

on some communications equipment some mysterious signals which seemed to be messages from outer space. You have some contradiction there. Whether they decide those messages came from other intelligent creatures somewhere in space, or from God, as some have suggested, they are still faced with the need to explain how it all started in the first place.

You see, we live by assumptions, by unproven ^{but reasonable} ideas, as much as we do by absolute facts. What, then, is the test of a good set of assumptions by which to live? Would not the best test be to determine **which** set of basic assumptions, which philosophy, contributes the most to your happiness and to the welfare of the rest of the human race? This is not just the selfish way of looking at it, for you're thinking about yourself and about others too.

Religion has long held that there is indeed a "something", a creator, an intelligence,

10-10-20

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The religion has long felt that
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one God, who not only created the universe, but who gave man a favored position in it, and who is vitally interested in the welfare and future of this universe and of each person. This outlook is an assumption, we'll grant you, but it is an assumption which has made a great deal of difference in life. It has made life much better for millions of people than their lives might otherwise have been. Further, some people of religious faith insist that they know this God personally, and that He is a fact. Such folks normally are truthful, honest and dependable, so you can't discount their faith real quickly.

The best forms of religion are not interested in making a profit for themselves, nor in getting power for themselves, but in helping you and others like you seek for yourself something of truth, of meaning, of purpose in life. Religion wants you to find understanding and purpose.

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 You are to find your own
 way and purpose.

You can't escape the questions with which religion deals, for it deals with the very ultimates: with what you are, why you are here, and what is going to become of you. ** To leave religion out of your life is to be a materialist, and you are **then** really following a philosophy which denies that man is anything more than a ^{needy and} pleasure-seeking animal.

An honest church, and honest religious leaders, will not claim to have final truth which is reserved only for that church, its leaders and members. Honest religion seeks man's best answers from the ages. Honest religion encourages you to examine all the possible answers. It encourages you to seek the truth, wherever that search may lead you. It only asks that you give as much thought and time to the assumptions which are religious as you do to any other ideas and facts presented to you. Religion is convinced that if you will give its basic assump-

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tions fair consideration and trial, you will become religious and thereby be enriched mentally and spiritually, and also you will have a better physical life.

As you seek truth, you'll find yourself in the company of some mighty interesting people. Late in April (1965) I was in Boston, Massachusetts, attending a meeting of chaplains of all branches of the military, both active and reserve and national guard. Roman Catholic priests, Protestant ministers of all shades, and rabbis representing the differing types of Jewish belief were there. In the various sessions of the conference we heard outstanding national leaders of government, law, business, television, newspapers, and religion. The common tie binding them all together was the conviction that there is a Creator God who made man a spiritual being to share the Godly characteristic of immortality; and that this God has

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high moral and ethical standards which he demands of those who believe in him. Because of this conviction, this mixed array of clergymen, and leaders from many businesses and professions were joined there in discussing how to help other people, through the poverty program, through urban renewal, through bringing international understanding, through fighting disease and illiteracy. Their belief in God and in the God-given worth of each person has made them effective and real contributors to the improved conditions of millions of people in this generation.

Not only will your seeking for truth and meaning be more successful if you make the religious avenue and philosophy your choice, but as you seek you will find that all you learn and experience makes more sense. Believe you me, there are really strong and valid reasons why the majority of the great contributors and discoverers in the worlds of science and

highly practical and ethical standards which he demanded of those who believed in him. Because of his conviction, this mixed array of craftsmen and leaders from many businesses and professions were joined together in discussing how to help other people, through the country's program, through urban renewal, through bringing international understanding, through fighting disease and ill health. Their belief in God and in the God-given worth of each person, as well as their active and noble competition to the improved conditions of millions of people in this generation.

It is only when you feel in your heart and mind to more successful if you make the religious, ethical and philosophy your choice, but as you seek you will find that all you learn and experience makes more sense. Believe you may have the call along our valid reasons why the majority of the world's contentment and discovery in the world of science and

and literature

politics, are people of firm and convinced religious faith. People of intelligence such as ~~x~~ we believe you to be will take note of this fact, and give this thing of religion a hard, long try, on your own.

A new bride started one day to cover her pantry shelves with newspapers. About that time her mother came in, took a look, and stopped her. "No, no," said the mother. "Lef~~t~~-over ~~w~~all paper, brown wrapping paper, paper bags -- anything but newspapers. Do you want everybody to know when you cleaned your shelves last?" (Woodmen~~x~~ of the World Magazine as in Quote, 5/9/65, p. 15).

If you can sincerely and honestly arrive at a religious faith with which to line your life, that lining will never be outdated, for it will ~~lead~~ *help you* ~~you to~~ *receive* truth, understanding, success, reality, and ~~to~~ God your maker.

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ligion is so large and vital a part of life, Christianity is the faith which contains God's best revelation to mankind.

In fact, more people hold and have held the Christian faith than any other one religion in mankind's known history. At the heart of this Christian religion is a figure in history, Jesus, whom Christians point to as both the ideal man and as God revealing Himself to mankind. This Jesus is quoted in one of the gospels, John, as saying, "God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth".

My reasoning with you, my plea, my appeal to your intelligence, is that you recognize the spiritual aspect of life as being an avenue to truth. As you find truth, you'll find that material things fade away, but that personality and spirit and the spiritual are the worthwhile and lasting aspects of life. The sooner you find this out for yourself,

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1:8-28

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Topic: "Youthful Christians."

Text: I John 3:2a --"Beloved, we are God's children, now..."

Proposition: Youthful Christians are believers in Christ who in the present life continue to learn rapidly, to change and act promptly, and to be on the side of justice and fairplay; in all of this progressing toward that greater maturity which they will experience in God's presence forever.

Dates written: February 1-3, 1962

Dates and places preached:

2-4-62 Montrose, Colo.
10-16-66 Aurora & Blanca, Wb.
8-25-68 Akron, Wb.

Topic: "Worldly Christians"

Text: I John 2:15 - "Beloved, do not love the world's children, nor..."

Introduction: Worldly Christians are believers in Christ who in the present life continue to love worldly things, to change and not promptly, and to be on the side of justice and righteousness. In all of this progressing toward that greater glory which they will experience in God's presence forever.

Text written: February 1-3, 1902

Date and place written:

W. J. ...
...
...

Introduction:

1. "Children" is a word frequently used throughout the Bible to designate the followers of God. In The Old Testament the "Children of Israel" are the descendents of Abraham. The Old Testament presents God as having made a covenant, or agreement, with Abraham that if he and his descendant believed in and obeyed God they should have special favor in God's sight. Not only were they then to be called the children of Israel, but also the children of God.

2. In some of the later prophets of Israel, such as Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Hosea, the concept was enlarged to present the thought that God allows people of all races to be his children. They must, by Old Testament thought, become Jews by adoption and ceremony if they are to become such children of Israel and of God.

3. The New Testament writers followed up on this larger idea, but broke away from the thought that children of God must first be Jews, or children of Israel. Jesus popularized the image of God as a Father,

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3. The New Testament writers followed up on this larger idea, but took away from the thought that children of God must first be Jews, or children of Israel. Jesus furthered the image of God as a Father,

and of his followers as children of God. New Testament writers, of books other than the Gospels, frequently used the phrase "children of God" to speak of those who were christian.

4. As far as the Bible is concerned, there's no doubt about it: Christians are often compared to children. We may well ask what characteristics about childhood, or youth, are so outstanding that they can be considered akin to the peculiar, special characteristics of Christians? We can safely assume that the lack of age, immaturity in bodily growth, a dislike of taking baths or other regularity, the attractive bodily packages of some young people, and other physical characteristics are not the traits of youth which cause Biblical writers to compare Christians to them. We can turn, instead, to

I. Mental and spiritual aspects of youth, to help us in our understanding.

1. Children are eager sort of
they want things right now.

The first day my brother went to school he came home in the afternoon with a brand new coat, three sizes too big for him. When my mother asked where he had got it, his reply was quite casual: "It's all right, Mum, when the bell went all the others charged into a big room and took a coat, so I did the same!"—
LINDA CROWE, *Woman's Own*, London.

Page 14

Quote

TOLKS.
11

Small children have little or no concept of time. Psychologists point out that at first the small child's interests are chiefly in himself. If his demands are not granted instantly, he can raise an awful howl. As a baby grows he gradually comes to sense the pleasure or displeasure of his parents toward him. He may react by trying to please them, and thus by rapidly learning and doing as best he can what pleases them find their approval. Or, he may feel inadequate to please them, and rebel and stubbornly resist their desires for him. Whichever trend he follows in his development, he is apt to be eager for immediate accomplishment of that which he wants. Sometimes this wanting to get the job done at once shows up as a keen sense of competition. Eagerness, immediacy; enthusiasm; activism: these are words which describe important aspects of youth.

child with coat 3 sizes too

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2. Our Roman Catholic friends are often quoted as saying that if they are given a child to train during his first seven years he will not depart from the church. All of a sudden point to exceptions to such a state-

ment, but there is real fact that a child's first few years are very important to what he is and knows for the rest of his life. The psychologists, again, point out that the years of childhood and youth are ones of constantly expanding social interest and activities. From first becoming aware of Mother and Daddy, then Brother and Sister, the child and youth finds an ever-increasing number of people who affect his life and are important to him. He is full of curiosity about all these people. The places they take him, the things he sees, ^{and} prompt endless questions, until weary parents sometimes wish that the human voice had never been invented. The ~~active~~ ability to learn rapidly, and to adjust to new concepts is surely a very important aspect of youth.

3. Many a time a child will come home from school blazing mad over something which he feels is an injustice that took place during the school day. His anger toward the teacher who wasn't fair, or toward the big bully who picked on some little kid on the playground, is strong. Children and youth so often seem to have a keen sense of fair play and justice

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A child and youth learns the art of compromise, or working things out with others, partly because of his feeling for the rights of others. Because of this it has been relatively easy for causes which play up words like freedom, fairplay, justice, and so on, to find support among the young, particularly among students. We have heard sometimes in recent years of remarkable political power which students can yield in many countries. It is easy for communists and other unscrupulous agitators to get student backing of a cause by telling them that it is a just cause, in the interests of fair play and a better way of life for all. Even though we know that this sense of righteous indignation within young people is often lead into dangerous and wrong channels, we also know that it can be a fine and good thing. We would not exterminate it. It should be channeled in good directions.

4. Children and youth are people who are not yet mature, who have the best of life still ahead of them

5. We can not list all aspects of childhood and youth, even if we had time. We have mentioned four

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Church attendance nearly doubled
after the minister began billing him-
self as “Sacred Agent 007”—BILL
COPELAND, *Family Weekly*.

very important ones so far: (1) a keen sense of the importance of the present, or wanting immediate action and results; (2) the ability to learn rapidly and to adjust quickly to new situations; (3) a strong feeling for justice and fairplay; and (4) maturity as a thing that is still ahead of them. We believe that a good case can be made that

II. These characteristics of youth are also ones which are integral to the good Christian.

*Church attendance feeble when minister
bill 1. 5-27-25 SACRED AGENT 2007*

1. A sense of the importance of the present is something which every Christian should have. Jesus was very much interested in people's present condition. He healed them, taught them, and spoke out for their current welfare. The church that thinks mainly of the hereafter but frowns on Christian social action here is not in the pattern of Jesus. We can be proud that we are part of a church which always has been and is very much interested in having a society in which people are treated well and justly. We are followers of Jesus in this.

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the present for Christians is indicated in our Scripture of today. The second verse shows this in the words which are our text: "Beloved, we are God's children now...." The Scripture then goes on to point out how sin, which is called lawlessness, should be avoided now; that Christians will live as righteously as they can, being wary to avoid "the devil."

The New Testament is full of words which reveal the expectation of the early Christians that Christ would come back soon, that mankind would be judged, and that the end of the world would then come. They stressed that each Christian should live righteously and faithfully, so as to be among the chosen of the Lord at this great time. Although in the centuries since then most Christians have not been so sure that Christ's coming would be immediate, the stress has continued on a present Christian life which would be ready at any time to face its maker. A feeling of the great need of being the best person now, in this everyday life, is most important to Christian life. A youthful aspect of Christianity is its sense of the importance of the present.

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3. The ability to learn rapidly and to adjust quickly is another of the childlike characteristics which is becoming to Christians. Jesus certainly acted as if he expected his followers to be this way. To fishermen he said "Follow me," and they dropped their nets then and there and followed him, we are told. In another incident a ~~youth~~ young man, ~~who had asked~~ who had asked Jesus what he must do to inherit eternal life, was told "go sell all that you have and follow me." Jesus recognized the importance of quick learning and fast adjustment for his followers. We today should recognise this too. It is certainly contradictory when a church, which is a society of the followers of Jesus, becomes known as reactionary, tradition-bound, slow-to-change. In the world of today we can be proud that our church officially is on the side of people who are seeking to exercise justice, opportunity, social rights, and self-government for the first time. We regret the small but loud percentage in our ranks who oppose such changes primarily because they see in them ~~threats to their~~ own special privileges. Yes, to be a good Christian is to be learning constant-

Sen. B. Everett Jordan was to speak to the Winston-Salem Rotary Club. The master of ceremonies said that the "Distinguished Senator" would be introduced by his brother, Dr Frank Jordan, a member of the club. Dr Jordan stood, pointed a finger across the table at his brother and said, "There's Everett." — Durham (N C) *Morning Herald*.

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Baseball's Bill Veeck tells about the late Tyrus Cobb, who had a lifetime batting average of .367 in the big leagues. "What would you hit in modern baseball?" a fan asked the Georgia Peach.

"About .300," said Ty Cobb.

"You mean the game is that much tougher today?" the fan asked.

"Naw," said Cobb, "but remember, pal, I'm 65 now." — *Eagle*.

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ly, and to be unafraid to change as one learns. This is youthful ability which is important to Christians.

^{17 Thore's Everett's} introduction
 4. The youth's strong feeling for justice and fairplay needs to be retained, too, by the Christian. The person who avoids testifying in court on behalf of someone whom he feels is being mistreated, avoiding testifying because he dislikes the publicity of the courtroom and the treatment he gets from the opposing lawyers, is not in the pattern of Christian outlook. Christ set an example of fearlessness in this respect. He threw over tables ~~x~~ in the temple where money changers took advantage of the sacrificial spirit of the poor. He denounced the priestly and ruling ~~class~~ who stuck by every dot of the law but had no feeling for the common man. We of today are in Christ's following when we throw our weight on the side of fairplay and justice for all people, everywhere. This is a youthful characteristic that each Christian needs to retain.

^{75 Cobb story: 367 av. - 300 new at 65}
 5. No matter how old they are in years, Christians living on this earth should not feel that they are

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mature, for in this life they are never fully so. The complete Bible verse from which our text comes says "Beloved, we Are God's children now; ~~but~~ it does not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when he appears we shall be like him!" Just as a youth is not considered a mature person until he is grown, educated or trained, and established in his life's work, so full Christian maturity comes only in life eternal with God. A conviction that this is so keeps us from being too complacent now. It keeps us working, hoping, striving. This is youthful, and is also characteristic of the best Christian character.

Conclusions:

1. We have observed that the Bible, and particularly The New Testament, frequently uses the term "children" to refer to followers of God, and to Christians.

2. We have observed and discussed several traits which are common to childhood and youth, and concluded that these are characteristics which Christ and the Bible point out as being important in Christians.

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2. We have observed and discussed
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3. With the Scripture writer we agree, when he uses familiar terminology, saying, "We are children of God now.."

4. We believe that youthful Christians are believers in Christ who in the present life continue to learn rapidly, to change and act promptly, and to be on the side of justice and fairly; in all of this progressing toward that greater maturity which they will experience in God's presence forever.

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...in ...

God, if we have been true to Thy Son and to Thy Word today, if we have been accurate in our consideration of youth, grant that we as Christians may be youthful ones. Help us always to find zest in living, in finding worthy causes for which to work, and help us to have the ability to change and adjust for the good, always.

In Jesus Name. Amen.

... of our need and how it has
 ... and so we pray today, that
 ... have been secured in our hearts
 ... of your great love as
 ... Christians may be joyful ones,
 ... help us always to find rest in living,
 ... in finding worthy causes for which
 ... to work, and help us to have the
 ... ability to change and adjust for
 ... the good, always.

In Jesus name, Amen.