As Christians, we disappoint God when we doubt what He has told us about His goodness and love, and the provisions He has made to save us. To illustrate, let us say that a man has two daughters, both of whom are heavily in debt. The father is wealthy, so he deposits $1,000,000 in the bank for each daughter. He tells them what he has done, and authorizes them to draw out any amount they need to pay their debts.

The girls look at their father with suppressed smiles, a bit indulgently perhaps. It is obvious that they doubt his word. But he insists: “The money is there. It’s yours. You can draw on it.” Finally they say, “O.K., Dad, we believe you”; but still they do not draw on the account. Their works contradict their words.

And because they disbelieve, they remain in debt. For all practical purposes they are still paupers. The money is in the bank, but they do not use it. Their spirits get no lift from it; their faces are still sad with the despair of poverty.

How tragic! By not believing their father they rob themselves of joy and rob their father of the pleasure he should have. Scripture says, “It is more blessed to give than to receive,” but the giver cannot receive joy if the gifts are rejected.

Thus it is with God. He has made full provision for our salvation. In Jesus Christ He has
made available all the best gifts of heaven—everything we need. He has put to our account salvation, freedom from condemnation, power over sin, eternal life!—By Kenneth H. Wood, Jr., These Times, November 1961.

Quote: “I said to the man who stood at the gate of the year: ‘Give me a light that I may tread safely into the unknown.’ And he replied: ‘Go out into the darkness and put your hand into the hand of God. That shall be to you better than light and safer than a known way.’ “—M. Louise Haskins, These Times, January 1969.

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A rich lady dreamed that she went to heaven and there saw a mansion being built. “Who is that for?” she asked of the guide.
“For your gardener.”
“But he lives in the tiniest cottage down on earth, with barely room enough for his family. He might live better, if he did not give away so much to the miserable poor folks.”
Further on she saw a tiny cottage being built. “And who is that for?” she asked.
“That is for you.”
“But I have lived in a mansion on earth. I would not know how to live in a cottage.”
The words she heard in reply were full of meaning: “The Master Builder is doing His best with the material that is being sent up.”
Then she awoke resolving to lay up treasure in heaven.—Unknown, Signs of the Times, September 2, 1903.

Quote: “A firm faith is the best divinity, a good life the best philosophy, a clear conscience the best law, honesty the best policy, temperance the best physic.”—Unknown, Signs of the Times, May 15, 1899.

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The looking glass is not a substitute for soap and water. When the miner or the mechanic looks into the mirror and sees his face dusty, dirty, and streaked as a result of the day’s toil, he does not take the glass and rub it over his face with the idea of getting the dirt off. That is not the purpose of the mirror. It is simply a dirt detector in his case. It takes soap and water to change the aspect of the countenance.

Dwight L. Moody in his evangelistic days used to illustrate this point with the story of “Willie and the Bears.” One day he promised to take the little boy to the park to see the animals. But after Willie was bathed and dressed, he played in the mud. His father said, “I can’t take you to the park looking like that; I couldn’t be seen with such a dirty little boy.”

“I, Why, I’m clean; mamma washed me,” he cried.

“Do you think I argued with him? No. I just took him up in my arms, and carried him into the house, and showed him his face in the looking glass. He had not a word to say.

“Now, the looking glass told him that his face was dirty; but I did not take the looking glass to wash it; of course not. Yet that is what thousands of people seek to do.”

There are those who seek to be saved by the law—who try to wash their face with the mirror . . . . The law is not, and never has been, the savior of men. Christ is the Saviour. Christ is the door to heaven—to eternal life.—By Dallas Youngs, *Our Times*, February 1948.

Quote: “I am only one man, but I am one man. I can’t do everything, but I can do something. And what I can do, I ought to do. And what I ought to do, by the grace of God, I will do!”—By Edward Everett Hale, *These Times*, August 1969.

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The guards called him a “hardened criminal,” and he merited the name, for he was
rebellious, stubborn, and secretive, a man with a past record of crime that was unenviable, the details of which were known to himself alone. His fellow prisoners shunned him, the prison guards watched him, and even the warden admitted that he could not understand Jim, or number 578 as he was known.

This morning as he left the dining hall, his eyes glanced furtively to the right and left as though expecting a blow or harsh word of command as he shuffled along in his leg irons, hating and despising his surroundings and the men who guarded him and held him in subjection. Without hope or friends, he was a man whom God seemed to have forgotten, and no one else cared to remember.

It was visiting day at the prison, and people were coming and going. A woman with a curly-haired baby girl clinging to her hand entered the corridor escorted by an attendant. No one noticed the hardened criminal as he shuffled along, no one knew why he was there at that particular time, except the Lord who loved him.

The little child, observing everything as children will, saw him and, releasing herself from her mother’s hand, ran toward him. The attendant drew a quick breath and started toward the man, but halted as he saw the baby reaching up her dimpled hands to the prisoner, and saying, “Take me up, man. Take me up.” Impelled by a feeling he could not account for, the prisoner stooped down and lifted the child to his bosom. The look in his face changed to friendly love and understanding. The baby patted his rough cheek with her dimpled hands, and said softly, “I love you, man. Have you got a little girl like me?” Memory unlocked the door to the inner chamber of his heart, and revealed things long hidden in the shadow and darkness, things that would never more be forgotten. He whispered something to the child as he gently set her down upon the floor and turned away to his work. No one but the guard and the mother saw the tears in his eyes and on his cheeks, and because of those tears the guard told no one but the warden of the incident.

Later the warden had a talk with Jim and learned his story. He once had a happy home, a wife, and a baby,—himself a respectable working man. But his wife was untrue to him, and he killed his best friend on her account. At the trial he was sent to prison, and his baby was given over to his wife. He never saw either of them again. He was pardoned and set free. Then he learned that the baby had died from neglect and exposure.

He was counted a criminal, and everyman’s hand was against him, no matter how hard he tried to go straight; so he learned to hate and distrust his fellow men. Future prison experiences only intensified that hate. But now, baby hands had brushed away the mists of doubt and fear, and her loving touch had made a new man of him, for “a little child shall lead them.” From that time on he was a model prisoner, one who could be trusted and depended upon, one who always held out a helping hand to his fellows in trouble. The
warden said it was a “miracle”; but the God who had not forgotten him knew that the loving touch of a baby’s dimpled hand had wrought the change.—By Ruth Lees Olson, *The Watchman Magazine*, June 1942.

Quote: “Only the religion of Jesus provides a place for the child.”—By Charles G. Bellah, *Signs of the Times*, February 17, 1931.

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Kenneth Booth of Kentwood, Michigan, tells of being a suicidal sixteen-year-old. “I felt so lonely and lost. Life seemed so empty and worthless. Each morning it was a struggle to get up and face a new day,” he recalls. A series of childhood losses that took a heavy emotional toll on him lay behind his despair. His mother died when he was two years old, leaving his father with five children ranging in age from two to ten. The father became an alcoholic, so the family was split up—the children being sent to live in various homes.

When Kenneth was twelve, his father remarried and pulled the family back together. The marriage had a positive effect on the father, who cut back on his drinking. But then he died, just as Kenneth was developing a strong bond with him. His death left the family destitute. “I did whatever I could to help my stepmother make ends meet,” he says. His stepmother was a hardworking woman who took in washing, did ironing for neighbors, cleaned houses, and provided baby-sitting services. “But it was difficult to survive on our meager income. Often, lunch was a can of beans. People gave us food and used clothing. At Christmas, the high school gave us boxes of canned goods. We were probably the poorest people in town. It was embarrassing to me to be so dependent on other people. My self-esteem hit rock bottom.”

As Kenneth sat in his kitchen contemplating suicide, he began thumbing through an old hymn book he had found. He came across a hymn that brought back a flood of memories from his days in church: “Jesus, Lover of My Soul.” Kenneth began to sing it to himself, and as he did, the song became the prayer of his heart. Almost instantly he felt God’s love and knew that he could go on living. “That was a long time ago and I have never been the same since,” he says.

Those who believe in God can always face the future with confidence and optimism because God is their invisible partner. The prophet Jeremiah utters this eternal message of hope: “‘I know the plans I have for you,’ declares the Lord, ‘plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.’” (Jeremiah 29:11)—By Victor M.

Quote: "He is the happiest, be he king or peasant, who finds peace in his home."—By Goethe, *Our Times*, August 1950.

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Ten Rules for Marriage

1. Trust completely.
2. Never credit circumstantial evidence.
3. Do not carry a grudge.
4. Do not be stingy.
5. Be ready to sacrifice.
6. Remember that marriage is a partnership.
7. Do not hold post mortems.
8. Remember that companionship begins at home.
9. Do not make unpleasant comparisons.
10. Remember that a home should be built upon a foundation of religious belief.—Christian Herald, *Signs of the Times*, January 27, 1931.

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Compiled by Dale Galusha. Please pass this newsletter on to others.

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