

Lesson 2
Chapter 1 (continued)
Life In Fast Forward

1. What two major factors mentioned in Chapter I are being directed at us by satanic forces in an attempt to control our thinking and frustrate spiritual progress.

a) being caught up in the whirlwind of activity that characterizes our culture, a life in fast forward; overwhelming pressure from a planned strategy to divert our time, energies and thought life from eternal values and rewards to focus on this world's agenda and what it has to offer.

Never before has life whirled at such a pace. Never before has the Christian Church faced the dilemma that challenges the daily existence of this generation: the volley of pressures, temptations and decisions; the frenzy; the affluence; the apathy.

With every aspect of life seemingly revved up to a heightened state of acceleration, it may not be surprising that many try to fit their Christian experience into this same frame of reference. Christians in record numbers flock to conferences, retreats, seminars and sessions in what seems like a frantic attempt to grab godliness on the run. Professionals lavish predigested teaching in mega-doses on ravenous appetites, while the faithful struggle to absorb as much as possible in the allotted time before rushing back to their whirlwind schedules. (Pg 15, Par 2 - Pg 16, Par 1)

b) having ever progressive evil and perversion launched at us in ways that are difficult to avoid. These are aimed at eroding our judgment and promoting acceptance of what Scripture explicitly says is contrary to God's laws. Such things dull our appetite for God's Word as we are constantly confronted with unwholesome input.

One can hardly avoid the influence of magazines, newspapers, radio, TV - the ever present media — which often seems bent on injecting corrupt and lewd thinking into every situation. To even watch or read the news frequently opens our minds and thoughts to unspeakable things committed by those who have inadvertently or blatantly given themselves over to satanic ends. Commercials of innocuous products are often designed to induce lewd and lustful thinking.

To live and work in this world is to be exposed to satanic influence that can become so commonplace, so much a part of our lives, we may tend to just accept it as norm. We, as God's children, need to be aware that we are being systematically led down a "primrose path" of sinister evil, and must take conscious steps to resist and counteract this trend in our lives. (Pg 21, Par 2-3)

2. *If you're having trouble keeping up with yourself and find that you have no time for the Lord or if you feel you're not growing spiritually, the way you'd like to, perhaps you should check the data you're feeding into your computer. If you're not delighting in doing God's will, if you see yourself constantly yielding ground to the enemy, it may be that you have become a victim of this world's secular agenda that has accumulated in your database and is controlling your life.*

Consider for just a moment: What percentage of time do you spend thinking about Scripture and the things of the Lord versus the time you spend focused on the things of this world? Do you see any kind of balance between the two? In this world of sin and corruption, it isn't easy to avoid being completely swept away by the swirl of activity and the rationale of the great deceiver. But to progress spiritually, we need to be aware of what is happening and to take definite steps to combat it. (Pg 21, Par 5 - Pg 22, Par 2)

Take a moment to contemplate what the data base of your *personal* computer might look like. Use the back of this sheet to draw a circle that you can divide into pie shaped pieces that fill your normal day. You may also want to draw one that is an overview of your years as a Christian to determine what your overall data base might look like.

3. You should now have before you, a visual analysis of your life. Apart from necessary activities, what is it that is taking first place in your life? Do you see anything that is competing for your time and attention that might interfere with your ability to pursue a spiritually sound data base?

4. What does this chapter suggest is a practical resource to help balance the negatives that may be diluting your data base, what is suggested to help counter the hemorrhaging of time, morals and eternal perspective that so subtly erodes our lives and our Christian perspective? What is your personal response to this suggestion?

Scripture that is memorized and stored in our data base is an ever present resource to draw from every minute of every waking moment.

When we store Scripture in our memory bank, we have constant access to its strength and power. We have our own little poustinia wherever we go.

We can meditate on Scripture any moment of the day or night. It's there for solace, for insight, for direction, for guidance. It's there when we go to work and there when we come home. It's there when we vacuum the carpet or mow the lawn. It's there when we rock the baby or ride in the car. It's there when the seas are rough and when they are calm. It's there in the long, dark, wakeful hours of the night and when the sun shines brightly at midday. (Pg 25 Par 4 - Pg 26, Par 1)

5. Read the testimony of a wife and mother who discovered her own private poustinia (Pg 24) and list the benefits she experienced when she began to memorize Scripture in its full context. Contemplate the benefits that you, yourself, might enjoy from such an emphasis in your life.

- a) It opened up a means by which she came to experience the Author in new ways:
 - a) by hearing His voice
 - b) knowing His character
 - c) seeing His blessing
 - c) feeling His peace
- b) It showed her how to overcome some of her weaknesses, to turn from evil and do good.
- c) She experienced a new inner peace.
- d) She learned to feast at the Lord's table while renewing her mind daily.

- e) She was able to meditate on Scripture anytime no matter where she was or what she was doing.
- f) Her thought life and lifestyle were revitalized.
- g) It helped her "to accomplish the critical while eliminating the trivial".

6. Consider Jim Elliott's statement: *He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain what he cannot lose.* Quietly spend a few moments recording your thoughts in the columns below regarding what is happening in your life. Ponder this thought for a few days and see what you might add to the list as you consider maintaining your own personal poustinia.

In closing: You may want to encourage your class to ponder such questions as: Are you beginning to understand why memorizing God's Word is so important for any and every Christian? Do you see that constant access to pure truth would enrich your life as nothing else can? Do you see its importance in combating the bombardment of evil that satanic forces progressively inject into our daily existence?