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Forrester & Co.
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THE POWER OF THOUGHT.

And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God.
Rev. 20.12.

afternoon
Perhaps this morning, for a few minutes, we could ask ourselves; What do I think about God? Phillips Brooks in a sermon he entitled "Standing before God," has this to say and I quote, "Every thought of man depends on what you first think of God. Make your thought of God large enough and there is no thought of man too large for you to think within it. "

St John in the book of Revelation tells us of the vision he had of the dead, small and great, standing before God. Poor and rich they were all the same. Death was the common denominator of each and of all. He saw them standing before the judgement seat of God. Not by the standards of this earthly life were they to be judged but by the standards of God.

We live in an age when it appears that it is too much effort to think. To project the mind as St John must have done is just too tiring. Perhaps for many too unrealistic. For many far too uncomfortable. For many not profitable. For others not popular. Are we the rank and file of the church too prone to leave all our thinking to the theologians. Let them do the thinking about God. That is their field their business. Don't bother me with standards. They make me feel uncomfortable.

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Can we escape that easily? In this mechanized life of our time we find that in all our industrial effort we have certain standards we must meet. We neglect them at our peril. Without their guidance our efforts can result in chaos. The engineer uses delicate instruments calibrated to micro thousands of an inch. The carpenter has his square his level and his blueprint. Through all of life we can trace a standard by which men must abide in order that their physical effort and its end result may be of use to society.

Dr Hilda Neatby in her book "So Little for the Mind" pointed out the great chasm that existed between our educational facilities and the end result---a mind, or minds well trained and well equipped to think and reason. And again quoting Phillips Brooks "Greater than anything else in education, vastly greater than how many facts and sciences a teacher may have taught his pupil, there must always be this other question, into what presence he has introduced him: before what standard he has made his pupil stand: for in the answer to that question are involved all the deepest issues of the pupil's character and life." End quote. Every thought of man depends on what you first think of God.

St John must have been a man whose mind was so trained to think and reason that he could project that mind beyond the veil of death and bring back to us the Revelation set down in the New Testament.

Our greatest scholars admit that they do not understand all the Book of Revelation, but this they are all

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agreed upon. St John for a moment pulled aside the curtain of death and gave a slight clue to it's mystery. A mysterious, dimly understood feeling that each of us possess as we see a loved one pass on and behind that curtain. St John gave meaning to that mysterious journey he says "I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God."

We have just been given an example of the power of thought in the recent journey into space of a mechanical marvel that drew it's power from our sun and travelled 132 million miles into our galaxy and still responded to the control of earthly operators, sending back to us photos of the planet Mars. Man put his mind to work on such a matter and God gave him glimpses of what might be and what he might find. But what exacting standards had to be met to achieve such success!!

Man had to first put his mind to work and despite the scoffing and derision of his fellows he had to develop his theory, and God gave him encouragement by showing him that this was the right way or that the wrong. The scientist set up a gauge for his work. Not, Is this comfortable for me, Is this profitable, Is this popular, but rather IS IT RIGHT? So that standard was set and by that criterion he judged his work.

Today as we gather together to worship God if we project our minds toward Him we will be richly rewarded. Our vision will be deepened and broadened, earthly cares will have

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little importance

I saw the dead small and great stand before God. St John leaves us to think this vision through for ourselves. ~~Here~~ were men of all ages of all lands and races, of all beliefs, standing before the Judgement of God. The rich the poor the comfortable, the adventures the selfish and unselfish, the child the youth the man. Of each, death, the common denominator had brought them on a level one with the other.

To all in this new environment of death, who, in their ~~life on earth~~ life on earth had never judged their own actions outside the standard set by their society of whether it was profitable, comfortable or popular, comes a startling new standard "Is it right ?" . On every side the perplexed soul hears the question "Is it right ?" "Is it right?" Perhaps for the first time the confused soul has had to really think in terms other than its own selfishness "Is it right ?"

To the soul that has striven through this earthly life to know the will of God, to think about Him, to use the conscience - born standard each of us have of our Heavenly Father, the soul that has endeavored to rise above mere self and selfishness and think its way to God; this soul stands too with others before God .The thoughtless and the thoughtful stand together before God. The two stand in judgement, together.

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For the one it is misery and perplexity for the other t
the fulfilment of a lifelong search. For the one a strange n
new environment in which questions it has asked are
answered by the question "Is it right?" For the other a
coming home, an entering into the fulfilment of a lifelong
quest, an entering into a oneness with God. We can ask
ourselves the question too "Is it right?? Is this the
hell or the heaven each soul makes for itself when called
together small and great to stand before God ?

In our mad rush to belong to The Affluent Society and
to maintain our place ther let us take time out to ask
ourselves this question of all we do and think "Is it right?"
God has given us power to reason and think let us not misuse
that power .