PERSPECTIVE

By Jamie Buckingham

Lloyd George once remarked that the most dangerous feat in the world is to attempt to cross a chasm in two jumps. I have a friend, a golfer, who knows the truth of this as applied to golf — for many times I've seen him attempt to cross a lake with two shots.

The last time I played with him he dropped four of his best balls into the water hazard on the eighteenth hole. It was a very colorful way to end the afternoon.

In golf or life, it's dangerous to attempt to cross a chasm in two jumps. The same principal holds true in other areas. If the chasm is 30 feet wide and you can only jump 15 feet, then even one jump is hardly a safe endeavor. In that case, the best thing to do is not jump at all, but to walk down and then climb up the other side one step at a time.

All chasms cannot be jumped in one leap. We are not strong enough to make it, and woe to the man who has not learned to measure his jumping ability accurately.

Life is full of broken specimens—human beings who tried to make a 30 foot leap when they had only 15 foot jumping ability. They have been in a hurry—too much of a hurry. Take marriage, for instance. How many young people have leaped out into marriage, taking a step that later proved to be far too big for them. If they had waited patiently, had stayed in training longer, then they would have been prepared for the big leap later on. No, they had to go ahead and jump—and the chasm proved too wide.

The road of life is littered with the broken forms of businessmen who bit off more than they could chew. They ventured out too far. Not that there is sin in venturing—but the sin came in trying to jump further than their jumping ability. And so they crashed to the bottom. Fortunately, some of them were able to pick up the broken pieces and —with wisdom gained from failures—begin to climb up the other side rather than attempt to jump all over again.

One of the things God has endowed all of us with is common sense. The ability to decide when to jump, when to walk, and when to wait. Most of our trouble comes from being in too much of a hurry. Speed sometimes postpones a solution forever.

Moses, standing at the edge of the Red Sea with the Egyptian army closing in on him, was in a position to try to cross in one jump. But instead he said to the Israelites, "Stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord . . ." And what happened is history.

Jump when the situation demands it—but don't jump when you should walk. And by all means, wait until the Lord gives you a nudge.