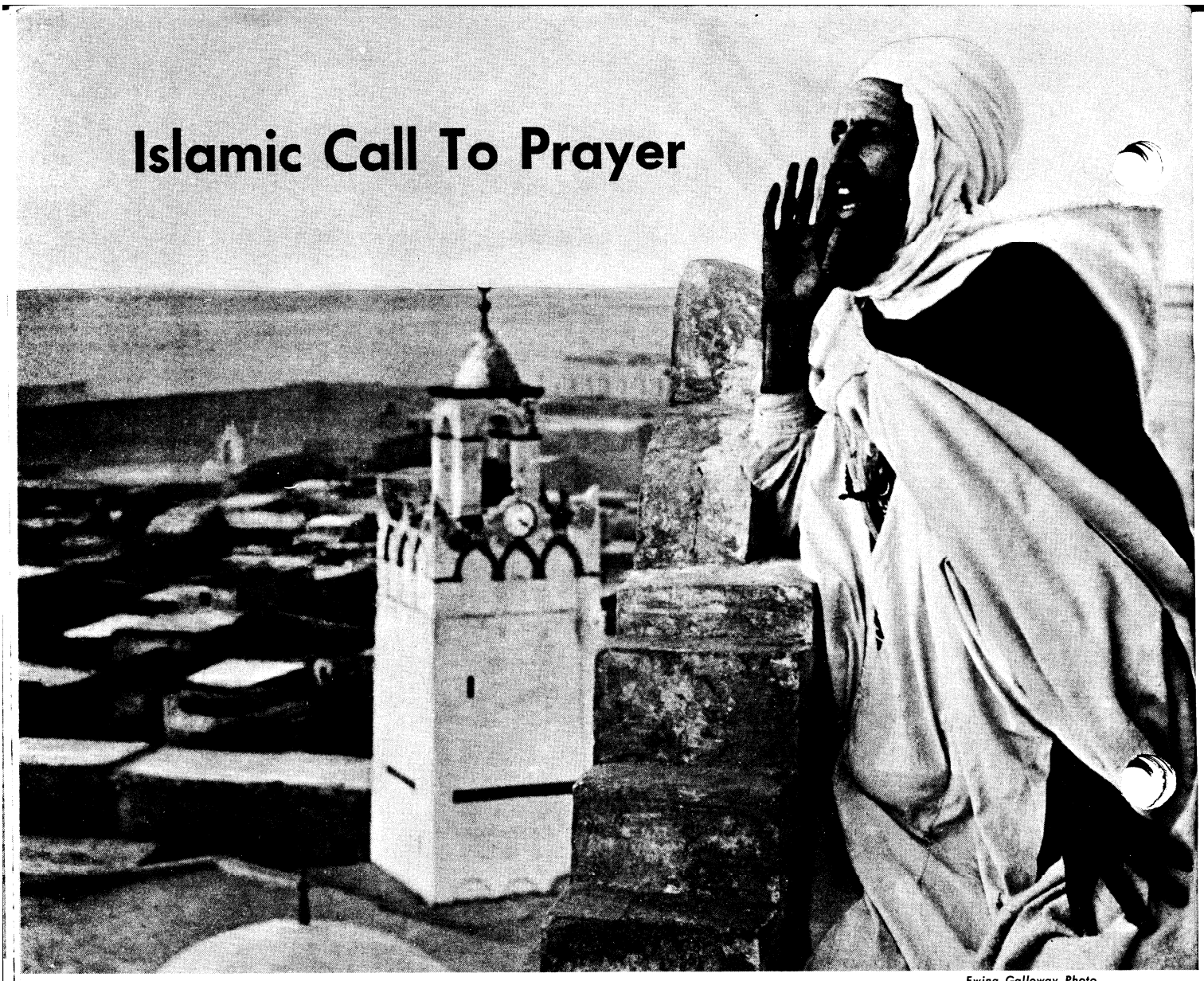
Absolutely not!

Many "babes in Christ" are faced with this problem. Perhaps some of you are afraid to pray as often as you should because you are *afraid other people will* KNOW *about it!* Have no such fear! Should the nearness of your wife, husband, or children prevent you from maintaining an intimate contact with your Creator and God? Of course not!

1. Do we find examples where Christ — our *perfect example* — prayed a short distance from His disciples who knew *where* He was and *what* He was doing? Luke 9:18, 28. Did He also occasionally give a public prayer? Mat. 14:19.

COMMENT: When Jesus did pray in public, His prayers were very short and for such things as asking God's *blessing* on food or to *help* and *encourage* His disciples. Such short prayers, if not said to be "seen of men," or for the sake of *vanity*, do not violate Christ's own instructions of Matthew 6:5.

So *don't* be ashamed if anyone knows you are



Ewing Galloway Photo

A Muezzin's main qualification is a loud, clear voice for calling faithful Muhammadans to prayer. Muhammadans believe they should pray to their god *five* times a day — at dawn, at noon, before sunset, just after sunset, and just after the day has closed.

praying! Just be careful not to pray to be "seen of men," and try hard to find a closet or a "private place" where you will not be disturbed, and likewise *not disturb others* around you.

2. How did Jesus make sure He got to pray when He was staying at Peter's home with His disciples? Mark 1:35.

COMMENT: You can be alone with God if you will follow Christ's example and *make a way!*

Position in Prayer

1. What position did Daniel take when He prayed to God? Dan. 6:10. Is it also proper to bow our heads as we pray? Psalm 95:6.

COMMENT: The Bible records many different positions in prayer. But it *always* shows that in private, personal prayer, you should *kneel* on *both* knees. It has always been a custom to kneel on *one* knee to a king or other ruler as a sign of *respect* and *esteem*. But the Bible always records that we should bow *both* knees to God in *reverence* and *worship*.

2. What position is especially conducive to *fervent* prayer? I Kings 8:54 and Ezra 9:5.

COMMENT: Notice that Solomon and Ezra kneeled upon *both* knees and spread out their hands *upward toward God*. This is a position of humility and supplication. You will come more nearly praying *fervently* if you are in such a position.

God may not answer "sleepy-time prayers"

that you mumble in bed just before dropping off to sleep. If you want an answer, better GET OUT OF THAT BED and *kneel* before your Creator!

3. Is it also proper to pray while standing or even sitting in public? I Kings 8:22 and Mat. 15:35-36.

COMMENT: In public or at the dinner table, you may pray while standing or sitting — whichever way you feel would honor God most in each situation.

4. What position did Jesus take in private prayer? Luke 22:41.

COMMENT: In your personal prayers, you should *kneel* before God and pray *fervently.*

Concentrate your WHOLE BEING on communing with the Creator of heaven and earth — and your own loving, spiritual Father. A correct position in prayer will help you do this.

How Often to Pray

In Acts 13:22, we read that David was a *man after God's own heart.* You should read some of the Psalms to see why God favored David so highly. Many of the Psalms are simply David's *prayers!* He prayed to God in time of trouble, for guidance and in thanksgiving. In *every circumstance* David went to God in prayer.

Don't think you are "bothering God" by sharing your joys and your problems with Him. Talk to God often — in *every circumstance.* That is undoubtedly one of the main reasons that David was a man after God's own heart.

If you want to be a child of God, then "get acquainted" with your heavenly Father. Talk to Him *often. Share your life* with God. And then let God talk to you as you *study* His Word daily.

1. How many times a day did David go to God in prayer? Psalm 55:17. Did God's prophet Daniel follow this same example? Dan. 6:10.

COMMENT: These examples are not commands, but they certainly show that to kneel in prayer *three times a day* is a good way to bring God into our lives.

2. What is the apostle Paul's instruction to all Christians concerning the frequency of prayer? I Thes. 5:17. What did he mean? Col. 4:2.

COMMENT: Paul obviously meant that we are never to *discontinue* our prayer life — that we should pray EVERY DAY! We should even occasionally talk to God in our minds as we go about our work or play. We should ask Him to direct our *thoughts and actions.*

When you seem to be losing your temper, quickly ask God for the power to curb your emotions and help you guide your speech. Or, when you are in doubt about a certain course of action — *stop and think,* "would Jesus do that if He were here today?" Then ask God to show you, and *study* your Bible, so you will *know* what He would have you do. Ask God for the *wisdom,* the *faith,* and the *power* to rightly carry out what you know is His will.

This simple process will change your whole life! Your life will then have more *meaning,* and more *real happiness,* than ever before!

How Long to Pray

Prayer should be one of the most important and *most enjoyable* activities of your life.

If you really love God as your Father, you will want to spend a great deal of time talking to Him.

Your spiritual food is obtained by contact with God through prayer and Bible study. Preparing and eating your material food takes at least two hours each day. Isn't your "spiritual food" *even more* important? So why not spend *more time* acquiring it?

Time is precious! Use your time where it *counts.* It's better to miss a few physical meals sometimes, better to *fast* once in a while, than to get "too busy" to drink in the spiritual things from God.

That is the very *purpose* of your life!

Schedule your time for the activities of the day, including a certain amount of time for prayer. Mr. Herbert Armstrong has repeatedly stressed that Christians should definitely spend at least a bare *minimum of one half hour* on their knees daily, in order to keep growing spiritually. The Bible does not specify the exact required amount of daily prayer, but a Christian should try to spend nearer *an hour in prayer* each day, and may sometimes spend much more than this (Luke 6:12).

1. Did Jesus set the *inspired example* of spending the *first* part of His day in prayer — *before anything else could interrupt?* Mark 1:35.

COMMENT: All of us need to *set aside* specific *times* for prayer — and *early in the morning* should DEFINITELY be one of these times! If you pray three times a day as did David and Daniel, try to spend more time on your knees in prayer in the morning while your mind is fresh and alert. Then you might split up the remaining time during the next two or more periods of prayer.

But be careful not to be a "clock-watcher" when you pray. Let your prayers be *from the heart,* and not just a duty or "ritual" you *perform* every day! Prayer has to become *heartfelt* — full of thanksgiving, praise and joy. It should

be a spontaneous and natural *talking* to God — "conversational prayer."

Sometimes you will need to spend a *long session* with God when you have a tremendous decision to make, or when facing serious trouble. In such a crisis, spend a *long time* in God's presence. Pray with all your might. God *will hear*. And it will be an inspiring experience that you will never forget!

Other Things to Pray About

There are many other things we should be praying for daily. You should STUDY your Bible to learn what God's true servants prayed about. Here are a few of the things we should be praying for every day, in *addition* to what Jesus instructed us in His outline of prayer.

1. Are we to pray for those who are in *authority* in the government of our country? I Tim. 2:1-3. Why? Verse 2.

COMMENT: In your prayers ask God to lead the civil officials to grant His people *freedom* to live Christian lives. Be *thankful* for the freedoms you now enjoy. Be grateful for the many *benefits* that have accrued in the fields of communications, transportation and public safety. God says it is well pleasing in His sight that we do so (verse 3).

2. Does Jesus teach us even to pray for our enemies and those who persecute us? Mat. 5:44. Did Jesus explain why we should love our enemies and *pray* for them? Verses 45-47.

COMMENT: God loves all mankind. He brings rain upon the just and the unjust alike. He is *responsible* for blinding the vast majority of this world to His plan and purpose for mankind. You should therefore pray that God would forgive your enemies their evil actions against you, even as Jesus asked forgiveness for His tormentors and murderers! (Luke 23:34.) Pray that God, in His *own time*, will reveal the truth and His love to them as He did to you.

3. Did Paul say we should pray for other Christians, and for God's servants everywhere? Eph. 6:18-20 and II Thes. 3:1-2.

4. To what end should we especially pray for God's Work on earth? II Thes. 3:1, last half.

COMMENT: We should be praying every day that God would direct His Work and that His gospel could *continue* being preached as a "witness" to this dying world — that it would have "free course."

5. Should we also pray that God will send more *laborers* to help in His great Work? John 4:35 and Mat. 9:37-38.

COMMENT: Pray that this gospel will *pierce* the hearts and minds of more listeners. Pray that God will lay it on the hearts of many more to become co-workers in helping to support His growing Work with their tithes and offerings.

And pray for more consecrated laborers to be led directly *into* the Work of God. There is a tremendous need for the right caliber men and women to do the work that is *yet to be done!*

6. Are you separated from other true Christians, but want to have a greater part in helping them and God's Work? What is the example set for you in Colossians 4:12-13?

COMMENT: Epaphras was one of the apostle Paul's helpers. This man's LABOR was in *prayer!* That was *his part* in God's Work that Paul referred to especially. It can be YOUR PART as well!

Do you have a *zeal* to help God's children? Do you get down on your knees *every day* and ask God to help and direct them? Do you pray for God's ministers and His Work? You should!

7. Finally, should we pray that we might be accounted *worthy* to escape the terrible things soon to befall this earth? Luke 21:36. Are we to "*watch*" as well as pray?

COMMENT: Jesus obviously meant for us to "watch" the fulfillment of prophecy in *world events* — and in this way be stimulated and inspired to *pray earnestly* to the REAL *GOD* who *actively intervenes in human affairs*. To pray to *Him* about all the things we have studied in this lesson, as well as our own future safety!

But don't *limit* the things you pray about to the points mentioned in this lesson. Ask God to show you what else HE wants *you* to pray for. HE will show you, *in His Word*, many other things to pray about.

Pray BOLDLY!

Some are *afraid* to ask God for much in their prayers — afraid to ask God's richest blessings. They hang back in *doubt*. They are sometimes hesitant and apologetic in their prayers! They are not sure of God's will, so they only ask *half-heartedly*.

What about YOU?

1. Are we to approach God's glorious throne with BOLDNESS? Heb. 4:16. And with a sense of fervency and urgency? James 5:16.

COMMENT: When Moses prayed for Israel, he prayed BOLDLY and courageously! When Elijah prayed, he prayed *boldly* — with faith and confidence. All the prophets and servants of God did NOT hang back apologetically in *fear* and gnawing doubt.

They KNEW God's will, and they prayed accordingly — BOLDLY!

For you to pray boldly — with real faith and CONFIDENCE — you must first KNOW God's will. His will is revealed in the Bible! You must come to know how God thinks, how He acts and how

He looks upon things. You must know His CHARACTER and His holiness, the purpose He is working out here below, and the PROMISES He has made in His Word.

Then you can lift up your voice in prayer, and cry aloud to God BOLDLY!

2. What is our *confidence* when we pray to God according to His will and with boldness? I John 5:14-15.

COMMENT: Your personal, heartfelt PRAYERS on the behalf of GOD'S WORK, on behalf of those who are sick and afflicted, on the behalf of God's ministers — your prayers for help, deliverance, healing and strength to overcome temptation — YOUR FERVENT PRAYERS *CAN ACCOMPLISH MIRACLES!*

And so learn to *expect* answers to your prayers. God reveals Himself as a REAL God — a *LIVING, ACTING GOD* who will *intervene* on your behalf, if you will beseech Him in BELIEVING PRAYER!

What our STUDENTS SAY

(Continued from page 2)

I have learned to love and respect our Father in heaven. I now pray from deep in my heart and my prayers are answered. It is just wonderful to me since not so long ago God was someone I believed in, but had no real need for because I thought I lived a fairly clean life. However, after tuning you in on my car radio one day, I learned how wrong I was."

— H. W. R., Rhode Island

• *Following are several more excerpts from inspiring letters about ANSWERED PRAYER that we received from our students and readers of the* PLAIN TRUTH *magazine.*

Healed Instantly

"I asked for and received a prayer cloth for a baby grandson who, according to doctors, had his heart on the wrong side, with enlarged blood vessels, tumors of the vessels, and one arm and leg smaller and shorter. Three doctors examined him, and said all these things were true. Without saying anything to anyone, I asked for a prayer cloth. I laid it on his stomach in faith, and he just flinched and slumped forward slightly, then went right back to playing. I never told anyone. His parents wanted to take him to Jackson, Mississippi, to a specialist. I just let them go, but told them there wasn't any need for that trip, for he was already healed. They never asked me how I knew, nor did I ever tell them. They took him down there anyway. The doctor kept him over 2 hours, X-raying, examining, measuring, and whatever else he did. His findings were: no short leg, no short arm, no tumors, and no heart on the wrong side. He is 3 now, and is as nearly perfect as a three-year-old boy could be. I thank God for it all — not man, not the prayer cloth, but God."

— Man from Alabama

A Living Miracle!

"My son suffered a kidney failure. I have learned now by experience God's wonderful blessings and healing power. Every doctor that has seen my son's medical records has said no one can live in such a condition. My son not only goes to school full time, but he's very active in school activities. I was told he could not possibly live more than 6 weeks. He was anointed. That 6 weeks stretched into 5 years. He's more active now than ever. Some agnostics might think his kidneys just began to function again. But this cannot be so! His kidneys had rotted away!"

— Woman, Tacoma, Washington

Protected From Disaster

"Our southeastern Minnesota area is coming in for its fair share of God's warnings with the terrible drought of last summer and the worst floods in history now. Roads in the area are still impassible and no travel is advised except on an emergency basis. When the city of Rochester was prepared to evacuate a major portion of the residents, a meteorologist predicted the Sumbro River would crest at an unheard of high by midnight. Our prayers of faith were answered. Miraculously, at 9:00 p.m., the flood waters began to recede before any serious damage was done."

— Woman, Dodge Center, Minnesota

Blessed Financially

"A wonderful thing happened to us last week. We were very low on money and did not know which way to turn. We had prayed for God to help us with our problem. The very next day we received a phone call from our bank saying that my wife had $80.00 in an account which she had before we were married. Also the same week I received a raise in pay. It truly does pay to tithe and leave your problem in God's hands."

— Man, Haysville, Kansas

• *God blesses those who sincerely* OBEY *Him and* ASK *for His promised blessings in BELIEVING PRAYER!*

Lesson 43

"I received Lesson 43 of the Bible Corre-

Wide World Photo

Flood waters struck the city of Chaska, Minnesota, in April, 1965. Be sure to read the letter we received from a student in Minnesota who prayed for deliverance from threatening flood disaster.

spondence Course last week and *wow!* What a lesson *it is!* It is going to be the *best* lesson yet. When I get started studying on it I hate to lay it down again — it is so interesting and so filled with *most important* knowledge, which we all need very badly. We all need to learn how to have more faith."

— Mrs. H. V., Kerrville, Texas

"My mailman just brought us the mail, and I was so excited to receive, at last, the 44th lesson. . . . How thankful I am to God for the Correspondence Course. Lesson 43 was a most inspiring lesson. I used to say to some friends 'Wait till your Lesson 24.' Now they're to Lesson 24. They tell me what I said is really true — that then it really starts to *speak* to one. Now I say to them, 'Wait till you're on Lesson 43.' "

— Student, Transcona, Manitoba, Canada

• *Be sure to REVIEW this vital lesson on faith in conjunction with your prayer lessons.*

On Lesson 44

"It has been so long since I have written to you, that I feel I must write now to thank you for such a wonderful study course! I am on Lesson 44, and can hardly wait for Test 11 to arrive. I think often of the men who must spend and sacrifice their time in order to send us students such lessons of high quality. They are so interesting, and all free, too!

"This Work is truly of the Living God!

"Thank you!"

— J. R. P., Phoenix, Arizona