

FOOD ⁴ THOUGHT

A QUARTERLY PUBLICATION OF DIME PUBLISHERS

Freedom has arrived!



There was a full moon and, in addition, many torches lit the impressive scene. Thousands upon thousands had gathered in a plaza in Jamaica. It would only be a while for them to be declared free. When the last bell of midnight rang, they would be men and women who would be allowed to do what they wanted and go where they pleased. That was what the government had decreed. Many of them were Christians who waited anxiously for the time to sing hymns. In front, directing them, was missionary Guillermo Knibb, who had fought hard against slavery. Of course, he was very excited. He requested the hymns they would sing and he read Bible verses.

Suddenly, the first midnight chime was heard. For them slavery was like a monster that held them. With each blow of the bell, the expectation increased, until twelve o'clock rang. He shouted: "The monster is dead!" Then, in a pit that they had already dug, they threw in chains, cricket balls and a whip. In the midst of chants and shouts of joy, they filled the pit covering it with dirt.

This is a dramatic demonstration of what the Gospel can do, both in society and in a person's life. No true follower of Christ can tolerate injustice in the world. Many times it has been Christians who have led the fight against any form of oppression, although today some ignore or forget about it.

However, the main work of the Gospel is to free us from another slavery, that of sin. The Bible tells us

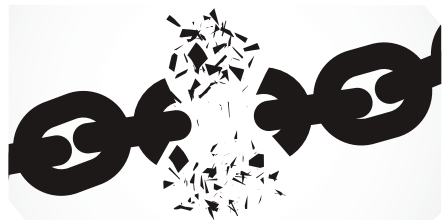
that we are all sinners and that we are slaves to sin, although apparently we are "good people".

He who says he does whatever he pleases, in reality, is doing what the devil wants him to do.

Jesus Christ said that He came to give us freedom. In the times when there was slavery, they could be freed if someone paid a price for their freedom. This was called "redemption". That is why we say that Christ is our Redeemer. When He died on the cross, He did it to pay our redemption with His own life. Through Him we can be freed from sin.

What would have happened if one of those slaves in Jamaica had said: "Everything is a lie. It is a government trap. I do not believe it."? It would have been something unusual, almost impossible to believe.

To receive the redemption that God offers us in Jesus Christ, it is necessary that we believe in Him and give Him our life, so that He unleashes us from all that enslaves us. Jesus Christ will keep His promise to free us. He will also give us a completely new life with the assurance that we will enjoy eternity with Him. □



Winner... but of what?

The stories of famous athletes may have appropriate applications for all of us. Using fictitious names, let's look at these situations:

González, from the age of 15 years, showed a special interest in basketball. He was 10 centimeters taller than the tallest boy in the university. He was fast and very skilled. But attracted by an offer of money, he abandoned his studies to join a professional team where he quickly gained fame. Despite his physique and his ability as a player, he always felt insecure and began smoking and drinking alcohol, trying to prove his manhood.

At the peak of his sports career he earned a good salary and married one of his many admirers. It was then that the reality of life was different. His wife did not want to treat him at home as king and star and, for the first time, he had to think about the well-being and happiness of another person. When the team traveled to other cities, Gonzalez became entangled with women and other vices. His marriage failed. Soon the years of being an athlete ended and González was in the street, without a job or assistance. The winner had lost what was most important.

Calderón was from a humble family. When he was a child, he lived near a tennis club and learned this sport very well. At age 14 he was already participating in national tournaments and at age 17 he went out for the first time with the team to an international competition. He earned enough to accumulate a fortune in less than two years.

It seemed to him that the money entered in very slowly and, when the opportunity appeared, he participated in an illegal drug trade. Greed made him forget the damage he did to young people trapped in the corruption. Once or twice he succeeded but, on one occasion, the police found him with a large quantity of cocaine. Calderón had to serve a 25-year sentence. He won in tennis, but lost in life.

García, also from a very young age, stood out as a soccer player and was able to play on his university team. Like any young man, he had to face the problems of personal discipline, temptations and disappointments in dealing with peers and the public.

One day, in the midst of his great disorientation, he took a Bible and opened it where it says: *"But God shows His love for us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us"* (Romans 5: 8). This portion of the Bible made him see that he was a sinner, but that there was hope for him. That same day he gave himself to God so that He would take control of his life. With this, Garcia won the most important game of his life because he discovered the secret of real and permanent triumph. He dedicated his soccer talent to helping young people and teaching them the message about the victory that Christ gives.

Whether we are athletes, merchants, workers, peasants or professionals, we each have our gifts and our responsibilities.

Not everyone will read their name in

the newspaper or hear the applause of the public, but we can all

win in what matters most. That is, we can live in communion with the Lord. This is genuine happiness and true triumph. This is being a winner! ☐



The greatness of God...

..even in the smallest thing

It is true that the fly is a disease-carrying insect that many times we have had to exterminate, but the fly carries in its body wonderful evidence of God's workmanship. If we carefully examine their legs under a microscope, we will see in each of them a large number of hollow hairs that, in the form of a tube, penetrate the leg to join an elastic bag: a gland that makes a sticky substance. When the fly puts its legs on the wall or the ceiling, hundreds of tiny drops of rubber on all these hairs come in contact with the surface and make it possible for the insect to stand firmly without slipping or falling.

In addition, the fly has compound eyes, each with a thousand facets that make it possible to look in all directions at once. It is therefore difficult to approach a fly by surprise.

Consider also that God has made the human being thousands of times more wonderful and complicated than the fly. A person can not only preserve their life, but their life can be much more enjoyable and eternally secure.

However, we tend to disregard God. On one hand, we are not impressed by His im-

measurable greatness in the creation that surrounds us, both in the immense universe and in the microscopic details of an insect. On the other hand, we do not want to pay attention to His justice, because if we do, we feel responsible for our faults and sins.

If by recognizing God's greatness and justice, we believe in Jesus Christ and accept His forgiveness, the perspective of our life changes radically.

The psalmist says: *"Shout joyfully to God all the earth. Sing the glory of His name; make His praise glorious. Say to God: How awesome are Your works!"* (Psalm 66: 1-3). □



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Pollution

One magazine commented that the most scientifically advanced countries, where atomic energy is being used for industry and many other applications, are faced with the problem of dealing with the radioactive waste that remains.

This worries many in our day. What are we to do with these leftovers, this garbage? Some have talked about taking it to space. Others talk about burying it in the South Pole or in the oceans.

One writer has said that a "priestly class" is emerging in the world, as protectors of nature. These are scientists who are concerned about this problem of air pollution, water and even food, and are becoming protectors of creation. This seems to be very positive because, perhaps unintentionally, our industrialization and our science are leading us to very serious problems.

Some think that pollution is going to create an atmosphere where we can't survive and, therefore,

we are going to destroy ourselves.

The Bible does not speak directly about the problem of pollution, or every exact detail of how the world will end. However, it clearly tells us what will happen to each of us.

Jesus Christ said: *"You will hear of wars and rumors of war. This is not yet the end. Nation will rise against nation, kingdom against kingdom; there will be plagues, famines and earthquakes in different places"* (Matthew 24: 6-7). Jesus Christ warns us that difficult days are coming as the culmination of history approaches. There will be more destruction, epidemics, famines and earthquakes. Most certainly, all of this is prophesied in the Bible.

Above all, we must affirm, with the greatest emphasis possible, that the judgment of God is approaching and we all need to be prepared. The only way to prepare is to repent, believe in Christ and thus follow His teachings. Are you ready? ☐

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