

Excerpts for contemplation, discussion and application from this week's issue of THE LOOKOUT.

The God Wrestlers (pages 3-5)

"We know we should not be angry at God, but that's how we feel, and so we consider ourselves the worst of sinners, piling guilt on top of anger; or we hide the truth from ourselves (not to mention everyone else), refusing to admit it, afraid God will punish us for our anger."

- Have you been in this kind of mental or spiritual wrestling match? How did it turn out?

"We wonder if God made a mistake. Why doesn't he just correct Adam's fall and put an end to all this pain?"

- How would you respond to this statement? Have you ever felt this way? Why, or why not?

"If God isn't there or doesn't care, then pain and loss have no answer."

- What questions do pain and loss create in your mind? How do God's presence and care answer these questions?

Controlling the Fires of Anger (pages 6 & 7)

"[Anger] is the quintessential signature emotion: I am

what makes me mad."

- What do you think this statement means? Do you agree, or disagree? Why?

"Forgiveness is surrendering my right to hurt you because you hurt me."

- Do you think this definition of forgiveness reflects Jesus' definition? Why, or why not?

I Don't Want To Be Angry Anymore, Lord! (pages 8 & 9)

"It wasn't easy to admit my anger, to ask for their prayer and support."

- Why is admitting anger so hard? Why is it hard for us to be transparent with one another?

"When I am angry, it seems all my irritation pours out in a flood and I don't stop it or think about it before I let it loose."

- How do you express anger? How do you think God might have you change the way you express it?

W O R L D W I N D O W S

By Steve Flairty

"For if you possess these qualities in increasing measure, they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ" (2 Peter 1:8).

I WAS INVOLVED IN the early part of the running craze that started over 20 years ago. It has proved to be more than a fad for me, as I still run on a regular basis. When I ran in distance races years ago, I learned to compensate for my lack of speed by working extra hard in my training, keeping my weight down, and learning to use proper

technique. Because of these measures, I had a fair amount of success.

Learning to play the guitar was a different matter, though. The initial excitement about my guitar, a gift, and the lessons I would be taking diminished after I could not seem to do the required amount of practice and study. The guitar was later sold in a yard sale. Maybe someone else put it to good use!

Christians have been given the gift of salvation through faith. But in 2 Peter 1:5, 6, we are told to "make every effort to add to [our] faith" such qualities as goodness, knowledge,

self-control, perseverance, godliness, brotherly kindness, and love. These virtues come through hard work and self-discipline, through prayer and the study of God's Word. They don't come to us overnight either, so we need to stay the course—even over a lifetime!

Then we "will receive a rich welcome into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ" (2 Peter 1:11).

Not bad for all the trouble. ■

Steve Flairty is a freelance writer in Lexington, Kentucky.