



# Perspective



By JAMIE BUCKINGHAM

Perhaps Governor Reubin Askew's plan to lower the speed limits on the highways will have other benefits besides saving fuel (and lives). A traffic expert I know declares that at the speed of 65 miles per hour we see seven times less than we do at 35 miles per hour. At 65 miles per hour we concentrate on the road ahead. But at 35 miles per hour we are able to pick up, through peripheral vision, all sorts of beautiful scenery which just flashes by at the higher speeds.

Americans don't like to slow down. Speed is our symbol of success. We glamorize race car drivers, fast-back sports cars, Olympic medal winners and young men who rise like meteors to the top of the industrial pile. We admire the man who is always dashing off to keep an appointment and assume that he must be successful because he is always in a hurry.

One of my favorite stories is about the man who came dashing out of the airport, jumped in the cab and immediately opened his briefcase. "Where to?" the cabbie asked. "Anyplace, as long as it is in a hurry," the man snapped back. "I've got business everywhere."

Deadlines. Long distance calls. Appointment books. All these are the marks of a successful man.

That's one of the reasons I'm happy to hear all this talk about slowing down our way of living. Perhaps those Arabs are doing us a mighty big favor by withholding all that oil.

In the book, "Cheaper By The Dozen," father, who is an efficiency expert, has his wife hold a stop watch on him as he buttons his vest in the morning. He learns he

can save 1.7 seconds a day if he buttons his vest from the top down rather than from the bottom up. Of course it takes him 15 minutes to determine this, which at 1.7 seconds a day will take him more than two years to regain. And tragically, he forgot to figure in the fact that he would be dead in less than a year and move into a realm "where time shall be no more."

We have created an illusion that the faster we move the more we will accomplish. It's hard for us Americans to realize that there is more to life than just increasing our speed.

Isaac Jacobson, a fiery little red-headed Jew from the Bronx, chuckled when he told me how he learned he could save time by using two shaving brushes instead of one. He timed himself and found he could save 17 seconds a morning. The next morning he used two razors instead of one and saved an additional 45 seconds. The third morning he lost almost 20 minutes trying to stop the bleeding under his chin.

The great men in history became great not by speeding up, but by slowing down. Jesus, of course, is the finest example. Living a life free from the pressure of material things and uncrowded by possessions, He was able to move forward with a single purpose. He was never hampered by speed limits. And as He walked down the dusty roads of His homeland, He had all the time He needed to convey His truth to those around Him.

So, sock it to us, Governor. I, for one, am ready to slow down.