

TEST TRACK

If you are standing at the edge of the testing track of a large automobile factory, you will see how they are torturing those new vehicles. They pass the cars through the curves and dips at high speed, until they look like they're going to break the suspension. They start and stop suddenly. They are doing all the things that a car owner would avoid in order to prolong the life of his car!



But there is a good reason for the way in which they are treating the cars: The manufacturer wants to ensure that the product is in perfect condition before it reaches consumers.

Undoubtedly, most of the machines and appliances of your house have passed similar rigorous tests before receiving the prestigious brand name and being put on the market for sale.

Do you think of yourself as a product that is already finished and perfect, or as a complicated being that is in the process of improvement? If you are still in the process, then you have to suffer severe tests. It is logical to think that these tests do not exist simply so that you can suffer, but so that you realize your weak points and have an opportunity to correct mistakes. God does not take pleasure from our pain, but there are some lessons that cannot be learned any other way.

In the New Testament, God teaches us: *"All discipline for the moment seems not to be joyful, but sorrowful; yet to those who have been trained by it, afterwards it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness."* (Hebrews 12:11)

God also says, *"Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. And let endurance have its perfect result, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing."* (James 1: 2-4).

Our character is revealed, not only in prosperous times, but especially when facing problems.. God allows problems in our lives so that we can see our faults and take steps to correct them.

So when we say "Happy New Year", we do not necessarily want freedom from all kinds of problems. The happiest person is the one who is continually learning and growing. May you be very happy in this new year!

You have to dig deeper

An article in a journal on psychological and emotional problems warns, "We might reveal more about your personality than you want to know."

While enticing readers to explore the depths of human character, it seems to foreshadow unpleasant findings. If we knew more about ourselves, we might not be as good as we think we are.

The daily news communicates to us a terrible truth: a shockingly large number of people, including seemingly innocent children, have a frightening potential for hatred and destruction of fellow humans, and even of themselves.

The saying, "Looks can be deceiving," not only refers to poor-quality products in attractive packaging or at deceptive prices, but can also refer to our own appearance. Our outward smiling and earnest expressions may actually conceal untold distress or selfishness.

Our true colors tend to come through when problems arise. Some of us ignore trouble, while others aggressively blame others. Some of us even blame God for our problems.

Most public service institutions require background checks for those aspiring to be police officers, paramedics, or firemen. No one wants first responders with alcohol or drug problems!

Ideally, everyone in the history of the world would be trustworthy and dependable workers and citizens. Many of us think we are basically good and better than most. However, if each of us were to dig deeper and examine our true character, we'd have to admit that we fall short of that ideal. Pride and selfishness are in each of us, together with cruelty, violence, perversion, and lies. No wonder the Bible states that *"every inclination of the human heart is evil from childhood."* (Genesis 8:21).

Too extreme you say? God, the Creator, may



agree with you, for He did not originally create humans to be so evil. God created the first humans in His own image and likeness. He gave them a spiritual nature so that He could be in peaceful, harmonious relationship with them. God even gave them mastery to take care of the world He created for them. However, an evil force intervened, and their spiritual nature broke away from God's original, good plan. They chose to follow their own way instead of God's way. Any other way besides God's way is called sin. Over the ages, their descendants continued to stray further from God, resulting in the fallen society we have today, where you & I also tend to choose our own way over God's way. Our sin separates us from that harmonious relationship with God.

This miserable separation from God seems pretty hopeless, except for two important facts. First, God still creates each person, including you and me, in His image. So, we still have a spiritual nature which can take steps toward Him. Second, God still loves each person and has created a way to restore fellowship with Him. That plan is called the gospel and it is a message about how Jesus Christ came to save humanity, not en masse or by force, but one by one according to the will of the person.

Many have already accepted Jesus as their Savior, who freed them from their sin and restored their fellowship with God. They go on to follow Jesus as their Lord, who helps them stop sinning and live an amazing life that will never end. Have you accepted Him? If not, but you would like to, please contact us at any of the address on opaged 4. □

How can I change my life?

“I exist but I do not live; my life is a calvary of loneliness, of enmity and pain. Is it possible to start a new life?”

Dear reader, yes, it is possible to start a new life. There are positive changes in the lives of hundreds of people in all countries of the world.

Did you know that God loves you and that He has a wonderful plan for your life? That is a promise. But not a vague promise for a distant future, but rather a promise for a real experience here, in this lifetime; right now. Yes, He can change your life and this is what we want to communicate.

In the epistle of Saint John, chapter 10, Jesus Christ says: *"I have come that they might have life, and have it abundantly."* In other words, Jesus Christ came into the world so that we could enjoy life. But, you might ask yourself: "Well, but if He came to give us life in abundance, why is it that I'm not experiencing that abundant life that Jesus promises?"

Unfortunately, the majority of humanity lives without experiencing that abundant life for the very simple reason which the apostle Paul explains in his letter to the Romans, chapter 3: *"For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God."*

Christ came into the world to remove and de-



stroy the evil of sin. Christ took all of our sin onto Himself so that when we decide to put our lives in His hands, God receives us as people who are free and clean of sin.

In order to change your life, it is necessary for you to open your heart to Christ. To invite Him to share His life with you. Christ says: *"Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and will dine with him, and he with Me."* (this refers to spiritual food).

Open your heart to Christ right now, and He will renew your spirit by giving you the abundant life which you so desire. Be sincere with God. Confess your faults and failures to Him. God will renew you. Read the Bible daily and interact with people who also have the desire to walk with Christ. □

You can read more issues of "Food 4 Thought" at www.food4though4you.org or scan the following code on your mobile device:



To receive more free literature on the Bible, or communicate with us, you can email or write to us at the addresses shown on the back page.

How to have a happy future

Did you start this year with well-intended resolutions? Have you kept them up? Or like most people, have you already broken some or all of them? If so, your year could just become the same old year repeated.

The only way to really have a new year is by recognizing the motives of the bad habits and failures. Deep down, we are all rebels against God and we have rejected His plan for our life. It is impossible to live to full capacity if we are separated from the source of triumph.

Jesus came to the world to free us from the slavery of guilt and the

dominion of sin. When we give ourselves to Him, He saves us and gives us a new life. Paul says, in 2 Corinthians 5:17: *“Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come.”*

Repent with all sincerity, and accept Christ as your Savior and Lord. Then you will have more than a new year; you will have a whole new life. If you want to know how to gain such a victorious life, or have other questions or comments, contact us by email or at the postal address shown below. □



FOOD 4 THOUGHT
email: info@dime.org
P.O. Box 490, Cupertino, CA 95015