

## **Talents on Vacation**

**By Kelly Spencer**

It's always refreshing to get away for a while on vacation, but how often are we refreshed spiritually? This point came home to me when worshipping with a congregation in London. While worshipping with Christians in a foreign land can be spiritually uplifting in itself, the one who led singing and taught the Bible class gave me a new perspective. It wasn't his singing style (though he never missed a note) nor his teaching (which was grounded in the truth) that touched me. It was his devotion to use his talents and overcoming what others would might deem impossible. You see, this songleader/teacher was totally blind. His songbook and teaching materials were in Braille.

This man's utilization of his talents forced me to examine my own life. Do I make excuses that prohibit me from fully serving God? "My song leading isn't that great. You may want to get someone else." Do we use a specific talent we feel secure doing, while neglecting to develop others? I'm sure a myriad of excuses can be made, but are any worth the fate of the one who buried his talent? (Matt. 25:14-30). Vacationing can refresh the body and mind, but make sure that your talents haven't gone on permanent vacation. Our own rationalization makes it all too easy! Combat it by developing all your abilities while overcoming the excuses the devil so easily provides. Maybe the next time you're on vacation, you will see something that causes you to reflect on God's power and ability to use his servants in the kingdom.

### **"Lie By Until Morning"**

Some years ago a large vessel called the "Central America" ran aground, with the result that a hole was torn in her side, and she began to leak. A signal of distress was immediately hoisted and another ship came alongside her. "What is amiss?" asked the captain through the trumpet. "Bad repair and are going down; lie by till morning," was the answer. But the captain on board the rescue ship said, "Let me take your passengers on board now. "Lie by till morning" was the message which came back. For the third time, the captain of the rescue ship raised the trumpet to his lips and with an earnest appeal, called "You had better let me take your passengers on board now." "Lie by till morning," was the reply which again sounded across the water. About an hour and a half later, the lights of the vessel went missing, for suddenly, without any warning, she heeled over, and with scarcely a sound, she and all on board, plunged into the depths of the ocean.

Oh, the danger in delay. Sinner, the opportunity is now; "Behold now is the accepted time" (2Cor. 6:2). By this time tomorrow many will have passed into eternity, and if you are one of them and still in your sins, you are destined for an eternity in pain. Decide for Christ now and do not "lie by till morning."

### **Two Generations Closer to God**

Jacob Kamenetzky made a trip to Israel accompanied by his teenage grandson. Ironically, these two deeply religious people had been seated in the airplane next to a prominent Israeli socialist leader and out-spoken atheist who had spent his whole life fighting against religious beliefs. After the plane reached its cruising altitude, the cynical atheist traveler couldn't help noticing the way the teenage boy attended to the needs of his aged, bearded grandfather. He got up to get the old man a glass of water, helped him remove his shoes and put on some slippers, and otherwise demonstrated that his grandfather's comfort was his primary concern.

At one point, as the boy got up for yet another errand on behalf of the old man, the skeptical stranger could contain himself no longer. "Tell me something," he asked Jacob. "Why does your grandson treat you like some kind of a king? I have a grandson, too, but he wouldn't give me the time of day."

"It's very simple, Jacob replied. "My grandson and I both believe in a God who rules the universe and created all things, including the first man. That means that in the boy's eyes, I'm two

generations closer to God Himself. But in the eyes of your grandson, you're just two generations closer to a monkey."

## IF

"Fret not thyself because of evil-doers, neither be thou envious against the workers of iniquity" (Psalm 37:1).

- If someone levels a criticism against you it may be evidence you have done something worthwhile.
- If someone opposes you, consider his objections; His opposition may be justified.
- If someone fails to speak to you, it could have been unintentional -- maybe he didn't see you or was preoccupied with a great burden of his own.
- If someone has defrauded you, remember that there are more than two hundred sixty million people in America who have never done you a wrong.
- If the burdens of the day seem unusually heavy, go to the Father in heaven; He can lighten or help carry your load.
- If you tried to do something worthwhile and failed, try again tomorrow: Maybe you can succeed. (Jesse Kelly)

## Chapters of My Life

Chapter One: I walked down a sidewalk and fell into a deep hole. I couldn't get out, and I couldn't figure out why. It wasn't my fault. I took a long time to get out.

Chapter Two: I walked down the sidewalk and fell into the same hole again. I couldn't understand. It wasn't my fault. I really had to struggle to get out.

Chapter three: I walked down the sidewalk and fell into the same hole again. This time I understood why, and it was my fault. This time it was easier to get out.

Chapter four: I walked down the sidewalk and saw the same big hole. I walked around it. I didn't fall into that hole.

Chapter five: I chose another sidewalk. (Portia Nelson)

## A Moments Wisdom

- Prayers don't keep you alive; they help you to live.
- "You don't have to be perfect to become a Christian; you cannot get your life in order outside of Christ as well as you can inside of Christ" (prb).
- "Bible classes are not merely to get you to know the Bible; they are to get you into Christ" (prb).
- "Some brethren speak and act as if it is a sin to love sinners and that it is wrong to treat them with kindness and speak of them with respect" (prb).
- "Bad things give pain when they come to us; good things give us pain when they leave. That is the way of life in this fallen world" (prb).
- "Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that. Hate multiplies hate, violence multiplies violence, and toughness multiplies toughness in a descending spiral of destruction" (MLK, Jr.).
- "It is no measure of health to be well adjusted to a profoundly sick society" (Jiddu Krishnamurti).
- "Peace is the result of re-training your mind to process life as it is, rather than as you think it should be" (Wayne W. Dyer).
- "We tend to meet any new situation by reorganizing, and a wonderful method it can be -- for creating an illusion of progress while producing confusion, inefficiency and demoralization" (Petronius Arbitr, 100 BC).