

The Gap Between the Real and The Ideal

Phil. 3:12-15

Introduction:

- A. Gap has existed since fall of man.
 - 1. No longer an ideal world (Gen. 3:17-24).
 - 2. No longer any ideal people. (Cf. Rom. 3:10,11; 1 John 1:8,10)
 - 3. No longer any ideal inter-personal relations. (Marriage, church, etc.)
- B. Gap generates good and bad attempts to cope with it.

Discussion:

- I. To Some, The Solution Is to Repeal the Ideal.
 - A. Deny perfect standard. (cf. 2 Tim. 3:16,17; James 1:25).
 - B. Dilute perfect standard.
 - 1. Pervert it. (Gal. 1:8,9)
 - 2. Water it down.
- II. To Some, The Solution Is to Accept the Real Without Improvement.
 - A. No desire to correct sin. (cf. 1 John 1:7-9).
 - B. No desire to grow. (Heb. 5:12-6:1; 2 Pet. 3:17,18; Phil. 3:12-15; Minnie Pearl's brother).
- III. To Some, The Solution Is to Abandon the Struggle for Ideal.
 - A. With self.
 - 1. Accepting status quo.
 - 2. Escapism - drugs, hedonism.
 - 3. Suicide.
 - B. With relationships.
 - 1. Leave families, jobs, brethren.
 - 2. Jump from one to other - looking for ideal.
- IV. To Others, The Solution Is to Patiently Strive for The Ideal.
 - A. For self – requires patience with self (cf. 1 John 2:1-3).
 - B. For relationships – requires patience with others.
 - 1. With Family. (cf. 1 Pet. 3:1,2; Eph. 6:4).
 - 2. With Brethren. (Eph. 4:1-6; 2 Tim. 2:24-26; 4:1-4)
 - 3. But, “long-suffering” is not “ever-suffering.” (1 Cor. 5:13; 2 Thess. 3:6,14; Rev. 2:20,21).

Conclusion:

- A. We will not be lost for not reaching ideal in this life.
- B. We will be lost for not reaching for ideal in this life.