



TOWARD THE MARK

*“I PRESS TOWARD THE MARK FOR THE PRIZE OF
THE HIGH CALLING OF GOD IN CHRIST JESUS.”*

PHILIPPIANS 3:14

A MAGAZINE FOR YOUNG CHRISTIANS
OF ALL AGES

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Dear Reader,

“I have written to you, young men, because ye are strong, and the word of God abides in you and ye have overcome the wicked one.”

I John 2:14

The aged apostle John who was clearly concerned about young Christians penned these words. He was the youngest apostle while the Lord Jesus was on earth. Now we are living in days where much attention is given to diet and exercise and the slogan, “**You are what you eat**” has a lot of truth to it. The apostle John wanted young Christians to be strong by feeding on the Word of God and exercising themselves unto Godliness. *Toward the Mark* is designed to help you maintain a healthy spiritual diet. We pray that you would find this issue helpful in keeping to your diet. As you read the menu, you can see that we have introduced you to a variety of meals. Enjoy it and let me know your comments.

Thank you for your overwhelming response to the first issue. Your e-mails, positive comments and letters that I received from both young and older Christians were of great encouragement to me. Please keep praying!

Yours in our soon coming Lord,

Emil S Nashed

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**Quotations from Scripture are generally taken either from the King James translation or J.N.Darby translation.*

MILK

The truth shall make you free

JOY

AND HOW TO KEEP IT

*Yet I will rejoice in the Lord,
I will joy in the God of my salvation”*

Habakkuk 3:18

Surely many of the children of God can well remember the first days of our being brought to know Him, through that blessed One, the Lord Jesus, whose Name filled our hearts with rapturous delight. How relieving, and how sweet to the soul to confess that Name before men; how marvelous to realize that His blood was shed for me, that His sacrifice for me was a sweet smelling savor to God, and because of it nothing could separate me from “the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.” With fond remembrance we recall the sparkling freshness and joy that issued forth in adoration for our Lord, when like leaves stirred gently by the wind, our being seemed alive with praise to Him.

But in so reflecting, not a few of us have sorrowed to realize that those affections have grown cold with time; the ardor of delight that once was there seems lost for ever,

and we wonder why, despite our efforts, it cannot be regained. Sadly, in this case many stumble and many are led astray. Some have claimed that to answer the question requires a wonderful and mysterious experience that they call “sanctification.” By this they profess to attain a higher level than Christians who are not (as they say) “sanctified.”

However, the honest enquirer into Scripture will find that we are not sanctified by an experience, but by the truth, the word of God (John 17:17). Moreover, when we look for, and find, some experience that stirs us to excitement, we may be stimulated for a time, but always drop back again to a still deeper dissatisfaction--the same effect that is naturally left through drinking too much wine. In Scripture, joy is typified by wine: it may exhilarate, but I do not, could not, feed on it; that would leave me a total wreck.

Is the Christian then denied joy?

Indeed, he is not, for true spiritual joy is of God and a very precious thing.

But let us ask, what gave you the joy at conversion?

Was it through thinking of that joy? “Certainly not,” you will say, “it resulted from the knowledge of the Lord Jesus as my own Savior, and of His presence always with me. I was feeding on real, substantial food, and rejoiced in doing so.” Yet think have you so greatly treasured that joy as to lose sight of the need of feeding? **Depending largely on the joy, have you forgotten how dependent you are on the Lord?**

Surely this is the true answer to the coldness and lack of growth in more than a few cases. The eye is on self, and on what is happening within, instead of being fixed steadily on the One who alone can give real gladness of heart.

This condition of soul is aptly described in Psalm 107:4-5: “they wandered in the wilderness in a solitary way; they found no city to dwell in. Hungry and thirsty, their soul fainted in them.” These were the children of Israel, some time after singing the glorious song of deliverance from their enemies, by the passage of the Red Sea!

There was a longing not satisfied, a desire not filled: the joy that had been theirs before could not sustain them now. What then? “Then they cried unto the Lord in their trouble, and he delivered them out of their distresses. And he led them forth by the right way that they might go to a city of habitation. Oh that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for His wonderful works to the children of men! For he satisfieth the longing soul, and filleth the hungry soul with goodness” (vv.6-9). Let this sink deeply, dear reader, into your heart and mine: Joy does not satisfy, does not feed the soul; but He our Lord does. Nor could it be otherwise, for He has said, “I am the living bread which came down from heaven” (John 6:51).

Now, where did I learn of Him at first? What gave me my first taste of the bread of sweetness? Only Scripture; without that I had been in darkness still.

How then can I neglect that precious Book and expect my thoughts to be of Christ? Impossible! And yet how many think to keep their joy while not heeding the only place from which true spiritual joy can come?

“It is hard to understand,” someone is bound to say, “and I seem to get so little from it.” Well, we rejoice to know that the most profound students of Scripture have marveled at its depth of wisdom and its beauty of perfection, for this strengthens our belief that it is indeed the Word of God. So, although our first impulse is to wish we knew it all, we are steadied by the thought that there is food here for many years to come, and too much at once will give us indigestion. You would not think of refusing a meal simply because you were denied a year’s supply of food at once! Take a meal at a time, and be sure you digest it well.

Once a start has been made in searching Scripture, Satan will employ many means of discouraging you. Perhaps it will seem difficult and wearisome, and doubts will arise as to whether there will be any fruit from it at all. This is a “trial of your faith,” and faith is simply trust in God.

Then ask yourself this question: “Is God not able to carry me through this test?” and go to Him about it. Then remember that faith acts! “The hand of the diligent maketh rich,” “he that gathereth by labor shall increase,” “in all labor there is profit,” and “it is the glory of God to conceal a thing: but the honor of kings to search out a matter (Proverbs 10:4, 13:11, 14:23,

25:2). “Let us not be weary in well doing, for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not” (Galatians 6:9). With diligence you will learn little by little, and each lesson will be truly learned in the heart. Moreover, when the heart has learned something for itself, the resulting joy will be calmer and deeper than was known before. But guard against relying on that joy!

Go on steadily, learning more of Christ: only thus is the soul kept fresh and alive.

If you would have real joy in reading, always remember never to open that precious Book except in a spirit of reverence and lowliness. And then every word you read, listen to the voice of “the High and lofty One, who inhabiteth eternity,” as speaking directly to your soul.

Further, do not go to the Scriptures with a selfish motive-- merely to get something for yourself to display to others--but with Christ as the Object of your heart. This is the only key that will open the word of God to you.

When walking with the two on the way to Emmaus, the Lord Jesus “expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself” (Luke 24:27). How sweet was their consequent testimony: “Did not our heart burn within us while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures?” (v.32).

Nothing can preserve the beauty and freshness of the Word of God to the soul as a mind alert to find something of Christ everywhere.

It may be, as in the Gospels, a direct contact with Him; or in the Epistles, doctrine concerning His person, His work or His glory and of His interests on earth in the Gospel going out to the unsaved, and His body which is the Church.

The Old Testament abounds with types of Christ in His various characteristics: **Son of God, Son of Man, Prophet, Priest, King, Servant, Shepherd, the Lamb of God, and others.** We find also both types and prophecy of His birth, His spotless life, His sufferings on earth, His rejection by men, His substitution for sinners in bearing God's judgment, His voluntary "obedience unto death," His resurrection, exaltation, coming for His saints, coming in judgment and reigning over the earth.

Also in the Psalms and in the Prophets He is supremely preeminent. Everywhere it is so; let us then be more earnest in finding this precious "hid treasure," ever keeping in remembrance that if Christ is really the Object, the heart will lack nothing. Then truly we may say, "His joys our deepest joys afford," and with the prophet Jeremiah, "Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart" (15:16).

L.M.Grant

Meat

Sanctify them by the truth

WHY DO WE COVER OUR HEADS?

Why do we cover our heads? First of all, who are "we?" In this case the word "we" refers to sisters in Christ—that is, those women who have trusted Jesus Christ as their Savior. If you have never done so, please write to the address at the front of this magazine. We would love to tell you about our Lord.

Those of us who do know the Lord want to be obedient to Him. (We often fail Him but we don't *want* to.) A good way to start is by obeying our Lord in small things. Matthew 25 and Luke 19 suggest that the Lord Jesus will not trust us with much if we do not obey Him in little matters. Covering one's head is "little" only in the sense that it is easy to do. We have no reason to think that it is little in importance.

The answer to the question is: because we are told to do so.

Who told us? The Lord Jesus, through the apostle Paul. If you read 1 Corinthians 11, especially the first 16 verses, you will be in no doubt about this rule. Paul, writing under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, says that we must not pray or

prophesy unless we cover our heads. Brothers, on the other hand, should *not* cover their heads at such times.

What about prophesying? Clearly, sisters are allowed to prophesy—but not in an assembly (church) meeting nor when men are present. We must not pray aloud either, in these gatherings. See 1 Corinthians 14:34-35 and 1 Timothy 2:11-12. (The Greek words translated as “prophesy” and “prophecy” do not always mean prediction. To quote an older writer: “It is forth-telling, not foretelling.”)

The rule is clear. So is the reason.

Why? Why must we wear hats or other head-coverings when we pray? It is a matter of authority. We are not in charge! Men are our head and Christ is their head. Thus when we cover our heads we show the authority of men but also that of Christ. The third verse of 1 Corinthians 11 explains this. (But you really have to read the whole chapter attentively to get the idea.)

The head covering is a symbol of authority, man’s and God’s. We wear it “on account of the angels” as we are told in verse 10. The angels are watching us! They are watching the Assembly—the whole group of believers, worldwide. They look for the order that they see in creation. See 1 Corinthians 4:9 and 1 Peter 1:10-12. We first read about this order in Genesis 2:21-24 and 3:16. Paul refers to it in 1 Corinthians 11:3, 8.

We cannot discuss headship, authority and head coverings without talking about long hair.

We have to have both? Yes. Just as long hair is a shame for a man, so short hair is a shame for a woman. The chapter we have been considering says so. Our hair is our glory. It must be long and it must be covered when praying. Although the hair is like a veil (verse 15), it is not the covering mentioned in verse 5. The word “also” (verse 6) confirms this.

Is this rule only for assembly gatherings or does it include private prayer? Read 1 Corinthians 11 and 1 Timothy 2. Pray about it, asking for wisdom as the apostle James advised in his book. Now, what do you think?

Isn’t all this old fashioned? Yes. Or, more correctly, it is above fashion. We should be too.

The idea of women being “in subjection” (or obedient) to men is unpopular, to say the least! But true Christianity has never been popular. The world hates it. The world murdered the Lord Jesus.

I don’t like anything that denigrates women. Neither do I. God honors certain women. Mary, the mother of our Lord, said that everyone would call her “blessed.” She was quick, though,

to give credit to “the Mighty One” who “has done to me great things.”

The case of another Mary and her sister Martha is interesting. The Lord Jesus commends Mary because she listened to Him. He gives Martha a mild rebuke for being overly concerned with her household tasks. We read about it in Luke 10:38-42. Even though we are told to be diligent in our homes (Titus 2:5), we must not be distracted with cooking and cleaning. Some people think that Christianity keeps women in the kitchen while men learn doctrine. This is not in the Scriptures!

What *do* the Scriptures say to a sister about housework? She is told to “rule” in strictly domestic matters (1 Timothy 5:14). When I read 1 Corinthians 10:31-33, 1 and 2 Timothy, Titus, and Peter’s epistles, I have the impression that we should work hard at whatever our tasks are, but only so that we can do the important task: honoring our Lord. We must care for our husbands and instruct our children in the faith; then worldly people will see how different believers’ homes are.

Perhaps the ideal sister is a combination of Martha and Mary. Practical Martha appears in a different light in John 11. Both sisters are guilty of telling the Lord, in effect, that His visit is too late—but Martha’s faith appears to be equal to that of her sister.

The Lord Jesus never denigrated women in general nor any in particular. The apostles didn’t either. Do you remember the

woman who was caught committing adultery? Have you read about Lydia and her prayer meeting? What about the woman in Samaria? Read John, chapters 4 and 8 and Acts 16.

What about single sisters? It is true that a lot of Scriptural advice is directed to those who are married. That is probably because most adults are.

Widows and single women are, however, a majority in some groups today. Their behavior before the Lord should be no different from that of married women so far as honoring Him is concerned. They, too, are happy to have long hair and head coverings showing the ultimate headship of their Lord, Whom we all honor.

It is interesting to note that all the women named in Scripture are treated as individuals. We do not even know whether some of them were married. Some examples are Martha, three of the Marys, Lydia and most of the women named in Paul’s epistles.

In those days women didn’t have careers, did they?

Some Biblical women, such as Lydia, seemed to have earned their own living. Some, though married, had other important responsibilities; note the property buyer in Proverbs 31:16 and (a thousand years later) Priscilla in Acts 18:24-26. (See also Acts 18:1-3, 18; Romans 16:3; 1 Corinthians 16:19 and 2 Timothy 4:19.)

Priscilla must have been a busy sister. She learned much about her Lord—while making tents. She, with her husband, “unfolded the way of God more exactly” to Apollos—even though he was already “mighty in the Scriptures” as well as earnest and instructed! Priscilla also found time to have Paul as a house-guest. I wonder if she and Aquila had children.

I heard that the instruction about hair and head coverings was intended only for Christians living in Corinth in the first century. I’ve heard that too. The people who say this usually tell you that it had something to do with what immoral women did not wear and what virtuous women did wear. Christians who say these things usually accept almost everything else in the Corinthian epistles, even the prohibition against long hair on men! This eclectic acceptance however, sometimes excludes the advice in 1 Corinthians 14:34, 35 because someone said that, in the first century, some women were unruly, calling out to their husbands (seated apart from their wives) even during church meetings.

All we really know about apostolic times is in the Bible. Extra-Scriptural writers in the first century were rare and their extant writings are rarer still. How many people could read and write? Who could afford parchment and ink? Of those, how many even mention Christians? Of those who do, how many are reliable? Even respected historians, writing today, have very few documents other than the Bible that they can consult

about first-century practices in general and fewer still of Christians in particular.

Did the apostle Paul limit his letter? Did he say it was only for the Christians of Corinth? Did he say it was just for that time? No. He said it was to the Assembly of God at Corinth with all that *in every place* “call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.” That is how he opens his letter! Read 1 Corinthians 1:1-3. See also 1 Corinthians 11:16 and 14:37, 38.

So it’s a matter of obedience? Yes, but it’s more.

This beautiful distinction between men and women goes beyond compulsory coverings and such hackneyed questions as “How long is long?” The division of humanity into two complementary parts goes back thousands of years to the dawn of this planet when the divine Creator divided all sentient beings into male and female. Even then, at the foundation of the universe, He wanted us, the Assembly, as His bride. He is preparing us all for the day of presentation.

Contributed

Honey

How sweet are thy words unto my taste!

THE HOLY SCRIPTURES

HOW IMPORTANT WAS THE OLD TESTAMENT TO THE NEW TESTAMENT WRITERS?

Over the years many books have been compiled with lists of Old Testament references occurring in the New Testament.

As one would expect, different compilers arrive at different figures. **A conservative estimate is that there are around 300 direct quotations and about 500 citations.**

From this estimate, it is interesting to note that all of the NT books, except Philemon, contain OT references. This practice reminds us of the words of Paul that these things were written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the ages are come.

The following table compiled from *Things Written Aforetime* (1990) and *Written For Our Learning* (1994) by F. Stallan shows the incidence of occurrences in the NT books:

Scriptures	Quotations	Citations
Matthew	54	69
Mark	22	33
Luke	25	70
John	20	53
Acts	34	64
Romans	54	36
Corinthians	29	50
Galatians	10	7
Ephesians	5	12
Philippians	0	8
Colossians	0	9
Thessalonians	2	8
Timothy	2	8
Titus	0	1
Philemon	0	0
Hebrews	38	54
James	6	9
Peter	17	16
John	0	5
Jude	0	5
Revelation	3	3

The following table of authors illustrates the fact that Paul is the writer who most frequently refers to the OT. **We also learn that these eight writers used 841 references in 260 chapters, slightly more than three references per chapter.** This would emphasize their respect for and dependence upon the OT Scriptures.

Author s	Chapter s	Reference s
Paul	100	304
Luke	52	193
Matthew	28	123
John	50	70
Mark	16	55
Peter	8	33
James	5	15
Jude	1	5

Go, inquire of Jehovah for me, and for the people, and for all Judah, concerning the words of this book (2 Kings 22:13).

Intelligence Report

..All that go forth to military service..

THE WHOLE ARMOR OF GOD

PART 2

There are seven parts of “the whole armor of God” and we cannot do without any one part. If we endeavor to stand with any part missing, the watchful foe will speedily find it out, take advantage of our weakness and readily defeat us.

1- “Your loins girt about with truth”

When David was convicted of his sin, he spoke to God saying, “Behold, thou desirest truth in the inward parts” (Psalm 51:6). His loins had not been girt with truth, and the enemy of God and His people took advantage of David’s weakness to dishonor the holy name of Jehovah. It is only as God’s word has its rightful place in our souls, only as Christ dwells in our hearts by faith, that we shall have the loins girt about with truth. A true heart thinks only of how his life affects the honor of the Lord’s name. If we have any other motive than Christ for any word or action, the loins are not girt about with truth. Paul had to withstand Peter to the face because he was influenced by those who came from James, rather than by the truth of God. Many things can come in to displace truth from the inward

parts. The love of this present world displaced truth in the heart of Demas, resulting in his forsaking one who was standing for the truth. Praying to the Father for his disciples, the Lord said “Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth” (John 17: 17). With the Father’s word in us, Christ will be the motive of our life, and the truth will fill our inward parts, the springs that give character to every inward thought and movement and every outward activity.

2-“Having on the Breastplate of Righteousness”

This breastplate ensures that the heart will not have an accusing conscience .If we do anything that is not right before god, we get a bad conscience, of which the enemy is not slow to take advantage. Hymenaeus and Alexander put away a good conscience, making shipwreck of the faith. These are examples of men who, as it were, threw away the breastplate of righteousness. We can acquire a bad conscience in very small matters which, if not speedily judged and confessed to the Lord, will hinder us greatly in conflict to which God has called us.

H.S

Exercise

...Exercise thyself unto piety

KNOWING, RECKONING, YIELDING.

In the first verse of Romans chapter six, the apostle Paul asks the question, “Shall we continue in sin?” and in verse two he answers it, “God forbid, How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?” **This makes it clear that a believer should not continue to live as he or she did before they came to know the Lord Jesus as their Savior.** Then he says, “As many of us as were baptized unto Jesus Christ were baptized unto His death.” He assumes those he is writing to have all been baptized. Dear young Christian, have you been baptized? The apostle states what is normal for a Christian. Not to be baptized is abnormal.

Peter in his first epistle (3:21), tells us that it is the “demand of a good conscience.” I should feel that as God in Christ has done so much for me, should I not then answer to that by yielding my life to Him?

Paul says in 2 Corinthians 5:14, “If one died for all, then were all dead: and that He died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him which died for them, and rose again.”

Knowing

In verse 6 of Romans 6 we read, “**Knowing** this, that our old man is crucified with Him.” All that we were as born of Adam God has finished with in the cross of our Lord Jesus. The “old man,” what I am according to the flesh, has been terminated, as it is impossible for it to please God. Even Paul says, “For I know that in me, that is, in my flesh, good does not dwell” (7:18).

If I know that God has finished with my old life, the question then is, have I finished with it? In being baptized I am saying that I have accepted the judgment of God on all that I am according to the flesh.

Reckoning

So Paul goes on in verse 11, “Likewise **reckon** ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ.” **The Holy Spirit gives me the power to say “NO” to sin.** Before I was converted, sin reigned in my life and controlled what I did. That power has been broken: “For sin shall not have dominion over you” (v. 14).

So we understand that not only has God in the death of Christ put away what I am in the flesh, but also He has given me the Holy Spirit that I might live unto Him.

Yielding

So we come to our last word, “**yield**”. Verse 13 says, “Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but **yield** yourselves unto God.”

My hands, my feet, my eyes, ears, and voice--once they were used to satisfy myself doing sinful things. Now I can yield them to God, “as instruments of righteousness.”

Paul says in Galatians 2: 20, “I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me.”

J. Brett

Rest

...and I will give you rest

PEACE

Peace

In comparing different aspects of peace it is helpful to note that in John 14:27, the Lord distinguishes between peace left to us and peace given to us. **“Peace I leave with you” is peace with God as to every question of sin.** He made peace by the blood of His cross, and brought the news of it on the day of His resurrection when He stood in the midst of His own and greeted them with “peace be unto you.” He showed them His hands and side as witness of the work by which peace was accomplished, and commissioned them to go forth with it to others. (John 20:19-21). It was the precious legacy of His death. (We have it in Romans 5:1 as we believe the testimony of God to the facts of His having been delivered for our offences and raised again for our justification.) It is *peace of conscience*. He never needed it: we did, and He made it and left it to us.

My Peace

But the Lord goes on to speak of a deeper character of peace - “My peace I give unto you”. **It is the peace in which He ever walked with the Father; the calm unruffled peace afforded by resting in His love and submitting Himself completely to all His ways.** He characterizes it as His, and gives it to be ours absolutely - not as the world gives indeed (for though it may give largely and generously it gives away) but as bringing us into possession of it with Himself. This principle is here applied to His peace but is true of all he gives: His joy (John 15:11), His glory (John 17:22) and the place He has in His Father’s love (John 17:23, 26). This second peace, coming in its perfect order, is *peace of heart*; of the heart that has found the resting place of Christ as its own in a Father’s love well known. We are entitled to count it ours - by His absolute gift - and to live in it practically through all the stress and strain of circumstances. Once again it is formally referred to in Colossians 3:15: “Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts” holding its blessed sway in all that is there, “to which ye have been called in one body,” and thus in all our relations with our fellow-Christians.

The Peace of God

It only remains to emphasize the strongly conditional character of the peace promised in Philippians 4. But the only condition is that we trust God with what would burden us, putting the care upon Him instead of carrying it as a weight upon our hearts. **It is not now the peace of Christ who as man passed through the scene of trial but the peace of God on the throne where no breath of trial ever came that He guarantees shall keep our hearts and minds.** And if our poor hearts would say that it is utterly incomprehensible, God has anticipated and tells us that it “passeth all understanding.” He does not expect us to understand it, but by acting upon His word in simple confidence of heart in Him we shall realize the truth of it. May it be ever more and more with us.

J.A.Pickering

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

Q: I HAD A DISCUSSION WITH A FRIEND AT SCHOOL, WHO CLAIMED TO BE A CHRISTIAN, ABOUT PLAYING THE LOTTERY. I TOLD HIM IT IS WRONG. HE ASKED ME TO SHOW HIM FROM THE BIBLE WHY IT IS WRONG. WHAT VERSES WOULD I USE TO PROVE THAT IT IS WRONG?

A: There is little doubt that playing the lottery is the **outcome of the lust to possess, which is covetousness.** Here are a few Scriptures:

“Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have” Hebrews 13:5

“..and covetousness, which is idolatry”Colossians 3:5

“...but godliness with contentment is great gain”

1 Timothy 6:6

“For the love of money is the root of every; which some having aspired after, have wandered from the faith, and pierced themselves with many sorrows. “

1Timothy 6:10

LOVE NOT THE WORLD

When my heart is filled with Christ, I have no heart or eye for the trash of the world.

If Christ is dwelling in your heart by faith, the question will not be, “What harm is there in this or that?” Rather, “Am I doing this for Christ? Can Christ go along with me in this?

If you are in communion with Him, you will readily detect what is not of him.

Do not let the world come in, and distract your thoughts.

I speak especially to you young ones; we, who are older, have had more experience of what the world is; we know more what it is worth, but it all lies shining before you, endeavoring to attract you.

What else does it fill its shop windows for?

Its smiles are all deceitful; still it is smiling upon you.

It makes many promises it cannot fulfill: still it promises.

The fact is your hearts are too big for the world, it cannot fill them; they are too little for Christ, for He fills heaven, yet will He fill you to overflowing.

J.N.Darby