

JUST THE SITE! London businessman Lindsay Clegg told the story of a warehouse property he was selling. The building had been empty for months and needed repairs. Vandals had damaged the doors, smashed the windows, and strewn trash all over the place. As he showed a prospective buyer the property, he took pains to say that he would replace the broken windows, bring in a crew to correct any structural damage, and clean out the garbage. The buyer said, "Forget about the repairs. When I buy this place, I'm going to build something completely different. I don't want the building; I want the site."

That's God's message to us! Compared with the renovation God has in mind, our efforts to improve our own lives are as trivial as sweeping a warehouse slated for the wrecking ball. When we become God's the old life is over. He makes all things new. All He wants is the site and the permission to build. There are still some trying to "reform," but God offers "redemption." All we have to do is give Him the "property" and he will do the necessary "building."

GIVE ME MADNESS. GOD, I WANT TO SURRENDER TO THE RYTHM OF MUSIC AND SEA, TO THE SEASONS OF EBB AND FLOW, TO THE TIDAL SOURCE OF LOVE. I AM TIRED OF BEING HARD, TIGHT, CONTROLLED TENSED AGAINST TENDERNESS AFRAID OF SOFTNESS. I AM TIRED OF DIRECTING MY WORLD, MAKING, DOING, SHAPOMG, SURRENDER IS A RISK NO SANE MAN MAY TAKE. SANITY NEVER SURRENDERED IS A BURDEN NO MAN MAY CARRY. GOD, GIVE ME MADNESS THAT DOES NOT DESTROY WISDOM, RESPONSIBILITY, LOVE.

"...the truth that is in Jesus: namely, that you must lay aside your former way of life and the old self which deteriorates through illusion and desire, and acquire a fresh, spiritual way of thinking. You must put on that new man created in God's image, whose justice and holiness are born of truth. See to it, then, that you put an end to lying; let everyone speak the truth to his neighbor, for we are members of one another. If you are angry, let it be without sin. The sun must not go down on your wrath; do not give the devil a chance to work on you. The man who has been stealing must steal no longer; rather, let him work with his hands at honest labor so that he will have something to share with those in need. Never let evil talk pass your lips; say only the good things men need to hear, things that will really help them. Do nothing to sadden the Holy Spirit with whom you were sealed against the day of redemption. Get rid of all bitterness, all passion and anger, harsh words, slander and malice of every kind. In place of these, be kind to one another, compassionate and mutually forgiving, just as God has forgiven you in Christ. Be imitators of God as his dear children."

DON'T GO TOO FAR! Two men were adrift in an open boat and it looked bad for them. Finally one of them, frightened, began to pray: "O Lord, I've broken most of the commandments. I've got some pretty bad habits -- I drink a lot, I curse most of the time, I steal things from work, I treat people like dirt. But if my life is spared now I promise you that I will change, that I will never again curse, that I will never again steal, that I . . ." Suddenly his friend cried out to him: "Wait a second, Jack. Don't go too far. I think I see another ship."