

A TIME TO

BOW

BY JOSEPH G. JARRET

Recently a coworker related a story that disturbed me. He had visited a monastery in Israel that had a weather-beaten cross above the only entrance, a door that measured a scant four feet in height. One was forced to, in effect, bow before the cross to gain entrance.

The disturbing portion of this individual's story was the delight he expressed in telling how he had bent at the waist and entered the monastery while walking backwards. By going through acrobatic gyrations, he had succeeded, as he put it, in "beating the system."

As I reflected on the antics of this person, I realized that he had unwittingly described an attitude that is pervasive among a multitude of God's children today: a disregard for *commitment*.

This attitude is evidenced by our fruitless struggle to take the easy way out. In doing so, are we not attempt-

ing to beat God's system? How often are we unreceptive to God's Word, failing to bow or humble ourselves before our Lord Jesus Christ? How many of us go to great, even acrobatic, lengths to accomplish things that would be so much easier if we would just lower ourselves before the Lord?

Many today exert an inordinate amount of time and energy trying to discover new ways to retain the title of Christian without having to pay the price of living within God's laws. Quite often we convince ourselves that the boundaries our Lord has established for us to live within are too severe or too stifling.

When given a chance, we generally prefer to "stand tall" in our self-sufficiency rather than drop to our knees before our sovereign Lord. This can be a dangerous choice.

God's Word tells us: " 'As surely as I live,' says the Lord, 'every knee will bow before Me; every tongue

will confess to God' " (Rom. 14:11, NIV). Can we realistically expect to live each day according to our own laws while escaping God's judgment in the process? Are we so righteous that we can ignore our Lord's call to redemption, yet maintain that we follow Christ?

How are we to interpret the words of our Lord: "By Myself I have sworn, My mouth has uttered in all integrity a word that will not be revoked: Before Me every knee will bow; by Me every tongue will swear" (Isa. 45:23, NIV). These words constitute more than a statement of future events; they are an admonition.

We are given a choice: We can either bow now of our own free will or wait till the time that we are compelled to do so. God does not choose His words arbitrarily. A time must come when free choice is no longer an issue.

God gave His Son Jesus so that

we may live (John 3:16). In doing so, "God exalted Him to the highest place and gave Him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow" (Phil. 2:9-10, NIV).

The next time you seek a special lift from the Lord, consider bowing first. If you are experiencing a lull in your walk, or just feel that God hasn't been around to pull you up, maybe it's because you're standing too proudly.

Let your love and awe of Jesus Christ cause you to bow, willingly. Only then can you expect Him to take you by the hand and raise you to your feet.

NEED A LIFT?

If life has lost its zing for you, perhaps you're trying too hard to make it on your own. Here's good news: You can always get a lift from the Lord. All it takes is to recognize Him as *Lord* of your life.

Forgiveness of sins and eternal life are God's gifts of love for all who receive His Son Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord. If you would like to know more about this vital gift, we would be happy to send you free information.

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