

## **Living Epistles**

### **By Kent Heaton**

“Do we begin again to commend ourselves? Or do we need, as some others, epistles of commendation to you or letters of commendation from you? You are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read by all men; clearly you are an epistle of Christ, ministered by us, written not with ink but by the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of flesh, that is, of the heart. And we have such trust through Christ toward God. Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think of anything as being from ourselves, but our sufficiency is from God” (2Cor. 3:1-5).

In days long ago a comic strip hero named Dick Tracy fascinated us with his unbelievable technology like talking wristwatches. The square-jawed crime fighter wearing his distinctive yellow raincoat always got his man. But it was that talking wrist radio that was so cool. Living in the space age of new inventions Tracy was a sure read. Today few children (or adults) would be impressed with his gadgets or even read a comic strip. There is more technology in my three year old smart phone than my first real computer. We live our day's dependent on the internet via Wi-Fi. Email, text, Facebook, Twitter this and Twitter that and a way we go. If you are wondering where I am going with this it is an answer as to why the devo's have been few and far between the past few weeks.

Spending a week a camp without Wi-Fi was enlightening. The campers actually spent a week without smartphones, internet, computers and they all went home alive. A few of us old folk who have limited internet access lived a week without all the trappings of the high powered world of internet. This week we have been moving from Georgia to Florida and without the internet resulting in no devotionals being published. I regret that but it looks like happy days are here again as internet has been established in our new home. So what is the point?

Paul commended the Corinthian brethren for being a message of Christ without being dependent on things of this world but showing themselves as God's people by matters of the heart. The Spirit of the living God is what makes us stand out and communicate the love of God. This does not require electricity. It only needs a heart. No matter how advanced we become in technology the word of Christ still needs people – simply put – people to be the word of communication of salvation. Get plugged in with the word of God and you will never be without power. Stay connected with the Lord and you will never lose signal. Surf the internet of God's grace and you will never find yourself alone. The word of God has been around much longer than the internet and will remain long after it is gone.

## **Monotony of Life Without God**

### **By Dee Bowman**

“The words of the Preacher, the son of David, king in Jerusalem. "Vanity of vanities," says the Preacher; "Vanity of vanities, all is vanity." What profit has a man from all his labor in which he toils under the sun? One generation passes away, and another generation comes; but the earth abides forever. The sun also rises, and the sun goes down, and hastens to the place where it arose. The wind goes toward the south, and turns around to the north; the wind whirls about continually, and comes again on its circuit. All the rivers run into the sea, yet the sea is not full; to the place from which the rivers come, there they return again. All things are full of labor; man cannot express it. The eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the ear filled with hearing. That which has been is what will be, that which is done is what will be done, and there is nothing new under the sun. Is there anything of which it may be said, "See, this is new"? It has already been in ancient times before us. There is no remembrance of former things, nor will there be any remembrance of things that are to come by those who will come after” (Ecc. 1:1-11).

Life apart from God is just one big, monotonous bore. Listen to the wise man. One generation passes, another comes. So it has been from all time. This generation will pass away and another will take its place. The courses of life are inalterable. The sun goes up and down and a day is past. This same process occurs 7 times and becomes as week, a week becomes a month, a month a year, and on and on it goes.

The hydrological cycle has been in place almost since the beginning. Mountain snows melt and fill little streams, little streams empty into big ones, the big ones into little rivers, little rivers into big ones, and the big ones into the oceans. Oceans evaporate and the whole process starts all over.

Man is never satisfied. He has never seen, heard, felt, known all he wants to see, hear, feel, and know. There is no new thing; everything stays essentially the same. Life without God brings no true joy, but living for God does. It makes the life worth living, the joy worth giving. It makes family important, the job fulfilling, even discipline appealing. God's life, lived in God's way is refreshing and wonderful, always new, for it promises an everlasting one.

### **Why I Drink**

"Wine is a mocker, strong drink is a brawler, and whoever is led astray by it is not wise" (Prov. 20:1). "Do not look on the wine when it is red, when it sparkles in the cup, when it swirls around smoothly; at the last it bites like a serpent, and stings like a viper" (Prov. 23:31-32).

I drank for happiness and became unhappy.

I drank for joy and became miserable.

I drank for sociability and became argumentative.

I drank for sophistication and became obnoxious.

I drank for sleep and woke up tired.

I drank for strength and felt weak.

I drank for relaxation and got the shakes.

I drank to make conversation easier and slurred my speech.

I drank for confidence and became doubtful.

I drank for courage and became afraid.

(From a former Alcoholic)

### **A Wasted Life**

"Seek the LORD while He may be found, call upon Him while He is near. Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; let him return to the LORD, and He will have mercy on him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon" (Isa. 55:6-7). The following grand, old poem which has no title was written by Theodore W. Brennan.

I looked upon a farm one day,  
That once I used to own;  
The barn had fallen to the ground,  
The fields were overgrown.

The house in which my children grew,  
Where we had lived for years -  
I turned to see it broken down,  
And brushed aside the tears.

I looked upon my soul one day,  
To find it too had grown

With thorns and nettles everywhere,  
The seeds neglect had sown.

The years had passed while I had cared  
For things of lesser worth;  
The things of Heaven I let go  
While minding things of earth.

To Christ I turned with bitter tears,  
And cried, "O Lord, forgive!  
I haven't much time left for Thee,  
Not many years to live."

The wasted years forever gone,  
The days I can't recall;  
If I could live those days again,  
I'd make Him Lord of all.