

RELIGION

Whatever controls you is your god

Last year the average American man lived to be 69.9 years of age, while women lived to be 77.6 years of age.

Not bad, considering that cancer — as a cause of death — is up five percent, suicide is up 13 percent, cirrhosis of the liver (caused primarily by alcohol and drugs) is up 74 percent and murder has increased 100 percent.

It's a wonder anyone even gets through adolescence alive.

The question, however, is why do women live longer than men? The sociologists have answers — many of them. A woman's psyche is turned to the emotions. Women cry easier than men. They love easier. They get angry easier. This can make things miserable for those around them — or easier, depending on how you handle it. But women vent themselves through their emotions much easier than men. As a result, the experts say, they live longer.

Women usually hang onto their friends much longer than men. They are much more personal. Men have the same opportunities, but they are too dumb to recognize it. They use the business world to run away from themselves. That's why they die so much faster. They are afraid to nest.

Many large corporations operate on a system of executive mobility. This is a system top corporation executives use to select and produce people as single-mindedly devoted to their corporation as they are. The idea is to move people around so often that the only thing left in their life is work, money and power. If you keep separating a man from his friends, his community, his church, even his family, after a while he'll begin to believe the only stable thing in life is his job. When this happens, the theory goes, he will then throw himself into his work with total abandon for the sake

Perspective

by Jamie Buckingham

of rising to the top where he won't have to move any more.

The trouble with that is, he'll either die at an early age — burned out for AT & T — or in his effort to get ahead quickly, he'll make a horrible mistake and be fired.

Either way is okay with the system, since there are a lot of fast risers just below him who want him out of the way so they can take his place.

Someplace down the line in this changing society as we grow older and enjoy it less, we need to ask the question: What is my God?

Actually, whatever controls me is my god. If I move to New Mexico because the Harris Corp. tells me I have to move or be bypassed in promotion — then Harris Corp. is my god.

Whatever controls me is my god. When money controls me, when ambition controls me, when fear controls me, when the company store calls the shots — that is my god. The first commandment says, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me." But again, Moses didn't have to deal with executive mobility, fringe benefits, retirement plans, credit unions and labor unions.

Every man needs to decide, before he dies, whom he will serve. If he doesn't, he may die early — or at best, live out his life in misery.

There is a God who brings life. Very few follow Him, however.