



FOR MILLENNIA Christians have insisted that faith is the key, not only to knowledge, but to all good things. Why have they been so insistent? Because of the conviction that all good things come from God, and only intimate contact with the Divine can put us in the right path. The person who has no faith in God is open to error that can destroy at any step along the way of life.

Double-sided Faith

Faith in God is a double-sided coin.

so God stirs up our comfortable nests in order that we might learn to fly by faith in him. When life is monotonously the same and there are few surprises, there often seems little need of divine help. But when we are placed in a new situation entirely, where so many things seem completely unpredictable, the situation is drastically changed and a wise soul reaches out beyond itself for help. You will be able to think of many illustrations of this, including poverty, sickness, unemployment, or traveling in a strange land.

THE KEY TO EVERY DOOR WORTH OPENING

Editor's note: In our February 1987 issue, page 7, we published a letter from Dr. Ford regarding his European trip. Readers will immediately recognize allusions in this following article to Dr Ford's itinerary. We believe the Lord greatly blessed the trip, and that it was a significant event for future GNU usefulness. Recent letters tell us of plans already under way for GNU speakers to be featured at a European Gospel Congress within the next two years.

by Desmond Ford

The other side of the coin is self-distrust. Moderns do not think that this is much of a virtue. They prefer self-confidence. If they mean confidence in what a creature can do when in right relationship with the Creator, certainly they would be correct. But if they mean that the creature can find his own way successfully through the labyrinth of life, they are certainly mistaken. "The way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps" (Jer 10:23).

We have often heard it said that people wrapped up in themselves make very small parcels. A person who is self-confident rather than God-confident is a very small parcel indeed. What is one self among 5,000 million selves in this back eddy of one tiny planetary system which is but a speck in a galaxy that is dwarfed by innumerable neighbors?

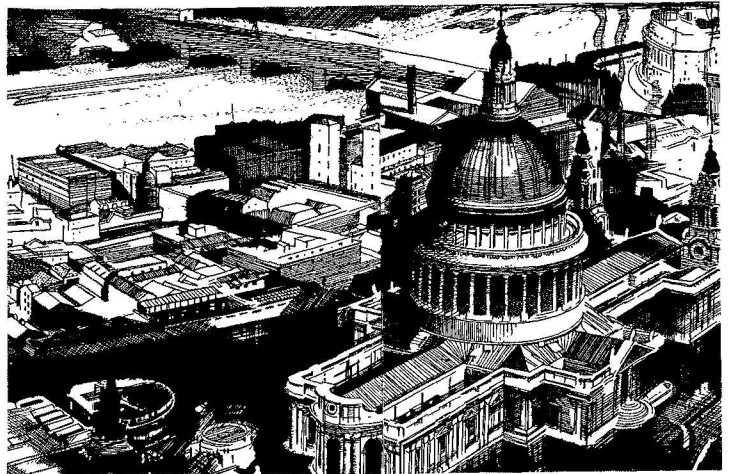
Change Teaches Faith

Our Heavenly Father in his great love uses all sorts of methods to teach us trust in him, and distrust in ourselves. Keep in mind they always go together, and are the fruit of the moving of the Divine Spirit. One way that God endeavors to teach us to distrust ourselves and to trust in him is the medium of change.

We read in Deuteronomy 32:11 that as the eagle stirs up her nest and ejects her young, all the while capably and protectively hovering over them,

Travels with Des

I am one of those persons who frequently do not observe their surroundings very closely. Often I am thinking about something I have read, or which I intend to write. Consequently, I am capable of being lost even in a telephone box. Recently, when traveling in Germany, England, Norway, Sweden, and Denmark, I was reminded afresh of some of the truths



God intends to teach us.

Because I believe that being constantly still is the nearest thing to being dead, I cannot abide being closed up in a hotel room or even the guest room of my host and hostess. Consequently, I leave the shelter and the

safety and venture forth. This procedure for someone as absentminded as myself can be almost fatal. For example, the other Sunday in London, when I had determined to lay books aside and get some walking in (and it didn't matter very much where), I started off at Petticoat Lane Market and finished at All Souls' Church. (All Souls' is John Stott's famous center, which has influenced the whole Christian world.)

Lost in London

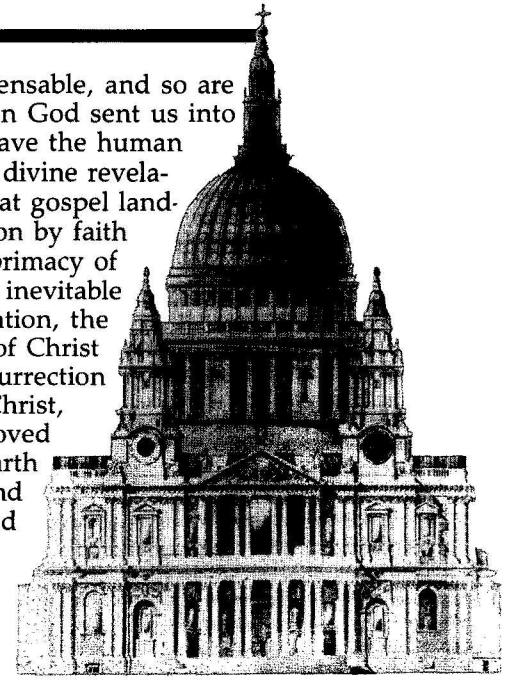
In the interim I had walked for over seven hours. You should not be impressed by this, because for about three hours I walked in a circle! I remember having just looked again at the home of John Wesley, and the cemetery opposite which houses the remains of such famous people as John Bunyan, Daniel Defoe, John Gill, etc. I knew that very close was a London Methodist Mission building of great size. I thought I should now return to that and see if there was any interesting program on for the day. There was not, so I decided to head for a London reference library, just to see if I might be tempted to open a book again for that day. After half an hour's walking, it seemed strange to me that I was not seeing any familiar streets such as the Strand, Charing Cross Road, Regent Street, Oxford Street, etc. Even an ignorant wanderer like myself in London is constantly stumbling over well-known thoroughfares. But now there were none. I could have been in a distant suburb of Sydney, or New York, or Los Angeles. I wasn't worried. After all I was out for a walk and it didn't much matter where I was. I knew that in due course I would strike an Underground station and from there I could get to any place I wished in the great metropolis. I usually didn't wish, as it seemed to surrender all the advantages of walking, and pay for the surrender as well.

Still, I was puzzled—no familiar landmarks at all hour after hour. Then suddenly I saw one. I was back at the mission building that I had left several hours ago. I had been walking in a gigantic circle!

Maps

For ignorant people like myself,

maps are indispensable, and so are landmarks. When God sent us into this world, he gave the human race the map of divine revelation and the great gospel landmarks of salvation by faith alone, and the primacy of justification, the inevitable fruit of sanctification, the ultimate return of Christ in glory, the resurrection of the dead in Christ, the reunion of loved ones, and the earth made new. Grand landmarks indeed for the soul which must otherwise wander fruitlessly in circles.



St. Paul's Cathedral

Travel's Unexpected Dangers

There are all sorts of traps for young travelers. For example, there were folk from another country at the guest house where I was staying in London, and I carefully explained to them that neither Oxford Circus nor Piccadilly Circus had any elephants. The circus in each case was just an urban circle, without tents or animals, except **Homo sapiens**.

So many things can go wrong for the hapless traveler. While walking in a thoroughly unfamiliar area of London, I decided I might have to consult my map. But alas I had dropped it. Suddenly a young, cheerful woman rushed up to me and said, "Excuse me, but you dropped this," and handed me my map. Things rarely work out that well.

A minister at the London guest home told us all of his experience in Spain. While driving friends in a hired car, on roads thickly lined with people, a little child suddenly ran out in front of him. It was too late to stop. He hit her. He told us that at that moment it seemed to him a great door, the door of his life hitherto, swung shut, and another door opened to a life where he would be branded as a killer. He was sure the child was dead. Stopping the car he raced to the prone body and carried her to the hospital. In a matter of minutes the little tot, bruised, was walking out of

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the hospital on her own account. But things could have been so different.

Or imagine you had just decided to take your family on a little camping holiday, perhaps to a place like Ayers Rock, Australia. And just imagine that during the night the youngest member of your family, a baby of only a few months, was stolen—by a wild animal such as a dingo. And now imagine that you were charged with the murder of your own child. Innocent lives can be blasted by what seems a mere freak of chance.

Life's Unexpected Dangers

So what? These are not just stories of travelers and campers. They depict everybody's life. The most significant things that happen to us are not the ones planned or premeditated. They are the ones that come out of the blue like an angel, or a demon; like the glory of a rainbow, or a shaft of lightning. Who is sufficient for these things? No one. Nobody has the strength, nor the wisdom, to successfully cope with all the emergencies of life. We need God and we need him every moment—and the wise man, the wise woman, the wise boy and the wise girl, is the one who acknowledges that fact continually. This is faith.

Saving Faith

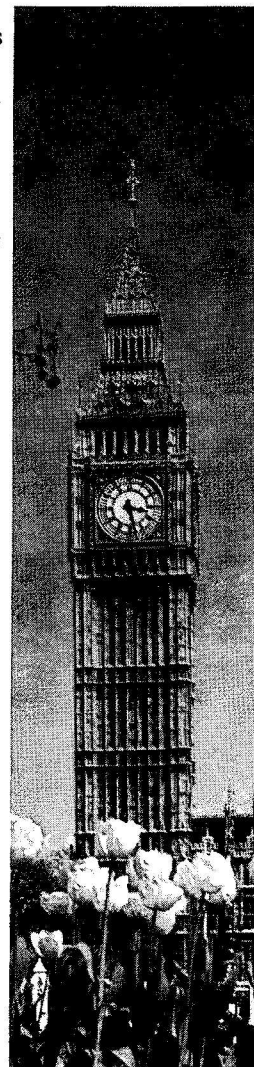
Saving faith, of course, comprehends more than that—it

lays hold of the merits of the Divine-human sacrifice for the sins of the world, and applies the merits of that sacrifice to one's own soul. It is the sense of dependence which characterized the lepers Christ healed, the beggars he enriched, the despairing he encouraged, and the dying to whom he gave life, which is the beginning and the root of saving faith.

Scripture promises that God will show us the path of life. Unless he does, we will inevitably wander in hopeless circles among the tombs of the dead, soon to lie down beside them in their darkness. We need the light of the world (Jn 8:12; 1:9) to shine upon us every moment. The way of man that walketh is not in himself, and he does not perceive the pitfalls all about him.

When we know we are weak, we are strong. God has promised "my grace is sufficient for you, my strength is made perfect in weakness." He fills the hungry with good things but turns the rich away. He pulls princes down from their thrones and exalts beggars from their dung hills. "In thy light shall we see light." Chapters 3 and 8 of Proverbs speak very highly of wisdom, describing it as the Tree of Life, and promising that all who lay hold of wisdom shall be happy. The wisdom so honored is religious faith. □

to be continued



AROUND THE WORLD TO AUSTRALIA!

Dr. Desmond Ford's gospel preaching tour of Australia, the Philippines and Japan (February 26—April 20, 1987) will take him 25,000 miles—equivalent to a full circumnavigation of the globe! Ron Allen organized the trip. The Australian portion of the tour is being funded by **GNU** of Australia. The Philippine / Japan portion is being funded by **Good News Fellowship** of Canada, as a gospel outreach.

Highlights include:

March	6-8	Perth Gospel Congress
March	13-15	Melbourne Gospel Congress
March	15	Interview on the Gordon Moyes' program, Australia's top religious broadcast
March	20-22	Sydney Gospel Congress
March	27-28	Brisbane Gospel Congress
March	29	Ecumenical Service at Uniting Church, Brisbane

Other appointments include preaching the gospel in Adelaide, Hobart, Cooranbong, Palm Beach, Manila, and Tokyo.

THE FORDS AT SAN DIEGO—A WEEKEND TO REMEMBER!

Dr. Ford spoke at the Point Loma SDA Church Friday night, January 9, 1987, on the Story of Simon the Pharisee. The congregation included not only local members but gospel believers from far and near. During Sabbath School next morning, Des went through the Book of Galatians with a large class. In the afternoon, at the Adventist Forum Meeting, the church was filled to overflowing with hundreds present! Gill was introduced from the rostrum to the congregation and had the opportunity to speak to many.

The Forum topic was "The Book of Revelation Revisited." The meeting began at 3:30 p.m., and went for one hour. After a break, there was a question time which lasted until 6:45 p.m. Later, a smaller gathering met for supper and more questions and answers. This meeting continued until 8:30 p.m. That's five hours of afternoon meeting!

Some people came 3,000 miles to attend the unprecedented sessions.

Dr. Ford was most gratified by his reception, and touched by the courtesy of all present. He prays that much good for all might result from the historic San Diego weekend. Tapes are available from the San Diego AAF, P.O. Box 3148, La Mesa, CA 92040.