

"ME FIRST" VALUES OR HEAVENLY VALUES? PART 1

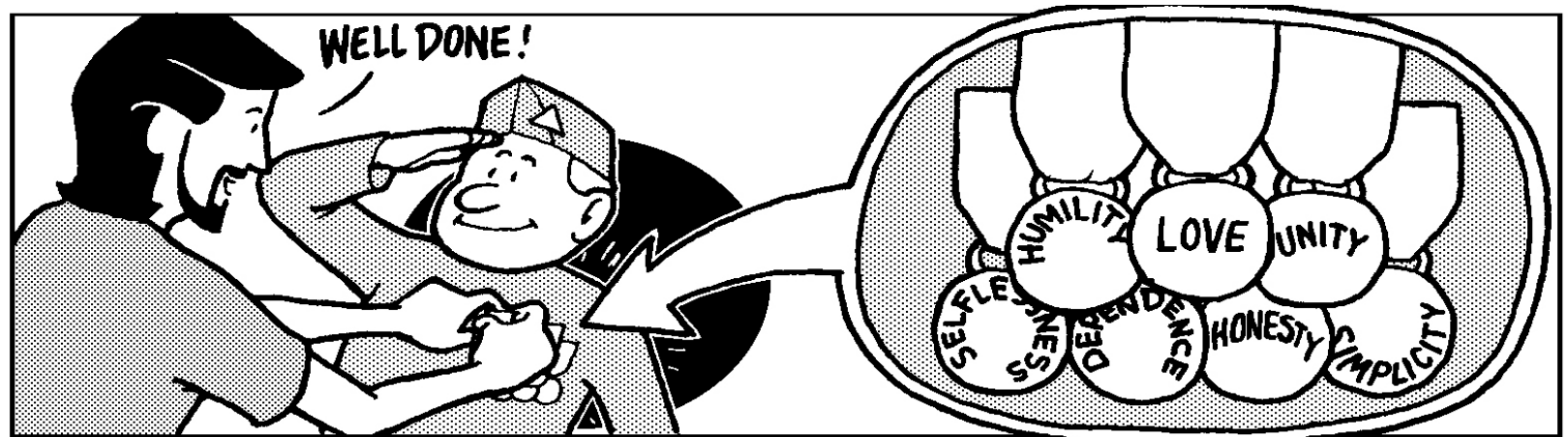
A MESSAGE FROM JESUS



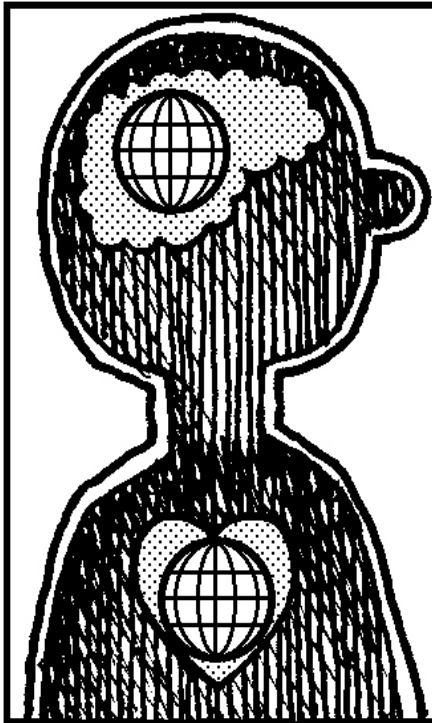
YOU LIVE ON EARTH, WHERE PUTTING YOURSELF FIRST CAN SEEM SO IMPORTANT. BUT THIS IS BECAUSE "THE MIND THAT IS SET ON THE FLESH IS HOSTILE TO GOD" (ROMANS 8:7 ESV).

THIS MEANS THAT THE NATURAL MAN AND THE WAYS OF HEAVEN HAVE CONFLICTING VALUES;¹ THEY PULL YOU IN ONE DIRECTION OR THE OTHER. THIS IS THE SOURCE OF MANY OF THE STRUGGLES YOU FACE.

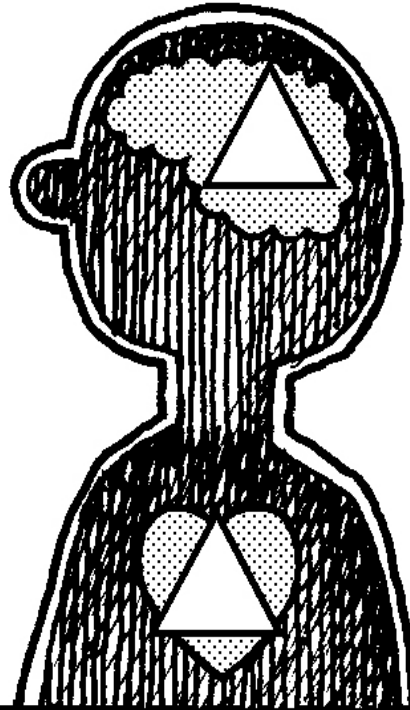
THE VALUES OF HEAVEN ARE WHAT I TAUGHT THROUGH MY EXAMPLE AND IN MY TEACHINGS, AND THEY ARE THE PRINCIPLES LAID OUT IN THE BIBLE. THEY ARE SELFLESSNESS, HUMILITY, LOVE, HONESTY, UNITY, AND DEPENDENCE ON ME.



¹ VALUES: PRINCIPLES OR WAYS OF BEHAVIOR THAT ARE DEEMED IMPORTANT BY A CERTAIN PEOPLE, COUNTRY, OR ORGANIZATION.



THESE ARE THE CHARACTERISTICS I VALUE. AND AS YOU LEARN OF ME, AND DO THE THINGS I SHOW YOU TO, YOUR THOUGHTS, FEELINGS, AND ACTIONS IN THE PHYSICAL ARE INFLUENCED BY THE VALUES OF HEAVEN.

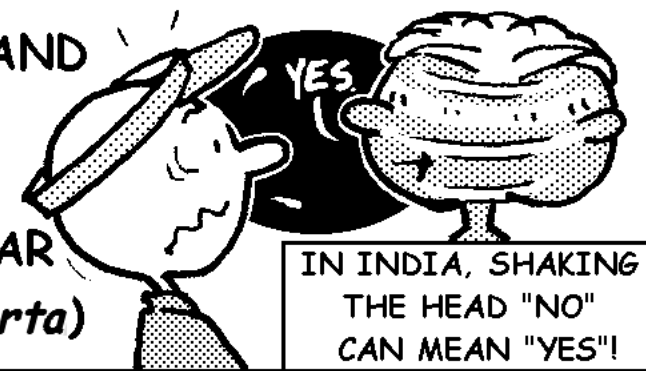


IT TAKES TIME FOR YOUR CARNAL MIND AND SENSE OF "ME FIRST" VALUES TO CHANGE, AND WHEN FACED WITH SUCH CHANGES, THEY ARE LIKE "CULTURE SHOCKS" TO YOUR VALUE SYSTEM.



* **CULTURE SHOCK: SUDDEN EXPOSURE TO UNFAMILIAR CULTURE:**

THE FEELINGS OF CONFUSION AND ANXIETY EXPERIENCED BY SOMEBODY SUDDENLY ENCOUNTERING AN UNFAMILIAR CULTURAL ENVIRONMENT (*Encarta*)



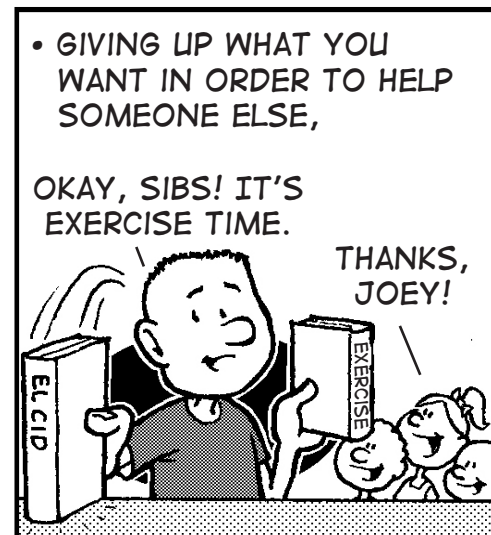
THIS IS WHERE YOU FACE THE STRUGGLES OF GROWING SPIRITUALLY, SUCH AS:

- APOLOGIZING FOR YOUR MISTAKES,




- TAKING THE MISTAKES AND FAILURES OF OTHERS, AS WELL AS ANY HURT THEY BRING, AND SEEING THEM AS TOOLS IN MY HANDS TO STRENGTHEN YOU,

- GIVING UP WHAT YOU WANT IN ORDER TO HELP SOMEONE ELSE,

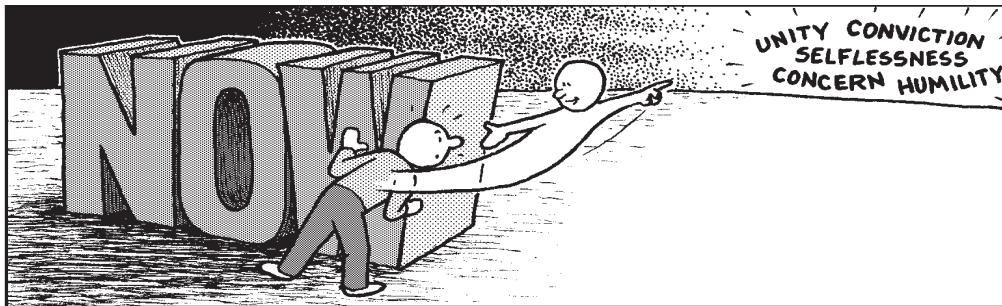


- CARING MORE ABOUT OTHERS THAN YOURSELF



THIS SOUNDS LIKE A TOUGH LIST TO DO, DOESN'T IT?

THESE QUALITIES OF SELFLESSNESS, HUMILITY, LOVE, CONCERN FOR OTHERS, UNITY—QUALITIES THAT I HOLD IN HIGH ESTEEM—MAY BE DIFFICULT FOR YOU TO ACCEPT AND PRACTICE BECAUSE IT MEANS YOU HAVE TO LOOK BEYOND THE PRESENT OR THE NARROW VISION OF THE MOMENT. BUT YOUR SPIRIT SENSES THE ETERNAL VALUE OF THESE THINGS AND LONGS TO PARTAKE OF THEM.



THAT'S WHY AS YOU TAKE ON MORE OF MY MIND THROUGH THE WORD,



THROUGH HEARING MY VOICE IN YOUR HEART

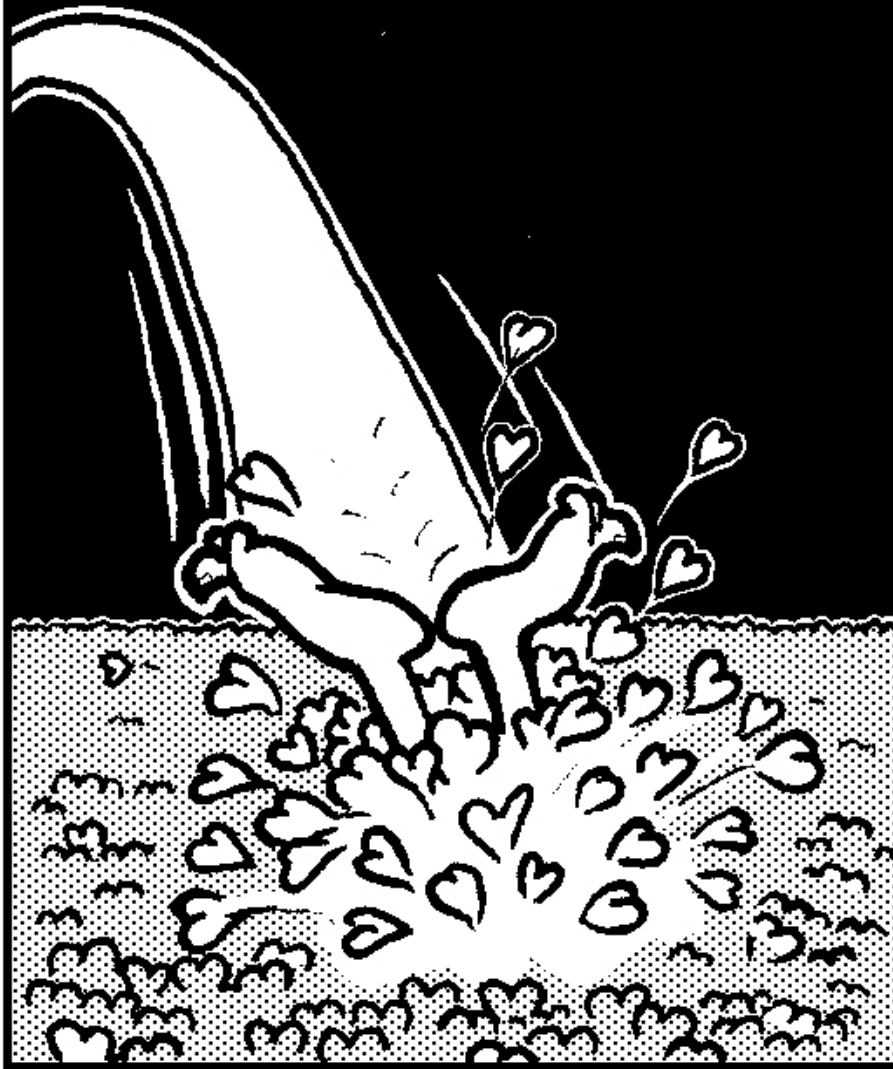


AND SPENDING TIME WITH ME,

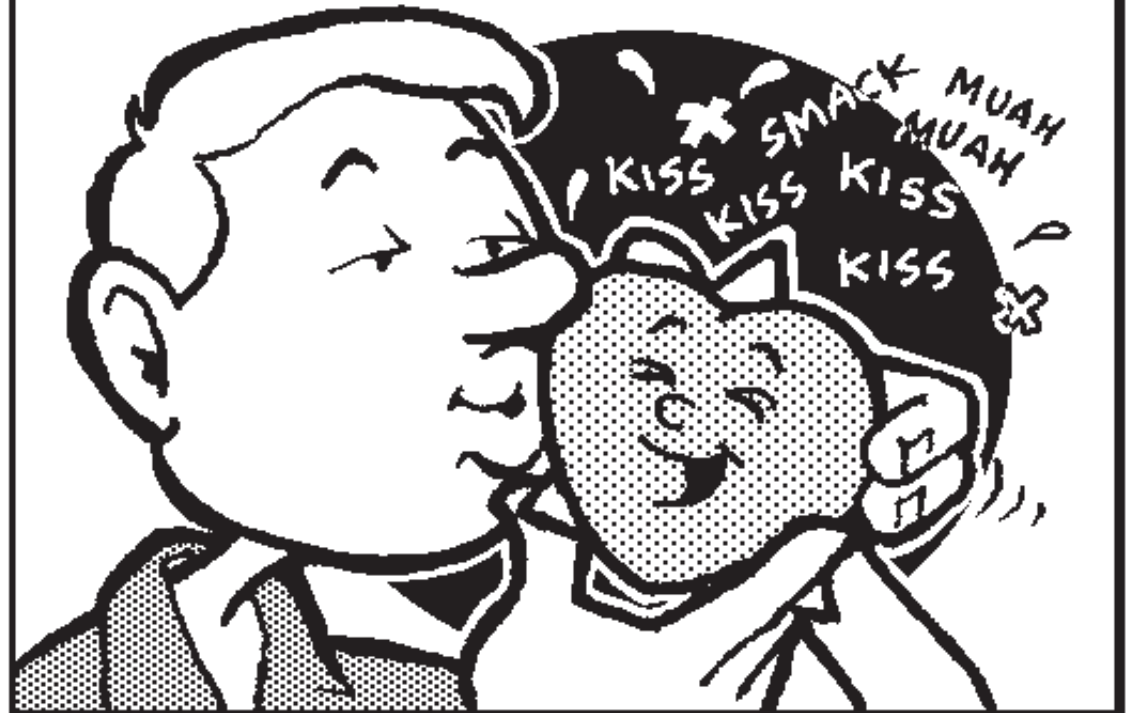


YOUR "ME FIRST" VALUES WEAKEN AND YOUR SENSE OF MY VALUES INCREASES. MY WAYS BECOME MORE AND MORE IMPORTANT IN YOUR LIFE.

DIVE IN TO MY HEAVENLY VALUES!



AFTER A WHILE YOU'LL START ENJOYING DOING SO AS YOU SEE THE POSITIVE RESULTS AND BLESSINGS IN YOUR LIFE AND THE LIVES OF OTHERS, UNTIL EVENTUALLY YOU WON'T EVEN WANT TO GO BACK TO THE OLD WAYS OF BEING ANYMORE. YOU'LL HAVE FALLEN IN LOVE WITH THE NEW AND WILL SEE IT AS THE BEST.



S&S link: Christian Life and Faith: Biblical and Christian Foundation: God's Word-2a;

Contributed by R. A. Watterson, based on the writings of Maria Fontaine. Illustrations by Anthony. Design by Stefan Merour.

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