

price can we get it thus. We gain it in day-by-day devotion to the best we know. We find it by always following the light before us. We build here a little and there a little. We grow as the oak grows, from a small acorn pattern to the spreading beauty of the giant of the forest. When we know that God has chosen us and that we at length have chosen Him, these priceless things of the spirit are ours. The life hid in Christ is not the result of practicing Christlike virtues, it is the cause of them. We definitely turn to Christ, because He is the way by which all of the qualities that make for the perfect life, in seed forms, in small beginnings, become ours. It is our work to go on and develop them.



## REBUILDING A LIFE

by Zelia M. Walters

WHEN A GREAT city destroyed by a cataclysm of nature or by fire arises from its ruins to look about, its first thought is to rebuild. In our own land Chicago, Baltimore, Augusta, Charleston, San Francisco have faced such destruction. None of them lay down in their ruins, gave up in despair, and decided that fate was against them and that it was of no use to try to cope with the disaster. Out of the chaos the note of faith and courage sounds, "We will arise and build our city anew," and as time goes on the new city arises, usually a better city than the old one.

The citizens learn from the mistakes of the past. They look forward with larger vision to the needs of the future. Experience has taught them what is bad for a city, and the vision of faith shows them what would be better. In place of the narrow, crooked streets that seem to have begun as cow paths, broad, straight boulevards are laid out. The whole city is likely to be fairer and better because now it has been planned.

So with an individual life. It may seem to have gone down in complete wreckage. But let no one be faint-hearted

UNITY SCHOOL OF CHRISTIANITY  
Unity Village, Missouri 64065

enough to say that all is lost and that there is no use trying again. No matter what the circumstances, the life may be reordered and rebuilt. It will be a fairer and better life. Experience will point out what must be avoided. The vision of faith will tell what must be built in. The old narrow, devious ways of life will become broad thoroughfares. When the goal is plainly in sight one can journey toward it with the least waste of energy.

We must remember that emergencies release dormant power. This is an often attested fact in the material world. A frail, sheltered woman confronted with a family catastrophe will step out of her sheltered life and show the courage, initiative, and endurance of a Titan. Let the urge for accomplishment be strong enough and the human mind will refuse to let the impossible be a barrier. Even physical power multiplies in time of need. A youth must swim a river to bring help to someone he loves. He may never have swum more than a hundred feet before, he may be regarded as a poor swimmer. But he must swim the three hundred yards across the river, and he does. A woman finds her husband injured and unconscious. She has never lifted anything heavy, but somehow she gets that inert form into the car and drives for help. A section of railroad track is washed out. The girl who discovers it, looking out from her hillside home,

knows that she must get down to the track and warn the passenger train. She must run a mile and a half, and she does.

Each of these incidents is a true one, and pages could be filled with similar ones. The physical organism does respond to the call of need by releasing unsuspected powers. The mind and will respond to the call likewise. Powers unfold that we did not dream we possessed. The pages of history are vast records of this truth. Indeed we do not use half of our mental powers.

If, then, there are reserves in the physical and mental parts of man's nature, are we to imagine that there are no spiritual reserves? Have we any unused spiritual powers to help us when we decide to reorder our life and make it worth living?

Perhaps someone asked Isaiah that very question at some time, for he answered with those ringing words which have heartened uncounted fainting pilgrims on life's way: "They that wait for Jehovah shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; they shall walk, and shall not faint." "He giveth power to the faint; and to him that hath no might he increaseth strength." Jesus Christ also knew of that unfailling source of spiritual power from within when He said, "Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give

him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall become in him a well of water springing up unto eternal life."

There are spiritual reserves. You can draw upon them when you remake your life.

Before you come to the place where you contemplate changing your whole outlook on life you have arrived somehow at a belief in God. It is not yet a working faith; it is just a belief that God is there and that He cares about you and will be both guard and guide to you if you will turn your heart to Him. It is in truth the beginning of faith. It is such a seed of faith as the father of the epileptic boy had when he cried, "I believe; help thou mine unbelief." Besides this budding faith you have truly repented of all sin and error in your life and as far as possible you have made atonement and set things right. Now, no matter what figurative earthquake, storm, or fire may have passed over you, you have cleared away the old debris and are ready to build again.

Oh, build no error into this second life! Set it on the foundations everlasting and let it rise toward heaven in perfect beauty.

There must be a plan. What will you have? It is almost as if you stood in the gnome's jewel cave and were bidden to take your choice of the gems worth a

king's ransom. What will you take into the new life? Let us make a tentative list. For while there are certain basic things that will be built into every life, the list will not be the same for all individuals. When the apostles and Evangelists were writing and preaching about the reordered life in the light of the Christ teaching, they prescribed different things for different people. Indeed, in the end each one will have to make his own list, his own plan, as his own vision reveals the needs to him. But let us have a plan to think about. Let us make a list.

Faith, gratitude, love, tolerance, wisdom, self-restraint, patience, perseverance, desire to work, harmony, courage, happy expectation, silence, honor, temperance.

Some of these overlap, certainly, and there are others that might be added according to the individual temperament and equipment. But is there any of them that can be left out if one is to build a harmonious life?

Let us compare our list with Peter's as given in the 1st chapter of his Second Epistle: diligence, faith, virtue, knowledge, self-control, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness, love.

Then note Paul's list given the Philippians: thanksgiving, things that are true, honest, just, pure, lovely, of good report.

And note his list given the Galatians: "The fruit of the Spirit," he says, is "love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, self-control."

We could make up a list from the Sermon on the Mount. The selfless, they that mourn, they that hunger and thirst for righteousness, the meek, the merciful, the pure, the peacemakers are pronounced blessed.

We could go on making lists from the words of the prophets and from the instructions scattered through the New Testament. But these will do for comparison and serve as a sort of pattern by which we may make a plan for our own life. For we shall make a plan. It is foolish to start without one, for if we do we shall only end in the same old disappointments.

We are told that at the age of twenty-nine the poet Wordsworth definitely considered the possibilities of his life, looking forward to a great goal. The result shows in his life. For in such poems as "Intimations of Immortality" and in sonnets like "The World Is Too Much with Us" he has given expression to thoughts that lift us all to a higher level.

So whether twenty-nine or sixty-nine, let us sit down now and plan our life, weaving into it those everlasting purposes which will make our thoughts like

God's thoughts and our ways like God's ways.

Of the fifteen foundations for a re-ordered life that we have listed much could be written. But they need no long explanations. Each of them is a spiritual quality, the essence of which is revealed to us in the depths of our own soul. Through prayer and meditation we shall find the divine guidance that will enable us to determine the elements necessary to our development.

The Indian fakir plants a seed in the ground, covers it with a basket, waves his hands over it, removes the basket, and shows us a tall mango plant. But we know there is some trick, some sleight of hand there. It is not thus that plants grow in God's beautiful world: first the seed, little by little the spear of green, the leaf, the blossom, the fruit, and every part of the growth, lovely and in order. There is no hurry, no waste, no useless striving. It took Jesus Christ thirty years, as we measure time, to grow in consciousness to the point where He was ready to show the Father-God to men. So shall we grow, unhurried, without striving, little by little, incorporating into life the qualities that are Christlike.

A fine plan for a life, you say, but how shall I attain it? Not lightly or easily. There is no celestial merchant who will sell us the ingredients for the higher life done up in a package. No, not for any