







The

# LINK

*December, 1954*

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# 1954

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# CHRISTMAS EVE MISTAKE

Matt Christopher

"CAR 41. Car 41. Proceed immediately to corner of Pan and Olive Streets. There has been a collision. Car 41 . . ."

Sergeant Mike Rafferty picked up the phone, pressed on a lever with his forefinger, and said, "O.K. We've got it."

He put the phone down and looked sourly out of the windshield. He was a big man with black brows that emphasized a rather belligerent pair of eyes, swarthy face, and slightly bent nose, the latter a souvenir of a ring bout during his World War II days.

"Christmas Eve," Dave Maloney, the driver of the prowler car, said, "and somebody has to spoil it."

"It's probably some young punk in a hurry to get some place," Mike grumbled. "If somebody gives me a hard time, I swear—"

He let it drop there, but he banged his big fist against a solid knee and clamped down on his

teeth to keep his roiling emotions from spilling all over the place. He was mad because he had asked for the night off and the chief had given him the thumbs down. After all, if he was given the night off everybody in the police force from the captain down would jump down the chief's throat. But everybody on the force, reflected Mike, didn't have a wife and five kids.

They reached the corner of Pan and Olive. Dave parked the car at the curb. He and Mike stepped out and walked through the crowd to the car that had its radiator squashed against a light pole. Beside it was a bicycle with its front wheel bent.

The whole thing looked plenty serious. Mike glanced around and saw a kid stretched out on his back on the front seat of the damaged car. Near the kid was a sailor. He looked scared as a frightened rabbit. He was over six-foot, but he hadn't filled out yet.

It didn't take a blink of an eyelid for Mike's body temperature to shoot skyward. He pulled the sailor away from the car, took a look at the kid, then wheeled around.

"Call the ambulance, Dave. This kid's gotta go to the hospital. He's bad hurt." He turned to the sailor. "O.K. Give me the story."

He tried to pretend that this was just another routine job, and that it didn't faze him one way or another. But everything equivalent to common horse sense was against him. The hurt kid made him think of his own brood, and the uniform standing in front of him made him think of his career way back when. Only it wasn't so



far back that he couldn't remember stuff about it now and then.

The sailor's low, husky drawl snapped him out of it. "I'm not trying to argue myself out of it," he said. "It was my fault. The light was caution and I stepped on the brake to stop the car. At the same time this kid comes down the street from my right. The brakes weren't doing me any good. The car kept going, and I see I'm going to hit the kid. So I spun the wheel to go left. At the same time the kid makes a turn to go left, too. I guess he was so interested in his own driving he never noticed me. Anyway, I run into him."

Mike's eyes flashed a red warning. "You spun the wheel, huh? How long you been in the navy, sailor?"

"Eleven months."

"First hitch?"

"Yes." The sailor's Adam's apple jerked as he swallowed.

"Can't be anything else," Mike

said stiffly. "What're you on, a tanker?"

"A fleet destroyer. The USS 'Hatford'."

"A tin-can sailor, huh? Hardly more than a boot." Mike shut his mouth and looked again at the kid sprawled on the seat of the car. A muscle crawled in his rock-hardened jaws. "Let's see your license, sailor."

The sailor drew out his billfold, pulled out a yellow, folded paper, and handed it to Mike.

Harvey Yunan. 119 Pleasant Street. The name, Yunan, seemed to have a familiar ring, but Mike wasn't quite sure. He returned the license to the sailor.

The ambulance came. The interns examined the boy, found a fractured leg and miscellaneous lacerations, then lifted him carefully onto a stretcher and placed him into the ambulance.

"Dave," Mike said, "follow me in that Chev. I'm taking this sailor boy down to headquarters."

"So, you're married, huh?"

"Yes, sir," said Yunan. He was sitting on a chair, with his elbows resting on his high knees, and his white hat in his hand. "I was on my way to see my wife."

"She know you were coming?"

"No. I wanted to surprise her."

Harvey Yunan's blue eyes blinked a couple of times. "Being Christmas Eve, I thought it would be a nice surprise to pop in on her without telling her. We married just before I enlisted."

"Oh. You weren't drafted?"

"No, sir. I knew I was going to get in anyway, so I joined up."

Mike walked to the door, stuck his hands into his pockets, then came back. "Where'd you get the



car? Steal it?"

"No, sir. It's my dad's. My mother and dad are the only ones who know I'm home. I told 'em not to say anything to Caryl."

Mike thought some more. The kid was acting too quiet. He knew this type. They thought that by keeping their mouths shut as much as possible, things might turn out easy for them. Deep inside they had little regard for the law, and even this minute Yunan was probably calling him every name he could think of.

"I was in the Navy, too," Mike said. "But it was during the war when we were fighting, not playing ship games like you kids are doing nowadays. I was a chief gunner's mate on the 'Robert C. Wiggins.' Ever hear of her?"

"No, sir."

"Well, you wouldn't. She finally went down after the enemy blasted her with all the ammo they could lay their hands on. But, before that happened, the 'Robert C.' rang up a string of records.

The sailor wasn't looking at him. He was studying his hat.

"You were just a kid, then," Mike said. "You were lucky."

"Yeah. I guess I was."

He seemed to be working up to something. Mike could tell by the way the kid was rubbing his knees and wiping the sweat from his face. Inside, Mike was having the time of his life. The kid didn't know what fighting was. If he was sweating because he was worried about the kid on the bicycle it would do him good. Teach him a lesson.

"I never forget the time," Mike began again, "when the 5-inch I was handling practically blew up

in my face."

The sailor leaped to his feet then. His face was scarlet red. Cords stood out on his neck, and there were tears that glistened in his eyes.

"Shut up!" he yelled. "Shut up! I don't want to hear any more about what you did in the war! I'm sick of it! What do you want me to do—start one so that I can say I was in one, too? Go ahead! Start one! Start one yourself if it'll make you feel any better!"

Then the sailor sat down and stared at the door. Mike knew he'd said enough.

"Come on," he said.

The kid got up. Mike took his arm and led him out of the room, down a long hallway, and into a cell.

"You can spend your Christmas here," Mike said, "where you won't run into any more kids."

"My wife," the kid whispered hoarsely. "Won't you let me see my wife?"

"You're not seeing anybody," Mike turned away.

"I keep thinking about that kid," Dave Maloney said.

"What kid?" said Mike.

They were sitting in the prow car, parked at the curb on the hill near the park exit. The motor was running, and the heat was nice and comfortable. You would never guess it was twenty outside, and getting colder. The slush had already frozen into black and gray crystals.

"That sailor," Dave said. "Yunan."

Mike's heart skipped a beat. For the last hour he'd been thinking about the sailor, too. Every minute

of that hour had become one plague piling on top of another in his mind. A dozen times the name tried to flash a signal to the innermost recesses of his memory and, just as he thought he'd grasp it where it would mean something, the signal would vanish.

But that wasn't the only thing that made him think constantly of the kid. It was Christmas Eve.

"I've got it!" Dave shouted suddenly. Mike jumped as if a gun had been jabbed into his ribs.

"Holy cow!" he cried. "Got what?"

"Yunan! I remember, now! It was back in '43 or '44. The papers were full of it. Three brothers died together on a ship. They all stuck together, like the Sullivan brothers! Remember?"

Mike sat straight in the seat. He stared out of the windshield, and it was as if one of his own nightmares was coming back to haunt him again. For a long minute that scene in headquarters unreeled before him, and he saw a man in a cop's uniform who looked like him yet was not him. He saw a man who was brutal and merciless, a man whose heart was not made of flesh but of stone. He saw a man whose mind had been momentarily warped by the damage of a bicycle and the fracture of a boy's leg, and by a tall figure in a Navy uniform who had not seen bloodshed nor even a single bullet hole in the gunwale of his ship.

Now Mike—the Mike who had a heart that was flesh and a mind that was rational—did a thing he seldom did—except when he found it necessary. He prayed to his God, and asked for His for-

giveness. Then he turned to Dave. "To headquarters, Dave. Please."

Ten minutes later Mike opened the cell door and told Radarman Third Class Harvey Yunan that he could go home.

"I'll never know how to say the right words, Yunan," Mike said, choking back a lump in his throat. "I don't know what made me say the things I said to you, because I know you can fight if you have to. What's more, you've already fought a great battle, and you're still fighting it. For you it'll never end. I—I heard about your brothers, Yunan. That's what made me look at myself in the mirror and see what a terrible fool I had made of myself in front of you."

"I've got five kids," he said. "That's the first thing I thought of when I saw that boy lying on his back in your car. I was looking at him as if he were my own kid. I'm not going to stand here and beg for your forgiveness, Yunan. You can think what you like. You've got that privilege. I'm only sorry that I can't close the books now and say go home to your wife and forget about the whole thing. But I can't do that. That boy won't die, but you'll be called to court. I wouldn't worry about it too much, though. The kid's going to make it all right."

Mike put out his hand. The sailor grasped it.

"Merry Christmas, Yunan. And if your wife could forgive a has-been gunner's mate and a lousy cop, tell her I said hello."

Harvey Yunan grinned. "You're wrong about the cop, sir," he said. "He's one of the best guys I've ever met."



# Christmas Carols

Eleanor M. Marshall

"What are you going to get your Mother and Dad?" may be your first hint that Christmas is just around the corner again. Yet there's a better-than-average chance that your first thought of this holiday will be stirred by hearing some old favorite which was first sung centuries ago and which will go right on being sung by future generations—a Christmas carol.

You can hum the melody as it comes from the radio or television, or even sing the words. But do you know anything more about any of these old melodies that have stood the test of many years and are as well known in small hamlets in isolated corners of the globe as they are on main streets of American cities?

A great many of our best-loved carols are to be found among the five hundred manuscripts preserved for ages before the Reformation. Authorities agree that almost without exception these carols resulted from fitting religious words to the tunes of popular songs.

One of the oldest carols, "O Come All Ye Faithful" was long known as "Adeste Fideles." It has been traced back to the 13th century and the Italian philosopher Bonaventura. It has been trans-

lated into seventy-eight languages since Rev. John Francis Wade gave us an English version in 1751. This shows that it is popular no matter where it is known and used.

"Joy to the World" in 1719 was based upon Psalms 98 by Isaac Watts. The melody was done by Lowell Mason and much of the credit for its popularity is due to the music, fragments of which are from the "Messiah," composed by Handel. Mr. Mason has other well-known hymns to his credit, among them being "Nearer My God To Thee" and "My Faith Looks Up To Thee."

In 1818 "Silent Night" was written in German by Joseph Mohr, a young priest, on a clear December night. He was alone in his room thinking about the birth of Jesus and the words of this song formed in his brain so that all he had to do was write them out. He took them to the village organist, Kranz Grüber, and asked, "Will you please fit these words to music?" Grüber liked the words so well that he had no difficulty. The carol was sung in Arnsdorf in Austria for the first time but it wasn't heard from by the outside world until it was recopied by an organ builder to be sung at a concert in Leipzig fifteen years

later. It attained wide popularity at once. It was soon translated into English.

Several years later Phillips Brooks was writing his best-known book "Sermons," and delivering his lectures on preaching at Yale University. He turned out what he considered as a minor thing of little consequence, "O Little Town of Bethlehem." This carol typifies the spirit of brotherhood which this famous Episcopalian minister sought to spread throughout his life.

It seems as if you never can tell what will result from a disappointment, but some results are incomparable. Charles Wesley's remembrance of a keen disappointment was one such, for it resulted years later in another beloved carol, "Hark, the Herald Angels Sing." Because he was ill, he had to stay at home while the rest of his family went to midnight mass when he was only nine years old. He heard the choir sing very plainly, for the night was clear and still. It seemed as if the singing was being done by angels to this lonely little fellow. It was this remembrance Mr. Wesley translated many years later into the carol which is now known around the world. The music was Men-

delsohn's, written originally for a male choir to sing at a market festival when accompanied by a band. Mendelssohn did not consider the melody suited to "sacred words" but an English organist named Cummings in 1855 made a good adaptation. The result is another universal favorite.

A carol, "I Wonder As I Wander" by John Jacob Niles of North Carolina, has not yet attained the recognition which has been accorded to these other, older Christmas songs, since it only dates back to 1933. But you never can tell about the success of a song. Some are sung all the time by everybody for a short while and then are never heard again. Others are slower to catch the public fancy but are never wholly discarded because they embody some sentiment, or are connected so closely with certain holidays, that the songs are woven into the very warp and woof of the celebration. And some songs that seem to have everything the public demands never are accepted.

Goethe's summary has much to recommend it. He said, "Music, in the best sense, does not require novelty; nay, the older it is, and the more we are accustomed to it, the greater its effect."

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## A Winter Tale

In keeping with the season we pass along the tale of a Russian named Rudolph.

Glancing out the window one morning, he was heard to remark, "It's sure raining."

"That's not rain," protested his wife, "it's sleet."

"No, no, it's raining," he answered. "Believe me, Rudolph the Red knows rain, dear."

—*The Watchman Examiner*,  
December 17, 1953

Those little red kettles keep

# Salvation's Army

on the job

• As Christmas approaches, busy shoppers will hear strains of music over the noise of the crowds and see the blue-coated men and women, and the red kettles, so traditionally a part of the holiday season—The Salvation Army will be on the job.

Behind each street corner scene lies a story unknown to many and surprising in its scope. For out

of the gay, little kettles will come Christmas joy for many who otherwise would have no celebration at all. The aged and friendless, the underprivileged children, patients in hospitals, inmates in prisons—all will be remembered at Christmas. Often this remembrance will spell the difference between happiness and misery.

This year, as a result of the







kettle drive, more than 500,000 individuals in the United States will receive assistance. Another 450,000 will sit down to Christmas

dinner given to them by the Salvation Army, and 600,000 children will open their eyes on Christmas morning to see that, once more, Santa Claus has come.

But if the Salvation Army is traditionally associated in the public's mind with Christmas and street corners, there are millions of men, women, and children of all races and creeds, all walks of life, for whom life holds new meaning because of The Army's year-round activities.

Across the United States lies a network of nearly 1,800 centers, carrying on a wide welfare program. Among them are homes, hospitals, nurseries, rehabilitation centers, boys' clubs, neighborhood centers, camps, and servicemen's clubs. Accounting for the broad scope of the organization's service is the fact that, while its main aim is Christian evangelism, The Salvation Army early recognized that it is not easy to talk of spiritual matters to those in acute physical need. This led to the establishment of its welfare activities, and, because they began spontaneously, they developed in many different directions in response to basic human needs as those needs expressed themselves.

A tenet of The Salvation Army is the belief that self-respect is most quickly restored in a person through self-help. Perhaps one of

the best examples of the practical application of this theory is found in its Men's Social Service Centers. Here, the work of repairing donated furniture, clothing, and household articles gives work to thousands of men. Then, the material they repair is sold through outlet stores to families in low-income brackets, enabling them to furnish their homes at lower-than-normal cost. In this way, the Centers serve a double purpose—the salvage of men and the salvage of material. In addition, through the resale of materials, the Centers derive most of the income necessary to carry on this work.

Men cared for at the Men's Social Service Centers are of all ages, and from all walks of life. Some of them are physically handicapped, some temporarily out of work, some alcoholic. As they work, they regain their self-respect, a sense of usefulness, and often learn a trade or skill that enables them to return to gainful employment in a regular industry.

Hand in hand with the work program for these men is the residence program. While at the Center, they are given food, housing, medical care, recreational facilities, and religious guidance. As they regain their usefulness, they also earn a small amount of pocket money each week.

Through this program, The Salvation Army has guided thousands of men back to the point where they can return to their rightful place in society.

Another practical illustration of The Army's slogan, "a man may be down but he is never out," is its work in prisons. For more than fifty years, The Salvation Army

Men's and Women's Prison Bureaus have been recognized as a semi-official adjunct of the penal system of the country. Through regular visits to practically every state and federal prison and house of correction in the nation, officers of these bureaus meet with prisoners. They hold religious services, and, when requested, provide personal counsel. Confidence and friendship are established, and a constructive connection is re-established with the outside world. Often The Army can assist a prisoner's family, who are suffering hardships without his support. Upon release, thousands of men and women are now paroled to The Salvation Army and are aided in finding employment. The friendship, so firmly established within the prison, strengthens men and women in their struggle to regain a normal way of life.

An atmosphere of understanding and kindness fills thirty-four hospitals throughout the country where The Salvation Army cares for unwed mothers and their babies. Officers in charge of these refugees listen with open mind and heart to each mother's story, and each case is worked out individually to its best solution. Modern equipment and excellently planned care assure the children of a healthy start, and before either mother or child leaves the home, a plan satisfactory to all concerned has been worked out to see that the future of the child is secure.

In its neighborhood centers, The Salvation Army provides a chance for children to enjoy the things which belong to childhood. Wholesome spiritual and charac-

ter-building programs are offered. Group activities include arts, crafts, and music lessons, organized play periods, and hobby shops for all age groups.

Often in these centers, too, the work of The Army's religious units is carried on. Through devotional services held in the Center, The Army seeks to provide a "church for those who have no church." The sidewalk meetings, which usually precede these services, are a practical means of taking the Gospel to those who need it where they are. And through these meetings, outdoors, or indoors, many persons troubled in mind, body, or spirit are encouraged to bring their problems to The Salvation Army.

The work of the Family Service Bureaus is carried on by workers who combine understanding with training and skill. Families of all nationalities and creeds bring their problems to the bureaus. Whether it be a mother worried about a delinquent child, a broken marriage, a health problem, or difficulties with the budget, the worker tries to offer the needed help and advice. Often the roots of an emotional problem are found in unresolved economic difficulties, and The Salvation Army can help to obtain the needed assistance.

Since the start of World War I, the work of The Salvation Army with our armed forces has been traditional. Today's inductees, passing through stations on their





way to camp, usually find the Army there to provide them with coffee, doughnuts, and gift packages of gum, candy, and useful items such as combs, handkerchiefs, and postal cards.

A participating agency of the U.S.O., The Salvation Army also operates clubs near military installations which provide writing and reading rooms, showers, snack bar, and always a room for devotional purposes. Programs of photography, archery, ceramics, a variety of games, and music are also available in these clubs. During the day, the clubs are literally converted into "homes" for wives and children of servicemen. The well-equipped club, therefore, may include a laundry with washing machines, irons, sewing machines, and cribs.

Children and their welfare have always been a deep concern of The Salvation Army. Through its day nurseries and foster home placement program, it seeks to give each child the birthright of love and care which he would not otherwise have. Its camps, at the seashore or by woodland lakes, are filled each summer with thousands of city youngsters. As they swim, fish, hike, and study the wonders of nature, their minds are made happy and their bodies become strong and healthy to withstand the coming winter.

But perhaps when disaster strikes, the heartwarming service of these men and women in blue is felt most poignantly. At fires, in floods, earthquakes, railroad accidents, and plane wrecks, their red emergency canteens are on the scene within moments. Tirelessly they serve food to workers and firemen, hand out clothing and blankets, comfort the wounded and their families, and help in the rescue operations.

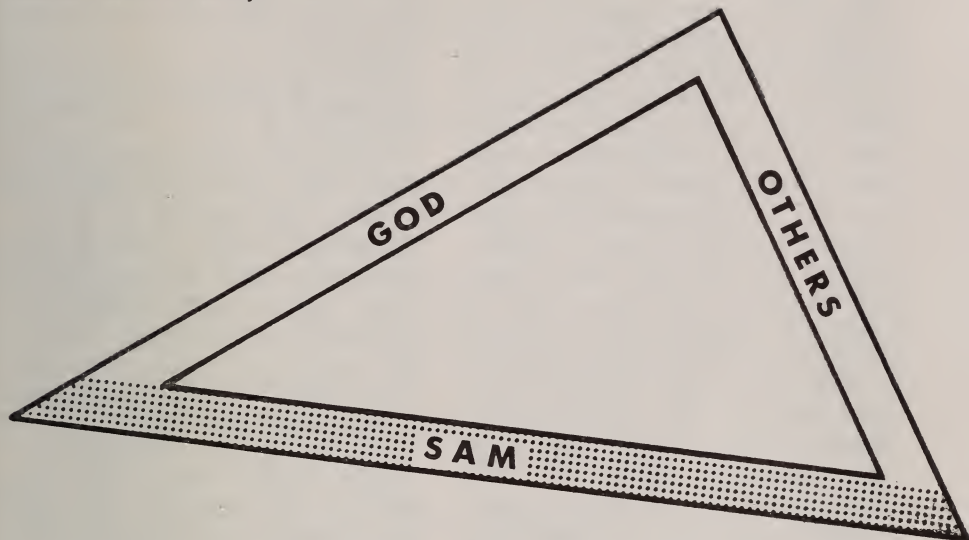
Times have changed since The Salvation Army began as a small singing, marching band of evangelists in the East End of London. It has grown into a powerful widespread religious and welfare organization, adjusting its work to fit the problems of humanity in our troubled world of today. But it is still an army of peace, and its spiritual purpose is paramount. Its officers and soldiers, with hearts dedicated to God and hands held out to mankind, carry on their services not as the doling out of alms, but as a practical expression of Christianity in action. And through these services, the erring, the bewildered, and the unfortunate are restored to their proper relationship with God and fellow man. In every corner of the world where a need exists, The Salvation Army seeks to meet that need.

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## Around the World

The Salvation Army operates 19,491 social institutions, day schools, Red Shield clubs and hostels, and religious centers in eighty-five countries and colonies, according to the organization's 1954 International Yearbook.





Sam felt Sarah nudge him gently, just as young Reverend Thad Kyle finished saying his benediction. Raising his gray head from the back of the pew, he opened his eyes.

"I wasn't asleep, Sarah," he said, "just thinking—if that sermon about the lopsided triangle had been a shoe, it woulda fit me so tight it pinched."

"Yes, a body'd almost think Thad preached it just for you," his wife agreed, looking at the bulletin board filled with the triangle the minister had used to illustrate his Sunday morning sermon.

The voices of the choir filled the church with an echoing amen. Sam and Sarah smiled at each other, then turned their heads toward their daughter Alta. Tall and golden she was, and as beautiful as her voice that rose rich and full, with all the others blending in. There'd been a time when Sam begrudged spending money to train her voice. There'd been a

time when he feared her beauty and talent would take her away from him. But she hadn't hankered after any career. She'd been his girl until young Tim Brady came back to Lakeside last week.

Church was over. Sam stretched his long legs slowly, wincing as he got up. There was no advantage in being a big man, he thought, when you had arthritis; there was just that much more of you to hurt. He'd be glad to pack Sarah and Alta into the car and hurry along home. Then he'd go over to the store after dinner and work.

"Where's Alta?" Sam asked impatiently. "Get her and let's go out the side door." He was in no mood to poke along with the crowd and shake hands with the minister.

He saw the twinkle in Sarah's blue eyes as she said, "You could see for yourself what's keeping Alta, if you'd look. And there's no use trying to sneak away from Thad Kyle, for I've asked him to

have Sunday dinner with us.”

Sam felt a brief surge of anger as his eyes followed the turn of Sarah's head. There was Alta smiling up at redheaded Tim Brady. Since Tim came home from the Army, he'd stuck his legs under Sam's dinner table so often that Sam had half a notion to send him a board bill. But then, as Sarah pointed out, Tim no longer had any family of his own left in Lakeside, though he'd lived here all his life. And he had helped out in the store when Sam needed him before he went away. Sam remembered how Sarah and Alta wept the day Tim left.

Sam heard Sarah sigh happily as she turned from watching the young couple, and moved toward the crowd leaving the church. You had to hand it to Reverend Thad Kyle, Sam thought, for he packed every pew of the church each time he opened his mouth to preach. That seemed to justify building this bigger church, although Sam, as a member of the board, was against putting out all that money now. Sam slowed his step to match Sarah's.

“I thought it was right smart of Thad to call his sermon “The Eternal Triangle,” Sarah said sweetly, “and show how you should put God's will above everything else, and love your fellow man as well as you love yourself.”

“I've never been too much troubled about my relations with God and my fellow man,” Sam said.

“You've been a good Sunday Christian, Sam,” Sarah pointed out, “but six days a week you've worshiped Alta and the almighty dollar. Neither Alta nor your

money'll do you much good, Sam, if you put your own will above God's.”

Sarah had managed so that she and Sam were the last ones out of the church.

“You'd as well ride down the street with us, Thad,” she said to the young minister.

Reverend Thad Kyle flashed the famous smile that had drawn young and old alike to his ever-increasing congregation. “I'll be with you in just a minute,” he said.

Sam looked around the empty church while they waited.

“Where's Alta?” he asked.

Sarah looked wise. “Oh, she and Tim are walking,” she said. “Tim's coming to dinner, too.”

“Dinner,” Sam snorted, “with me buying the groceries.”

Thad rejoined them for the short ride home. When Sam spied Tim and Alta poking along like a pair of moonstruck high school kids, his hand tightened on the steering wheel. He checked his rising antagonism when he remembered that he and Sarah had been no older than this young couple when they first came to Lakeside. They had lived in the tiny apartment adjoining their new grocery store. After Alta came along, they bought the five-room bungalow next door.

Ever since Alta was a little girl, she said she was going to grow up and live in the tiny apartment right next door to her parents.

Sarah busied herself in the kitchen; in the front room Sam grudgingly waited with the young minister. Thad Kyle talked about how young people added new life to an old town like Lakeside. Sam thought about the picture of a

modernized new front Tim had drawn for the store building and sent to Alta in one of his letters.

The front door burst open. Even before Sam saw the stars shining in Alta's eyes and in Tim's, he saw the diamond shining on her finger.

Thad Kyle rose and clasped Tim's hand. "Well, I see the engagement is official," he said. "Congratulations, Tim!"

Sam stood stiffly, saying not a word.

Coming toward her father, Alta put her hand on his arm. "Dad, I—I tried to tell you," she said.

"In a thousand ways, we've been trying to tell you," Sarah added. "Tim wanted to talk to you about it first, but we couldn't warm you up to where he'd have a chance for a favorable answer."

"I tried, too, Sam," Thad put in, "ever since Alta decided in favor of Tim instead of me."

Sam sat down, and put his hand over his eyes.

"Oh, Sam," Sarah said with obvious annoyance, "please don't have another attack now." She turned to the others. "He had that bad attack last winter when they wouldn't build the new church to suit him."

Sam started. "Do you mean you think I bring these attacks on myself?"

Sarah answered, "Sam, you know you do enough working and worrying for two men."

It was Tim who smoothed things over.

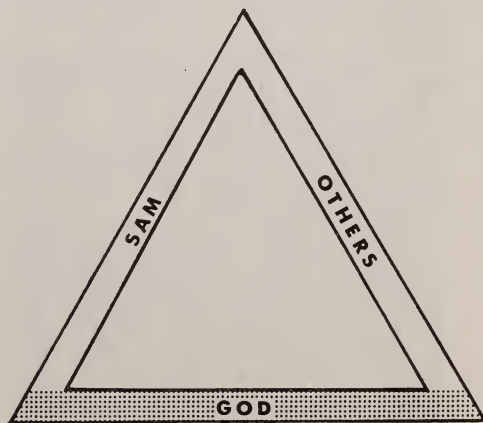
"That new church is an inspiring sight," he said. "When I came home, I saw that white spire shining long before our train pulled in at the station. I watched other people looking at it and

talking. I'd say it was money well spent when the sight of a church can serve as inspiration to fellows like me. You don't know what a good feeling it was to come back home to Lakeside," Tim went on. "To see our new church. To be with my own people."

Sam felt as if something were turning over inside of him. Maybe it was his lopsided triangle righting itself. He wasn't sure. He was almost as surprised as the others to hear himself saying, "Thad was right about our needing the bigger church. I guess maybe you're right, Tim, about bringing the store up-to-date." He winced as his arthritis nudged him. "Something tells me the money will be well spent. Son, Sarah's right. There's enough work in that store for both of us."

"Daddy," Alta cried, throwing her arms about her father's neck, "that means I'll get to live in the little apartment after all!"

"Well, Thad," Sarah sighed happily, "I guess maybe it's a good thing you preached that sermon about our lopsided triangles this morning. Sam's just got turned right side up."





# The Christmas Gift

Larry Campbell stopped raking pine needles and leaned on the rake, looking morosely at its tracks in the sand. What a way to spend the Christmas season—air base down south; his unit waiting for radar classes to begin; subject to call for every duty on the post. He wasn't much good at ducking detail.

"Hi there, airman with a rake. See the sergeant found you."

He looked up as a couple of fellows from his unit approached. "Hi, fellas," he muttered glumly. "Where you been all afternoon?"

"Way out in the tall trees," Ronnie Greene drawled.

"Hunh," Larry grunted. "Sure, hiding out."

"Get your week-end pass?" Chuck LaFlesch grinned easily.

"Nope, just a pass for tonight," Larry answered wishing they'd go on.

"Come with us." Chuck lowered an eyelid at his partner. "We'll pick you up a girl."

"Sorry, fellas. Already got a heavy date." Larry gave his buddies a defiant look.

They went on and Larry watched the receding dun-clad figures in dismay. Why the devil had he said that? He didn't have a date; he didn't know why he'd bothered to get a pass even. The other fellows were getting their

passes; he just stood in line. He fingered the slip of paper in his shirt pocket. Maybe he'd stay in camp after all and write some letters. But—now he had told Chuck and Ronnie he had a date, he'd have to go to town.

Angrily he hacked at the pine needles, cutting deep holes in the sand. Darn trees—worked all night dropping needles for him to rake up. Longleaf, he grunted; at home it would be lodgepole or ponderosa. He didn't have a girl at home either. Ginny and Jane Anne wrote to him, but he didn't think of either as his girl. He'd taken them to shows and bowling, but he had never gone steady with anyone. He hadn't known a fellow could want a girl so much until he got in the Air Corps.

That afternoon he didn't wait for the bus, but hitched a ride in a supply truck. On Main Street he got out and walked along looking in the store windows, wondering what to do. He put his hands in his pockets but removed them quickly, remembering regulations and glancing hastily around him. Homesickness rushed over him and made the backs of his eyelids sting; he blinked hard. The windows were filled with things for Christmas. Christmas without snow was hard to imagine; it didn't give him the right feeling.

by Sally Wright

He might go in and look for gifts for everybody at home even if he couldn't get much on his airman's pay. It was cheaper to get it at the post anyway, but he wanted to buy some little thing for every single person—even Dickie, his nephew. Mom was the important one and he'd already bought a watch for her.

The sun glinted on a shiny object in the store window—an evening bag, the littlest one he'd ever seen, sort of gold mesh or something, and expensive looking. Then he found himself inside the store, asking the clerk how much it was. When she said seven-fifty he was so surprised he told her he'd take it. Right away he felt foolish—sure was a silly thing to do. Who would he give it to? Better ask the clerk to never mind. But he didn't; he just paid her without looking up and rushed from the store.

When he reached the street, he caught a glimpse of Air-Corps blue among the people going and coming on the street. Quickly he pocketed his small package, flushing uneasily. He didn't want to see any of the fellows, so he ducked into the nearest doorway, the lobby of a theater. He bought a ticket and went in. He felt his way along the padded incline and slid into an outside seat. The one next to him was vacant but he didn't move in.

Just before the picture began, the usherette flashed her light at his feet and said, "Seat, please." Larry arose and pushed up his seat with the back of his legs. A voice whispered softly, "Excuse me," and a girl brushed by. He

was conscious of a good smell of apple blossoms as he sat down again. She was very small. He saw the screen over the top of her head as she passed in front of him—hadn't missed a thing. Now he glanced at her profile in the semi-dark—high forehead, tip-tilt nose, small chin, and a smooth neckline. Her hair was long and looked as if it might be blonde; he couldn't be sure. He felt an electric warm pleasantness. When she leaned forward and slipped out of a short jacket, he had an impulse to reach a hand to help her, but he sat stiffly shy. Leaning back she made herself comfortable, elbow touching the arm of the chair near him.

The main feature was a western; the cowboy on the edge of the hill played a haunting tune on a mouth organ. Larry watched the picture, conscious of her elbow. Once he thought she looked at him; and when she crossed her legs, her elbow touched his. He imagined how she would look. How old was she? Did she have a boy friend? If she did, why did she come to the movie alone? He wondered if he could talk to her, get acquainted, and take her for a coke after the show. Other fellows talked about picking up a girl. Why couldn't he? He thought about the little bag in his pocket. Suppose—then he'd have someone to give the bag to. He thought on, scarcely seeing the picture.

When the main show ended and the room blazed with light, the girl stood up, without so much as a look, slipped past him, and walked up the aisle, leaving only

a scent of apple blossoms.

He looked longingly at the now vacant seat, wishing he'd spoken to her, feeling lonelier than ever. It was empty all right—no, not quite empty. She had left her scarf—a wispy silk thing that twined around his fingers as he picked it up. Then he was rushing up the aisle. Maybe he could catch her and return the scarf. He charged out the door of the theater and started down the street, crushing his service cap on his head. The town lights had just gone on in the settling dusk. She was nowhere in sight. He looked at the fluffy bit of cloth, balled it up in his hand and struck the other hand with the clenched fist, disappointment welling up, choking him. Just as he turned and started back into the theater, he saw her. She was looking in a store window. He started to run, then remembered he was on a crowded street. Take it easy, Campbell, appear unconcerned, approach her and say something debonair. Doubt began to take hold of him, doubt and fear—the fear that she

might not even speak to him.

He was beside her now; she started away from the window without looking his way. He felt his heart beating rapidly. Larry took a deep breath like a diver and plunged. Matching her step and extending the scarf, he said, "Excuse me, miss. You left your scarf in the theater. I thought you might want it back."

She stopped, looked down at it. He felt himself getting red and his grin felt starched and silly. When she took the wadded silk square, she said, "Thank you, that was very nice of you." She had a soft girlish voice that tinkled like the Japanese wind bells that hung in Dickie's room.

He had to ask her now or he wouldn't do it at all. "My name's Larry Campbell. Will you have a coke with me?" He blurted it out; held his breath while he waited for her answer. He knew that wasn't the right way to say it, but it was too late now. He shifted his feet but didn't take his eyes from her face. She just had to say yes. It seemed a long agonizing time before she answered.

"I'm Merridee Hempton. I'd like to have a coke with you."

His breath whistled out and he laughed out loud. Merridee smiled at him; she had to tip up her head to look at him. As he took her arm and walked toward the nearest fountain he felt as if he was walking on the highest peaks of the Rocky Mountains. Merridee led the way through the crowd to a booth in the back. Looking over her head at the other young people, Larry noticed again how real little she was. He waited while she slipped into the booth,



"Hey, Sis, your knight-in-shining 2nd Lieutenant bars is here!"



then sat down opposite her.

"Would you like something besides a coke?" he asked when the waitress came.

"No, just a coke." Larry thought he heard a tremble in her voice and wondered if she were scared, too. It made him feel surer of himself.

After the waitress left Merridee took off her jacket and laid it on the seat beside her. Her dress was yellow and ruffy, like a party dress, Larry thought, wondering if all southern girls wore such pretty dresses. Their cokes came and they sat sipping them quietly, shyly. Each time Merridee looked up and met his eyes, he felt confused. She'd smile a little bit and he tried to smile back at her, wondering what she would do after the cokes. He was surprised to hear himself asking her:

"Do you—are you doing anything tonight?"

"No, nothing really," she sounded casual, but leaned forward quickly.

"You mean you don't have a date?"

"No," she said. Larry thought her voice sounded funny again and she seemed more bashful than ever. It made him bolder. "Would you like to do something with me?"

"Oh, yes," she began eagerly, then she sat back blushing and lowered her eyes. "I mean," she finished lamely, "if you'd like, that is."

"We could go some place dancing," he suggested hesitantly.

He was surprised as her face lit up like a little kid when you give her a Christmas present and she said, "I'd love to go dancing—

there's a dance at the high school gym." She faltered, eyes growing wide as if a secret had slipped out. Then she looked down at the table—her fingers nervously pulling at the napkin.

"I don't know," Larry began, fumbling with his straw. "I wouldn't know any of the kids there. I thought we'd go someplace by ourselves and—"

"Oh, you just have to," her voice was sharp, breathless. She sounded kind of desperate and he looked up quickly. She was looking at him and her eyes were too shiny bright. "Please," her voice trembled as she looked down at her napkin and he noticed a tear creeping from under her lowered lashes. Larry was embarrassed; he wondered if anyone saw them, but he was scared to look around. He stiffened uneasily.

She didn't look up but Larry could tell she was trying very hard to keep the tears from spilling out and he liked her for that, remembered doing the same thing himself. It was pretty hard to keep from crying when you felt like it. "Gosh," he began but she interrupted him, talking in a low intense tone, so fast the words tumbled over each other. "It's the Christmas dance at the high school. I don't have a date. You see I have a sister. She gets all the boys. She's prettier and older than I am and she can say bright gay things."

"I think you're pretty," Larry told her awkwardly and flushed. But he was glad he'd said it.

"Oh, but I'm not pretty," she was saying seriously. "You see my hair won't stay fixed, it's wild and

mussy, and look—just look at my freckles.” She lifted her face for inspection. Her tone was angry and disgusted. “My sister has beautiful wavy hair and a clear complexion.”

He looked at her hair—kind of coppersy and tumbled around her small face. He looked at the smattering of brown flecks across the turned-up nose. “I like freckles. See I have a few.” He had forgotten his embarrassment in the face of her problem.

She scrutinized his face carefully. Larry thought she had awfully big eyes. She wasn't crying anymore. “I thought I had a date. He hadn't asked me yet. I just knew he would. But when he came to the house this morning, he met my sister. Her date got sick the last minute and she talked my friend into asking her to go to the dance with him. This is the biggest dance of the year. I just have to go. You understand, don't you?”

“I'll say I do,” Larry said but he didn't tell her why he understood. Still he hesitated—he was dressed all right—in his blues, but he wasn't sure he wanted a girl that liked some other guy. Maybe she'd forget the other guy and like him instead. He looked at her. She was mighty cute and little. While he argued with himself, she talked on.

“When I came downtown this afternoon I was going to ask the first serviceman I saw alone. I put on my prettiest dress. I got scared and went to the show instead. There I saw you. I could ask someone else, but I don't want to go with someone else. I want to go with you.” She finished very low

and looked down.

Larry felt himself grow warm with pleasure. She sure had a way of making a fellow feel good. He thought about the little bag in his pocket. What would she do if he told her about it? He decided not to—at least not right then. He couldn't help wondering about that other guy.

Merridee said, “I'm very glad I left my scarf in the theater. I was afraid you wouldn't see it, and if you did see it, that you wouldn't come out. I pretended I was looking at shoes, but all the time I was watching for you. I was scared when you did come, but now I'm glad.”

“You mean you left your scarf on purpose?”

She nodded while Larry looked at her in amazement. He hadn't picked her up, she had chosen him; that was something the other fellows hadn't been able to say. “I'll be darned,” he blurted, and didn't know if he liked it that way or not.

Before Larry could say anything else, a voice broke in, “Hi ya, Campbell. How about an introduction?” Chuck and Ronnie stood there looking at them—no, at Merridee, with admiration in their eyes.

“Merridee, this is Chuck LaFlesch and Ronnie Greene; fellows, Merridee Hempton,” Larry said, feeling proud but at the same time wishing they'd go away.

“How about askin' us to join you?” Chuck asked with his eyes still on Merridee.

Larry frowned, then rose quickly and reached for Merridee's jacket. “Sorry, men, we're going to a Christmas dance.”



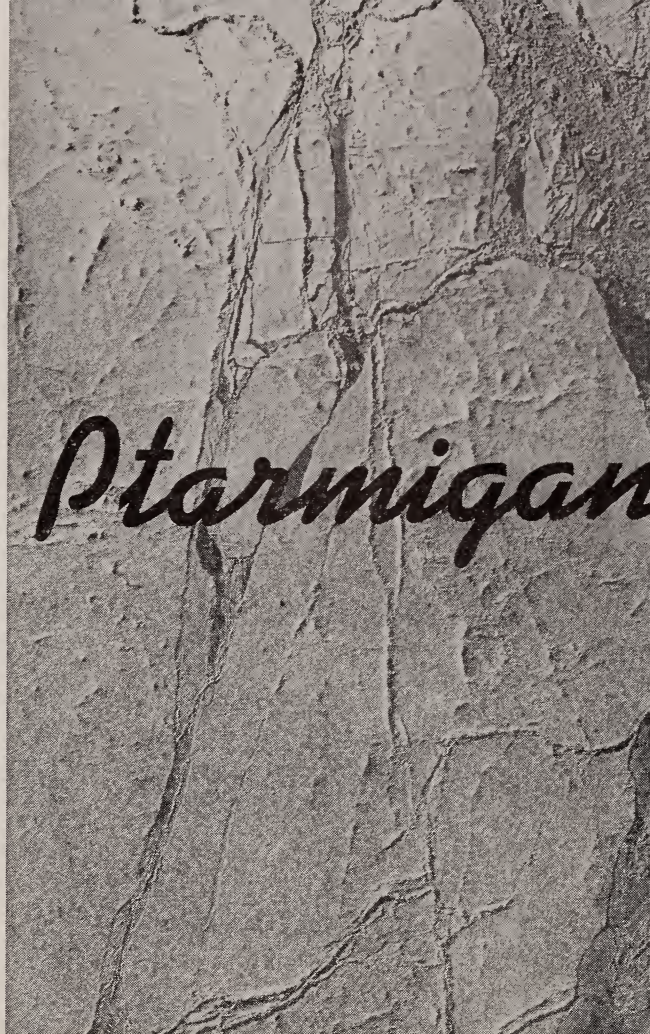
*Bill Kreh*

EVERY other day, at exactly 0600, a huge Air Force B-29 roars off the runway at Eielson Air Force Base near Fairbanks, Alaska. It circles to gain altitude, and then points its sleek nose northward. Some sixteen hours later, that same airplane drones over sleeping Fairbanks and comes in for a landing at Eielson. Behind it lies 3,800 miles of continuous flight over the icy wastes of the North Pole.

The weary crewmen, after turning in their reports, head for their quarters. It's doubtful if any one of them feels much like a hero or a daring adventurer. Nevertheless, they've just completed a trip which several years ago would have made headlines around the world.

To the men, though, it was just another routine "Ptarmigan" flight. They were members of the Air Force's 58th Strategic Reconnaissance Squadron, the first organization to place polar travel on a regular schedule. Already, the men of the 58th have made nearly 1,000 flights over the barren Arctic, performing a vitally important mission that affects everyone living in the U.S.

The flights were started regularly back in 1947 when scientists



realized the important effect that the Arctic has on the world. The vast polar basin, acting as a huge weather factory, produces the cold air masses which, traveling southward, can produce a chilly day in Georgia or a squall along the Eastern Seaboard. The 58th was given the assignment of plotting these developing air masses and transmitting the information to a central weather bureau. There the information is coordinated with returns from other weather sta-



tions and used to forecast more accurately the weather across the entire United States.

Since 1947, throughout the long, cruel Alaskan winters as well as through the comparatively pleasant summers, the men of the 58th have, with rare exceptions, dispatched their "Ptarmigan" flight every second day. The flight got its nickname from the far-ranging arctic bird, the Ptarmigan.

A typical polar flight starts some twenty-four hours in advance of the actual take-off. The crew of thirteen men meet in the briefing room on the afternoon of the day before. There, the plane commander outlines the mission. Then each crew member takes the floor and goes over in detail his part of the mission. Location of survival gear, emergency procedures, various duties—all are gone over and over until proper performance becomes almost second nature to each man.

The briefing over, the crew checks the plane and begins loading equipment aboard. This in-

cludes two tons of survival gear—parachutes, individual life rafts, bail-out kits, exposure suits, and life preservers. Nearly 7,800 gallons of gasoline—enough to power a good car during its entire useful life—is pumped into the plane's tanks. Once loaded, the men eat a light supper, and go to bed early. They are roused at 3:00 A.M. the next morning to start their mission for the day.

Let's go along on one of these missions and see what it's like. Right after breakfast in the mess hall, you go to the locker room with the rest of the crew and get into the five layers of clothing you'll need on this long, cold flight. First comes the long underwear. Over this you pull a wool shirt and trousers. Next comes a wool gabardine flying coverall. Then, on top of everything, you climb into a fleece-lined outfit consisting of trousers and hood which are quilted like a heavy blanket. Your feet are encased in three pairs of heavy wool socks, electrically heated insets, and huge felt shoes with three thicknesses of soles.

Now you're ready. You run out to the waiting truck, clamber aboard, and ride off into the darkness to the plane waiting at the end of the runway. Along the way, various men drop off the truck—the navigator and the pilot at the operations shack to get last-minute take-off information, the radar operator at the radar shack, the radio operator at the radio shack to pick up his codes for the day, the weatherman at the weather section to get his latest data.

Finally, a little before 0600, the crew assembles at the waiting B-29. The plane has been



thoroughly checked and is ready to go. The pilot gives the word, and inside you go. You sit down in one of the bucket seats and wait. Everything is quiet as the crew take their places.

Suddenly, in the frosty silence, an engine coughs, sputters, and comes to life. Another catches, another, and another, and then all four propellers are turning steadily, rending the arctic air with their sound. The big bomber lumbers forward, wheels around, and heads for the far end of the runway.

There it pauses as the pilot makes last-minute checks. Finally, it points its nose down the long strip of concrete and starts to roll slowly forward. Gathering speed, it gobbles up yard after yard of runway. The engines strain to lift the plane and its 130,000 pounds of equipment, fuel, and personnel off the ground. Slowly, the wheels come up and the plane gains altitude over Alaska's snow-covered evergreens.

Maybe you feel a little uneasy as you look down at the snowy, barren wasteland far beneath the fast-moving plane. You needn't be. You're riding with one of the best-trained crews in the Air Force.

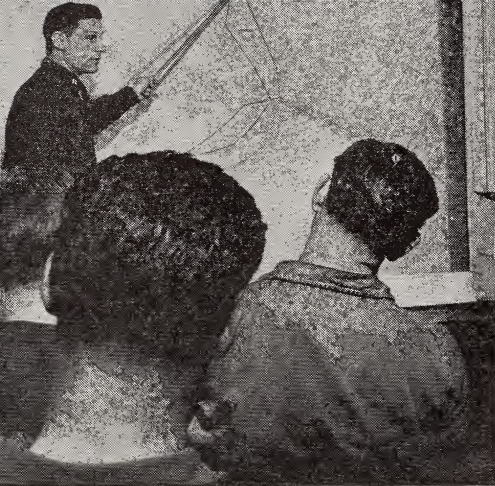
They were all carefully selected for their jobs. They had to be—the Arctic doesn't often give a second chance. The navigator is a man of great experience and good judgment. Navigation in the Arctic isn't anything like flying a well-marked airway. The compass plays strange tricks in the magnetic field at the top of the world. The ice affords no check points. Radio aids don't exist in an area

where there's no land on which to build radio stations. In addition, there are periods when a cloudy twilight prevents the use of either the sun, moon, or stars for navigation aids.

The rest of the crew is just as thoroughly experienced as the pilot and navigator. The radar operator often is the only one who can plot ground speeds or drifts—essentials in accurate navigation. The engineer knows his engines like a mother knows her baby, and he treats them with the same care. The radio operator has to be extra good to maintain communication despite the magnetic storms that sweep through the arctic. The scanners, who sit at the side blister windows of the bomber and keep the engineer and pilot informed of conditions out of their sight, have to know at a glance when trouble is brewing in the form of a small oil leak or ice forming on the leading edges of the control surfaces.

Up ahead of you, in the plexiglass nose of the Superfortress, sits perhaps the most skilled crew member of them all. He's the meteorologist—a flying weatherman, and he was picked from among the best meteorologists in the Air Force. He's surrounded by a maze of instruments, capable of telling him the atmospheric conditions in the cold space outside. Precise thermometers, hygrometers and a host of other gauges are the tools of his trade. He can read them like a book and translate their meaning into Morse code to be transmitted over the tremendous distance between the plane and the nearest radio station at Point Barrow on Alaska's northern coast. Morse code has to be





used because voice contact is impossible to maintain over the magnetic wastes of the barren Arctic.

Heading up over the snow-capped Brooks Range, the big plane wings toward Point Barrow, its last point of contact with land. From there, a brief stretch of open water, and then comes the ice pack. All the way to the Pole, you can see nothing below but solid ice, broken here and there by thin black lines. Those are cracks caused by drifts and tides. The time drags by as the crew works methodically.

It's a steady, intense routine. Everything done by any one crew member is precisely geared to the work being done by all the others. As the navigator takes a fix, he knows he must finish it in a few minutes so it will be ready for the radio operator's half-hourly position report.

The radar operator knows that exactly fifteen minutes past the hour and fifteen minutes before the hour he must have wind data for the navigator. The pilot does not have to be told that at exactly twenty-four minutes after the hour, he must change course

slightly to give the weather observer a reading at a specific, predetermined altitude.

And thus it goes—every operation interlocked with every other operation. Every crew member knows well the requirements and details of every job besides his own. This perfect coordination is what makes each mission over the arctic successful.

The plane drones on, mile after mile. It's nearing the Pole. You look down and feel a little disappointed. It's no different from the barren waste you've been flying over for hours. Then, the plane banks and heads back southward. It'll be a different route back, but you wouldn't know it if you weren't told. From 18,000 feet, the entire polar region looks monotonously the same.

In a few hours the plane reaches Barter Island on Alaska's northeast coast. The pilot begins a slow let-down, calculated to have the plane at 4,000 feet by the time Fairbanks is sighted. With the arrival of the B-29 over Barter Island, there comes a slowing down in the crew's work. The weather observer stops making his calculations. The navigator relaxes and lets the radar operator direct the plane by fixes on known mountain peaks and rivers. The dropsonde operator puts away his reports and seals his hatch. Only the engineer, pilots, and radio operator keep working.

Finally, over Fairbanks, the Eielson tower is called, landing directions received, and, its wing lights boring giant holes in the darkness, the Superfortress comes in. With a slight bounce, it hits the runway. The mission is ended.



# FAITH FOR OUR DAY



## Read Daily Because

### I

The Holy Scriptures "are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus." (II Timothy 3:15)

### II

A vague intention to read the Bible drifts into nothingness until you really make a day by day beginning.

### III

Reading the Bible daily and devoutly helps to develop a happy and useful life.

### IV

We would lose our way without the faith and truth proclaimed in the written Word of God.

### V

Purposeful reading of these selections each day has been found highly effective by millions of people of all ages.

## VI

The more faithfully you read God's Word, the more you will learn to treasure it and the greater will be the influence of its transforming teaching on your life.

## Thanksgiving to Christmas 1954

### NOVEMBER

25 Thanksgiving	.....	Psalms 1
26	.....	Psalms 23
27	.....	Psalms 27
28 Sunday	.....	John 1:1-34
29	.....	Psalms 37
30	.....	Psalms 46

### DECEMBER

1	.....	Psalms 51
2	.....	Psalms 91
3	.....	Psalms 103
4	.....	Psalms 121
5 Sunday	.....	Isaiah 40
6	.....	Isaiah 53
7	.....	Isaiah 55
8	.....	Matthew 5
9	.....	Matthew 6
10	.....	Matthew 7
11	.....	Luke 15
12 Bible Sunday	.....	John 3
13	.....	John 10
14	.....	John 14
15	.....	John 15
16	.....	John 17
17	.....	Romans 8
18	.....	Romans 12
19 Sunday	.....	I Corinthians 13
20	.....	I Corinthians 15
21	.....	Ephesians 6
22	.....	Philippians 4
23	.....	Hebrews 11
24	.....	Revelation 21
25 Christmas	.....	Luke 2:1-20

American Bible Society, Dept. U.  
450 Park Ave., New York 22, N.Y.

# Charles Dickens' Christmas

Vincent Edwards

If you had been a sick child in England ninety years ago and had lived anywhere near Charles Dickens' home at Gadshill, you might easily have been invited to celebrate Christmas with the great author of the *Christmas Carol*.

No man lived for the holiday more than the beloved novelist. His enthusiasm over Christmas put everybody else in a happy glow. It was his custom to celebrate with a big program of festivities, and that is why he filled his home to overflowing with guests. The children of the neighborhood were especially welcome. Sometimes Dickens invited so many people to come that the overflow had to be put up at houses in the village.

Every one of the guests was privileged to accompany the host on his favorite exercise for the day—a walk. Usually not many accepted, however, because, when Dickens struck out at his usual brisk stride, he covered too great a distance before he quit. A twenty-mile walk was nothing for the famous writer. He knew his part of Kent by heart, for there wasn't a corner of it that he had not visited in the course of his daily strolls.

Dickens' walking companions had to put up with a curious habit

of their host. Dickens might be talking with all his usual vivacity. Then suddenly he would break off, his eyes would stare vaguely into space, and his lips would work noiselessly as they did when he sat and wrote. He would forget his companions entirely, and his friends always understood that at such times his mind had turned off on the novel on which he was working at the time. But in a short time, when the writer had completed his reverie, his thoughts would come back again, and conversation would be resumed as if nothing had happened.

It was after Dickens returned home from his walk that the festivities reached new heights. The house was snug and cozy, and everybody could not help being in a gay mood under the spell of the genial host. Besides music and billiards, there were impromptu charades and drawing-room games, with all the guests, from the oldest to the youngest, being invited to take part.

Nobody ever enjoyed games more than Charles Dickens. The zest with which some of these are described in his most popular Christmas story is a reflection of his own enthusiasm. Into such entertainment as "Spanish Merchant," "How, When and Where," and "Yes and No," the writer

threw himself as heartily and with the energy he expended upon all of life.

On one occasion, when Dickens was acting in a charade, he had the part of a sailor who was brought before a magistrate. Living up to the ridiculous part to the fullest degree, he danced a lively hornpipe on the floor of the court. The guests who saw him cut this merry caper were highly amused

left every barrier and flag as they found it. There was not a dispute, and there was no drunkenness whatever. I made them a little speech from the lawn at the end of the games. They cheered me lustily and dispersed. The road between this and Chatham was like a fair all day; and surely it is a fine thing to get such perfect behavior out of a reckless seaport town."

The author of the famous "Carol" really lived for the year's happiest season, and no yuletide passed but what he had a big celebration at his home.

and never forgot the exhibition. Dickens carried it out as humorously as if he had been rehearsing it for days, instead of its being a sudden, momentary inspiration.

The people of the village long remembered the Christmas when Dickens held a big sports program in the meadow at the back of his garden. Members of the local cricket club and their opponents had been requested to take part, and everybody was invited to see the fun. For two days beforehand, the novelist and his sons were hard at work laying out the courses, making flags, putting up tents and hurdles, and performing other necessary tasks. Dickens was like a young boy in the enthusiasm of getting ready.

The day turned out to be a triumph for everybody. Dickens was especially pleased with the conduct of the crowd. Writing about the celebrators, he told a friend: "They did not, between half-past ten when we began, and sunset, displace a rope or a stake; they

If there was any time when Dickens' observance of the holiday reached a climax, it was at the Christmas Day dinner. The presiding host kept his army of guests in a rollicking good humor, for he had an inexhaustible fund of sprightly remarks and droll stories.

Dickens always liked to have the dinner table look pretty, and he arranged a special place of honor for the plum pudding, which was not in order without its special bit of holly well covered with berries. Dickens' Christmas toast was short and to the point and never varied in its wording: "Here's to us all! God bless us!"

It is not hard to understand why the spirit of Tiny Tim has lived on through the years when one remembers that the creator of that beloved little character took such delight in the year's most festive season. Dickens spoke from the heart when he once wrote: "It is good to be children sometimes, and never better than at Christmas, when its mighty Founder was a child himself."



# 'In God We Trust'

Glenn Everett

ISSUANCE OF a new 8-cent stamp by the United States with the motto "In God We Trust" and a picture of the Statue of Liberty recalls the story of how this motto came to appear on American coins.

The new red, white, and blue stamp represents the first time this slogan has appeared on regular U.S. postage, although it has been on coins since the time of the Civil War.

It was on November 13, 1861, shortly after that lamentable conflict began that the Reverend N. R. Watkinson took pen in hand at his parsonage in Ridleyville, Pennsylvania, and addressed the Hon. Salmon P. Chase, Secretary of the Treasury in the Cabinet of President Abraham Lincoln.

"Dear Sir," the clergyman wrote, "You are about to submit your annual report to Congress respecting the affairs of the national finances. One fact affecting our currency has hitherto been overlooked. I mean the recognition of the Almighty God in some form in our coins.

"You are probably a Christian. What if our Republic were now shattered beyond reconstruction? Would not the antiquaries of succeeding generations rightly reason from our past that we were a heathen nation?"



Mr. Watkinson suggested a design for a coin which would carry a flag and the words, "God, liberty, and law."

"This would relieve us from the ignominy of heathenism," he declared. "This would place us openly under the Divine protection. From my heart I have felt the national shame in disowning God as not the least of our national disasters."

From Secretary Chase there came an historic reply:

"Dear Sir:

"No nation can be strong except in the strength of God, or safe except in His defense. The trust of our people in God should be declared in our national coins."

To James Pollock, Esq., director of the Philadelphia Mint, went a letter from the Secretary directing him as follows:

"You will cause a device to be

prepared without unnecessary delay with a motto expressing in the fewest and tersest words possible this national recognition (of God).”

The director of the mint found that an Act of 1837 prescribing the designs for coins would have to be amended before this could be done. In 1863 he submitted a design for new one-, two-, and three-cent pieces with the motto, “Our Country”; and “God, Our Trust.” Secretary Chase studied the designs, then came up with the motto “In God We Trust.” This was authorized by Congress April 2, 1864.

All coins from then on bore the motto until 1907 when it was discovered that in a new design for the silver coins the religious motto had been omitted. By Act of May 18, 1908, Congress ruled that the motto must appear on all gold and silver coins of the U.S.A. It

appears above Lincoln’s head on the copper penny as well, as appropriate tribute to the faith of the great President, who enthusiastically endorsed the suggested motto.

Until now, the motto “In God We Trust” has appeared on American postage only once, on the 2-cent commemorative of 1927 showing George Washington kneeling in prayer during the winter of 1777 at Valley Forge.

The new 8-cent stamp, which replaces the design picturing President Martin Van Buren, is design especially for use on mail going overseas, the rate on which was recently raised to eight cents. When this motto now is carried on millions of letters written all over the world, including those lands behind the Iron Curtain, it will convey a message that tells much of the spiritual heritage of America.

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## Birth Month for Charles Wesley

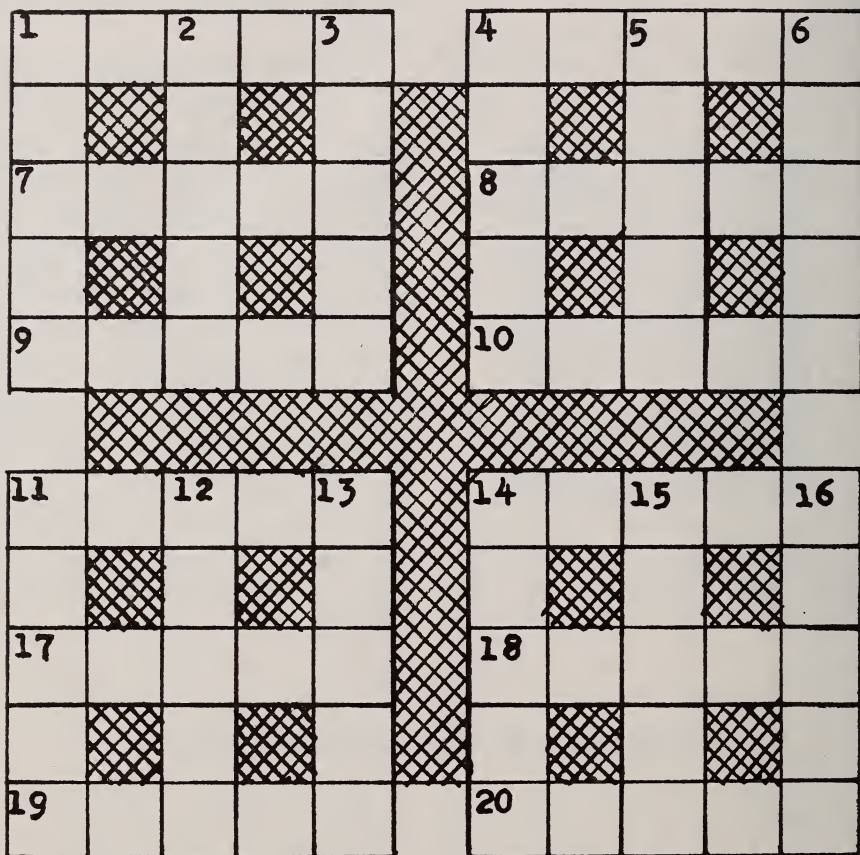
Charles Wesley, the author of the Christmas song-poem, “Hark! the Herald Angels Sing,” and over 6,500 other hymns, was born in the Christmas month, on December 18, 1707. Poetry came to him everywhere and at any time—while walking, talking, on horseback or riding a stagecoach.

Yes, Charles Wesley, one of nineteen children, who probably composed more hymns than any other man in history, wrote the well-loved carol, “Hark! the Herald Angels Sing,” at the age of thirty-two. This is one of the ten hymns which have gained the greatest favor in hymnbooks of England, and the music it is set to is taken from Mendelssohn’s cantata of 1840—“*Gott Ist Licht*.” This beautiful song that is always a Christmas favorite came from the heart and soul of a man who with his brother John founded and spread the Wesleyan movement and of whom it is said: “His pen was tipped with flame.”

—Conquest  
December, 1953

# LINK-O-GRAM

Joseph C. Stacey



## ACROSS

1. Bands worn around the waist
4. A veil or disguise
7. At a later time
8. To change
9. A brief extract
10. Pertaining to the nose
11. A long, narrow strip of leather
14. Water in vapor form
17. A country in southern Asia
18. Remains of a substance which has been burned
19. To have made a mistake
20. Wearies

## DOWN

1. An alloy of copper and zinc
2. After awhile
3. A thick, sweet liquid
4. Shackles; bonds
5. Ballots
6. Pertaining to the country
11. Two times
12. More advanced in years
13. Of imposing character or aspect
14. To begin
15. The upper air
16. The younger son of Amram and Jochebed



That long view through Blue Gap gave  
Kenny a deep-down feeling just

## *Like an Organ Playing*

P. G. Cox

Kenny Burch didn't dally long when asked if he'd sell his home place there in the Blue Gap knobs. He looked toward the sturdy old house, back up the road in a cluster of timeless cedars. He glanced around the small fields sloping off over the high dome. You knew what the answer would be. A lean, personable-appearing chap, he had a solid steadiness in his eyes and manner. His attachment to this home spot stood out on him like a birthmark.

"No," he said, firming himself to make it plain. "I've no notion of selling out. This is where I mean to stay. I like it here better than anywhere else." He paused, and something painful clouded his eyes as he added, "Even if others see it different." Kenny was reminded again that Belva Starr did see it differently and was planning to go away.

The man and woman in the shiny car showed their disappointment. They had been along the winding road twice that morning, driving slowly and trying to see everything in all directions. Then they came back and stopped by the roadside at Kenny's place. They studied the whole layout, getting out of the car to look and

point. The sweeping view over the hill country seemed to be gripping them.

Kenny saw them from a barn shed where he was mixing cow feed. He had seen others get hepped up over that view, and it always pleased him. But he wasn't one to intrude himself unless he was wanted. So he kept on with his work until he heard a call and saw the man beckoning to him. Brushing himself off a little, he went down to the road.



He soon got the facts. The man and wife, a substantial-looking couple well past middle age, were from Falls City. They had a yearning to get back to a country home for their retirement years. After a long hunt for just what they wanted, they had come into the Blue Gap region. And finally they had found Kenny's home and seen the view from there. Learning that the eighty-acre farm on that knoll belonged to Kenny, they had come to ask if he was interested in selling.

Kenny said he wasn't. The man and wife sat for a while looking dejectedly at each other. Then the man turned to Kenny again.

"There'd surely be a price for which you would sell. Say for—enough to buy another farm somewhere with better land. Why don't you name such a price and see how it strikes us?"

Kenny shoved his hands deeper into the pockets of a new coverall suit. "You don't make a price on what you mean to keep. I know there's better land other places. Lots better. But it wouldn't exactly satisfy me. Not like being here; getting my living from this home ground; and having that before me all the time." He pointed out over the scenery. "In the war—" Kenny stopped, as if thinking he'd said enough.

"Go on," the woman urged. "What about the war?"

"I wasn't in it so long," Kenny said after some hesitation. "But when things got bad, I'd think about this place. I'd recollect the house and the fields. And how you can look away off and begin feeling close to something that's like—like hearing a big organ. And it

helped me—knowing I was coming back here if I could pull through. I don't know if I'm making you see how it was, and is."

"Yes," the woman said in a low, sympathetic voice. "We understand the feeling. We've caught some of it ourselves." She was studying Kenny with growing interest. "How long have you lived here?"

"All of my time—going on twenty-four years. Except when I was in the war." He straightened sort of pridefully. "And it was the same clear back through my father and them before him."

"You told us you're the only one here. You live alone?"

"Yes, ma'am. Since mother went on, a year come next fall."

After a meditative silence, the man in the car spoke up, "Yes, we see how it is with you. But I wonder. Do you know of anyone hereabouts who is wanting to sell? Anyone with a place something like this?"

It seemed likely that these strangers would want Belva's hill-top when they saw that view. But the place was well back from the main road. They might never find it unless he sent them there. Kenny had to decide whether to tell them and help quicken the time when Belva'd be leaving.

All of Kenny's girl-interest had been centered on Belva since she was a little sprite. They went to district school together, climbed trees, and rode colts on Sunday afternoons. From the first, Belva spiced the companionship with impulsive actions. She'd take her best hair ribbon to tie up a finger that Kenny had ripped on a briar. Then again she'd fly at him and



kick and scream, and he scarcely knew what for. But he liked it. At least he always had her unstinted attention.

Belva grew up like a Baldwin apple, filling out and taking on color. With more maturity, she stopped kicking Kenny, but began going silent and dreamy sometimes when she was with him.

She may have been explaining these moods when she once said, "Most generally it suits me well around here. Then I get to wondering what's out yonder. I might like it better than being here."

Kenny wasn't much disturbed by this talk. He kept thinking everything was fixed between him and Belva. She wasn't actually engaged to him, but he meant to take care of that in due course. Recently, when he thought the proper time had come, Belva somehow prevented him from saying the words. She did this for four straight Sundays. The next thing he knew she had gone to Falls City to visit a distant cousin.

She stayed two extra weeks. Then she returned full of plans to sell the Blue Gap home and move to the city. She couldn't endure the hills after knowing what was outside. A glaze came over Kenny's eyes when he heard about it. But Belva didn't tell him. She talked a streak about what she'd seen, and all at once whirled out of the room.

Her mother did the explaining to Kenny. Some of the arrangements for going to Falls City had already been made. Belva could get a job as an usher in a movie show, with a promise that she might work up to be a ticket seller. She had a small house in mind

and prospects of some work for her two younger brothers.

"I guess you'd no idea of Belva taking such a notion." Mrs. Starr eyed Kenny closely. "But a time comes when a girl must look ahead and make a choosing. Seems as though Belva has."

"And—and you're aiming to sell out here?" Kenny asked.

"Soon as we can—I guess." Mrs. Starr folded and unfolded a fancy kerchief in her lap. "If it's what Belva wants, she oughtn't to be prevented. She's been a mainstay since her father was taken. It was her push that kept the boys tending the place the way they have. And now she's a full right to pick out what she'll like best."

That's how it was when Kenny stood trying to decide whether to tell the strangers about the Starr place. Suddenly an idea struck him. He started telling about Belva's home being for sale. It surprised him how well he could describe the place. Then he drew a map of how to get there.

"If it suits you," Kenny went on,



**"Help! Timber-er! Help! Timber-er! Help! Timber-er-er!"**



"might be you ought to push the deal as fast as you can. And you talked about meaning to keep a horse or two. The girl over there's got a dandy saddle horse. Maybe you could offer to buy it along with the place. Might help. If you'd just as leave," Kenny concluded, "you can tell them I sent you. Kinda like them to know I tried to do a favor."

It was a long afternoon for Kenny. An emptiness had come over him. When he looked away off, something was gone from the fullness he'd always felt before. It bothered him until he couldn't keep his mind on anything he tried to do. About an hour before sunset, he took his dog to round the cows from the pasture. From a calf lot north of the barn, you could see across to a bend in the hills where Belva lived. Kenny turned his head the other way as he strode past the spot.

He had just returned to the barn when a horseback rider popped out from the north valley on to the ridge road. One look told who it was. Only Belva could ride like that on her high-headed bay horse. The dog tore off for a noisy welcome as she turned in toward the barnyard gate.

"Come here," she called out to Kenny. "Right now."

He could see that Belva was flustered. Slenderish and snug in a bright-patterned dress, she was acting nervous and pent-up. Kenny gave up his last small hope. He figured she was excited over selling the place and had come to thank him.

"Kenny Burch," she began be-

fore he had reached the fence. "Are—are you trying to get rid of me? Sending folks to buy us out?"

Kenny stopped dead still, keeping himself in hand until he heard more. "Why, I was just meaning to do a favor," he said. "Trying to help you get away—if you're not suited with what's here."

"But I am," Belva exclaimed. "I don't want to leave. I found that out today for sure." She gave Kenny a long, imploring look. "Especially when I got to thinking you might be trying to push me off."

Kenny's idea had worked. Now, he'd hear the music again when he looked out over the Blue Gap country. It made him feel so good that he never remembered exactly what he said during the next few minutes. But Belva told him it was what she had come to hear.

"I guess it was our chance to sell everything and go away," she said some time later. "But all at once I couldn't stand the thought of it. The man even talked as if he'd buy my horse." She reached down to pat the prancing bay. "As if I'd ever part with Big Boy."

"Way it's turned out," Kenny spoke as if his conscience was gouging him a little, "I wish we could help the folks find a place they'd like."

"Oh!" Belva said. "They went off thinking our forty on the west knoll might fix them up all right. Said they'd come back tomorrow for another look. I guess now we'll make them a price on it. That'll still leave plenty for mother and the boys. After I come over here."

# United Fellowship

## *The Touch of the Master*

Remember back to your childhood when you reluctantly stumbled over the scales on the piano or noisily scratched back and forth on that violin? What a trial you were to the neighbors. Discord filled the whole atmosphere and a rising sense of wrongness stirred the tempers of all who heard.

Then remember the peaceful calm and the glowing harmony that filled the room when last you heard Liberace play the "Moonlight Sonata" or Menuhin bring forth the grace of "Traumerei." As you listened, the whole of life somehow seemed right, didn't it?

What makes this drastic contrast? We all know. It is the touch of the master craftsman.

We need only look about us to see the skill of the master that takes the ordinary and makes it a thing of exceptional beauty and effectiveness. The master architect creates the cathedral, the master painter the "Madonna," the master gardener the prize dahlias.

Yet Jesus never painted a picture, built a cathedral, fingered a violin, or raised a flower as far as we know. How, then, can we say that most of what is beautiful and right in our Western civilization shows clearly the touch of the Master of men?

Because, as we look at the master craftsman's created beauty, we realize that *he* was first touched by the Master. Jesus creates the true, the beautiful, and the good in life by transforming the heart and mind that guide the skill of hand, ear, and eye.

Only by patience and practice do we achieve the master's skill. That skill becomes truly worth while when we surrender all that we are to the ennobling touch of the Master.



—Joe Dana



## *What's Buzzin'*

During the summer when most groups in civilian churches are disbanded, two new Fellowship groups got off to a good start.

At the chapel of the 278th Regimental Combat Team at Fort Devens, Massachusetts, a group was formed on Thursday evening, 15 July. The officers who were elected are: Pvt. Stanley C. Harcey, chairman; Pfc. Ellie R. Ma-ready, vice-chairman; Cpl. James M. Corbett, secretary-treasurer; Pvt. Harmon E. Long, projects chairman; and Pvt. Curtis V. Bentley and Cpl. Rene P. Hitziger, social chairmen. Their chaplain sponsor is Chaplain George C. Farmer, just recently returned from overseas.

Sharing in the fellowship are men from several other units at the Fort.

At the Naval Training Station at Bainbridge, Maryland, Chaplain Ted Granberg has been the leader in the reorganization of an informal group into a regular Fellowship. It had just nicely started rolling when he was transferred, but we expect that the fellows have carried on.

Did you notice the prayer on the inside cover of the November LINK? It was written by a fellow on the "Coral Sea." Some of our best stuff comes from men and women in the service. We'd like

to see a lot more of it. We won't guarantee to accept it, but we'll give it every chance.

A lot of Fellowship groups will be having Christmas parties for themselves and others. Why don't you write us all about them and send us pictures? Sure, it will be April by the time we can mention them in THE LINK, but they'll still be news.

We would also like very much to hear from every fellow who went to a summer conference this past summer. We need to decide soon whether or not to run our "Conference Calendar" next summer, and it will help a lot to hear from you. Just drop us a line.

A lot of us have an impression that most young people in service are not hearing from their home church regularly. What has been your experience? You can gripe all you want to us and we won't tell a soul.

You'll want to get started now to really make something special of YOUTH WEEK, January 30th to February 6th. The theme for this 12th annual observance is, "One Fellowship in Christ." Certainly chaplains and servicemen have some important things to say on that subject.

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# Christ Brought Liberty

## *Aims for This Program*

1. To understand the kind of freedom that Christ gives to his followers.
2. To learn how that liberty helps to set all men free.
3. To decide how Christians may use the freedoms they enjoy without endangering them.
4. To find ways of helping our nation use its freedoms for the glory of God.

**SUGGESTED SCRIPTURE:** Isa. 61:1-2; Luke 4:18; John 15:14-17; Gal. 5:1, 13-16; Philemon 16; James 3:12; 1 Peter 2:16.

The faithful Jews, who went every Sabbath day to the synagogue in Nazareth, sat up and took notice when Jesus started to speak. Here was Joseph's son, whom they remembered as a local carpenter, returning to his home town and being invited to take part in the service. Perhaps they had heard reports of his preaching and healing. At the time for reading an attendant handed him the Isaiah scroll. He found the quotation that he would use as a text, Isaiah 61:1-2. The words of the prophet set forth a daring program for any leader, for they promised "release to the captives" and liberty for "those who are oppressed." Now Jesus announced, as he closed the book and sat down, "Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing."

No wonder every eye was fixed on Jesus. If he meant what he said, he must be the deliverer for whom they had been looking and praying. They were far from happy under Roman rule. Their Messiah, when he came, would

surely bring them liberty. Did Jesus mean to say that he would be their liberator? Their hopes soon vanished. At first he pleased them. Then he infuriated them. If he held any promise of liberty for men, it was certainly not the kind of freedom they sought.

Did Christ really bring liberty to his homeland? There were zealous who would gladly have followed him in a campaign to overthrow Roman rule. But he offered no resistance to Roman soldiers and he died on a cross. As a liberator from oppression he could have gained a more enthusiastic crowd of followers, but he staked his kingdom on a few disciples and he warned them against fighting for him. Yet within the lifetime of many who knew Jesus in Galilee, Paul was writing letters in which he urged men to stand fast in the freedom to which Christ had called them.

These first Christians found a special kind of liberty in discovering that they were sons of God. They were no longer enslaved by

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the fears that once held them, they were free from many of the evil habits that used to defeat them. Even if they had no more political freedom than they had before Jesus came, they felt strangely released.

In the closing hours Jesus could spend with his disciples, he put the idea in these words, "No longer do I call you servants (or slaves) . . . but I have called you friends." Paul wrote to the Galatians, "So through God you are no longer a slave but a son." And when Paul returned a runaway slave to his Christian owner, he wrote to Philemon, asking him to accept Onesimus, "no longer as a slave but more than a slave, as a beloved brother."

The kind of liberty that Christ brought did not result in a declaration of independence from Rome nor an emancipation proclamation for every slave. He did not break down any prison walls, but still he set men free. He made them realize that God believed in each one of them; that every person was worthy of respect; that every one, no matter if he was a Roman or a Jew, a master or a slave, could live as a free man in the sight of God.

Jesus Christ still sets men free. When they take him as Master of their lives, they are no longer bound down by superstitions, haunted by vague fears, chained by bad habits, or betrayed by false hopes. He still helps persons to gain respect for themselves and others, to realize that they are called to live as free men. They are at liberty either to choose God's way or to reject him. If they take his way they will

learn how to use their freedom wisely. If they turn against him, they will forget that they are men and live in bondage to evil.

The liberty that Christ brings may give courage to persons who have been denied the simple freedoms we enjoy every day. F. Olin Stockwell, a missionary who was detained for two years in Chinese Communist prisons, tells how he read his New Testament every day during his imprisonment. He says, "I discovered that the New Testament was especially written for me and other prison-sitters." Although he could see no direct way by which his New Testament could release him, his daily reading supported his faith and sustained his hope that God could still use him as a Christian missionary.

Since the time of Paul and Silas, who sang hymns in a Philippian prison, some of the most independent Christians have been those who were most closely guarded. Their minds were free, their faith was strong, and their hopes were high because they had the kind of liberty that Christ still brings.

We often talk of our freedoms as something which can be taken from us by force. More often we lose our liberties because of our own negligence. We lose our Christian freedom if we abuse the privileges we enjoy. We forfeit our own liberties when we deny them to others. We find freedom slipping away from us when we fail to use it. If a law were passed forbidding us to assemble regularly for worship, we would immediately go to bat for our freedom of worship. Yet great numbers of Christians think so little



of that privilege that they make no effort to attend worship services.

A nation can lose its liberties in much the same way. We can fight for free elections and then lose the privilege by neglecting to vote. The best defense of freedom is the use of freedom for the service of God and our fellow men. If a nation is concerned only about freedom from outside interference and does not think how to use its privileges constructively, it will soon be in danger of losing its liberties. The New Testament frequently reminds us that our freedom is not a license to do as we wish, but an opportunity to live as we should.

Always in our Christian experience freedom is accompanied by responsibility. We have to account for the way we use our Christian freedom. If we are free to worship God as we please, we are responsible for giving him the full measure of our devotion, not merely an occasional gesture of respect. If we are free to speak our convictions, we are responsible for respecting the opinions of others and joining with them in the search for truth. If we are free to select our own leaders, we are responsible for choosing the best qualified, not the ones who can reward us in some way.

While it is true that Christ did little to encourage the struggle for political freedom, his emphasis upon the dignity and worth of men has helped to spark the love

## Questions for Discussion

1. How would you seek to liberate people who were treated as slaves: by talking up rebellion? by planning a revolt? by reminding each person that God meant him to be free? by praying for their captors? by bargaining with their captors?

2. Did Jesus fulfill his promise to release captives and liberate the oppressed? Are these promises yet to be fulfilled?

3. Have Christian missions, in teaching about freedom, helped to stimulate some of the nationalistic movements in Asia and Africa that are creating unrest at the present time?

4. Can a man enjoy Christian freedom if he is denied the liberty to worship as he pleases?

5. Is freedom of Christian belief possible only in nations where there is political freedom?

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of liberty in men everywhere. Paul did not specifically oppose slavery but by teaching Christian brotherhood he prepared the way for the eventual abolition of slavery. The ideal of individual freedom, the concept of responsible citizenship, and the standard for regarding all men as brothers—these are contributions that the Christian gospel has made to the struggle for human freedom. Seldom do we who enjoy the privileges of freedom recognize how much the world owes to the fact that Christ brought liberty.

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Most people find it easier to defend their religious convictions than to live up to them.



# Christ Has Enriched Literature

## *Aims for This Program*

1. To discover a few of the respects in which Christ has influenced the world's literature.
2. To see how men with widely different viewpoints respond to the example and teachings of Christ.
3. To set up several standards by which a reader can decide when literature is truly Christian.
4. To suggest ways of encouraging a stronger Christian witness in present-day literature.

**SUGGESTED SCRIPTURE:** John 1:1-5, 9-14; 6:66-69; 7:45-46; 18:37; Phil. 4:8; Col. 1:15-20.

For nearly two thousand years the personality of Jesus Christ has puzzled and fascinated men. Unbelievers as well as believers have tried to understand him; nearly all of them pay some kind of tribute to his life and his teachings. The literature that has been inspired by Jesus is richer as a result of his significance for all men. Because of his universal appeal, we can trace his influence in many kinds of literature, representing the work of poets and writers of many ages. Each one viewed Jesus from his own perspective.

What men find in Christ often reflects what they have in themselves. A popular writer like Irvin S. Cobb would call him "the greatest gentleman that ever lived." A student of the arts like Havelock Ellis would describe him as "a lovely crystal figure." To the German writer Goethe, Jesus was "a true Philosopher . . . a wise man in the highest sense." Ralph Waldo Emerson, who was a keen observer of mankind, wrote

that Jesus was "the only soul in history who has appreciated the worth of man." To a Catholic poet, Gerard Manley Hopkins, he was "all the world's hero." Samuel Taylor Coleridge called him "the life-giving light of men." The Russian novelist Tolstoy concluded, after studying the life of Jesus, that the title "God" rightly belonged to him.

If you had time to make a careful study of references to Jesus in the world's literature you would discover that practically every century since his time has produced many writings that were directly inspired by him. This would be especially true during the Middle Ages and in the early developments of English and American literature. A teacher of literature recently pointed out that even during the least religious periods in English history the catalogues of the booksellers showed that religious books were among the best-sellers.

Several years ago Edward Wagenknecht compiled an an-

thology of creative literature about Jesus. His book, *The Story of Jesus in the World's Literature*, was one of the first attempts to show by means of brief selections how profoundly the story of Jesus has captured the attention of great writers. In the anthology there are poems, hymns, carols, songs, stories, prayers, legends, essays, plays, sermons in verse, fantasies, and excerpts from books of fiction. The events of the birth of Jesus have been reflected in hundreds of stories, far too many to be represented in any one book. Other incidents in his life are viewed from many different angles and used in a variety of ways to throw some new light on his meaning for the poet or novelist.

In a representative anthology nearly all the great names of English, American, and European literature appear. We expect to find there religious poets like John Donne and George Herbert, but we may not realize how much the classic writers like Milton and Spenser, or romantic poets like Coleridge and Shelley, or more modern poets like Tennyson and Browning were occupied with Christian themes and tried, each in his own way, to pay tribute to Jesus Christ.

Early American literature, especially that produced by the colonists, was colored by the ideals of persons who sought religious freedom. The New England poets like Longfellow, Lowell, and Whittier are usually well represented in our hymn-books, but some of their best Christian writings were even more ambitious, like *Snow-Bound* and *Evangeline*.

Our present literature has much less to say about Christ and about the church. Yet, just within the last few years we have seen renewed interest in religious books. There seems to be a demand for Christian literature that is never quite satisfied. Novels with a Biblical setting are popular. Recognized masters of writing like Thomas Mann, Franz Werfel, and Sholem Asch have produced novels of this type that will last beyond our generation. Most of the others that use New Testament personalities or incidents for their subject are less enduring, though they may be entertaining and informing. But the success of even the lesser ones offers evidence that the personality of Jesus has an attraction for many persons who may have no faith but who still hunger for it.

In trying to decide how much of our modern literature is Christian we cannot be satisfied merely to look for references to Christ, for Bible quotations, for allusions to the church or descriptions of religious activities. Some recent books, like some recent movies based on Bible characters, are completely misleading in terms of realizing Christian ideals. They may even use incidents from the Bible in such a manner that the significance of the Bible message is lost. Instead of using such a superficial yardstick, here are a few questions we could ask about any book, poem, or play that is offered to us as Christian literature:

1. Is it true to the picture of Jesus that you find in reading the New Testament? It is not necessary that Christian books be loaded down with facts about



## Questions for Discussion

1. Can you expect writers who are not Christians to produce Christian literature? How do you account for the sympathetic descriptions of Christ that you find in the work of some pagan poets and novelists?

2. Will popular books about Jesus and other Bible characters encourage more Bible reading? Will they reach readers who seldom come in contact with the church?

3. Would anything be left of Christmas if every hymn and carol, every story of Jesus and the meaning of his life, every poem and play about him were suddenly taken away?

4. How can our present literature become more Christian? Should we have more biographies of modern heroic saints? More historical accounts of great moments in the history of the Christian church?

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Jesus, but it is essential that the picture of him that they suggest is in keeping with the Christ we find in the earliest writings about him. Sometimes he is wrongly presented as a magician who steps in at the crucial moment in the story to straighten out the plot. References to him and imaginary conversations attributed to him should catch the spirit of the Jesus who speaks in the New Testament.

2. Does it bring you face to face with Jesus so that you are en-

couraged to follow him? One of the values of some of the fictional stories about Jesus is their ability to make him seem real to the reader. The best stories make you want to read the gospel records again to see if Jesus speaks to you as directly in them. The best Christian literature inspires a desire to take the high standards of Jesus for your own life.

3. Does it help you to see how your problems can be faced in a Christian way? You may not look at life in quite the same way as a Christian poet or novelist, but he may be able to make you feel that Christ has an answer for your problems too. In the best Christian literature the writer will use his imagination and experience to show how Christ lives today and inspires new "acts of the apostles" among people who live as you do. Biographies of men like Albert Schweitzer and Wilfred Grenfell help every reader to become a better Christian.

4. Does it encourage respect for the church and its message? So many books that deal with religious themes make a caricature of the church. Very few seem to be written by people who know the church and love it in spite of its weaknesses. We do not expect that there must be stained-glass windows in the background of every religious story, but we would hope that the rich fellowship that is found in many churches around the world could be described and shared through Christian literature.

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Character is a victory, not a gift.

—Try Square



# Christ Inspired Music and Art

## *Aims for This Program*

1. To discover the broad scope of Christian influences in music and art.
2. To find ways of distinguishing the genuinely Christian aspects of art and music from other aspects.
3. To suggest some means of enriching Christian worship through a wiser use of art and music.

**SUGGESTED SCRIPTURE:** Psalms 95:1-7; Psalms 150; Acts 17:24-29; Eph. 5:18-20; Col. 3:16-17.

Suppose you have time on your hands and no money to spend for entertainment in a large city. An afternoon in an art museum would be a wise investment of your time and admission is usually free. Perhaps the word "museum" is misleading if it makes you think of a place where relics of the past are kept, because as soon as you give ten minutes to a few of the best art treasures you discover that they are very much alive even though they are so carefully dated.

It may surprise you to discover that so many of the really great paintings are religious paintings. As you stroll through an art gallery you may not pay too much attention to periods of art history or schools of painting but you will observe that for a number of centuries almost all art was Christian art. This came about because during those years the church encouraged artists to devote their talents to painting religious subjects. Leaders in the organized church were patrons of the arts. Even the decorations for church buildings were assigned to creative artists who welcomed the op-

portunities to express their own ideas of religious themes. And the church, when it valued art so highly, also took great care to preserve its art treasures.

But there were times, following the Reformation, when church people turned against art, regarding it as something pagan. As a result the religious influence on art was considerably weakened and artists became interested in other subjects. Yet even then the greatest masters of painting never completely neglected the rich store of material that was offered in the life and ministry of Christ. They still painted some religious pictures.

Almost every incident in the life of Christ has been the subject of a painting by an excellent artist. Nativity scenes and Madonna paintings are especially popular. You can recall pictures of Jesus as a boy, usually based on his visit to the Temple; and there are many attempts to show him as a teacher and healer. But probably the events that have received most attention are the incidents of his suffering and death.

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Great masterpieces by Da Vinci ("The Last Supper"), Tiepolo ("Christ Bearing His Cross"), Rubens ("Christ Between Two Thieves"), and El Greco ("Christ on the Cross") cannot be dismissed with a quick glance. They demand to be viewed carefully and reverently.

Even a casual study of paintings of the life of Christ will convince you that the artists took Jesus seriously. When he is pictured, he is always the center of the picture. Part of the artist's skill can be detected in the way your attention is drawn to the central figure. Sometimes they give new meaning to the scene by making him the source of light.

Another striking characteristic about paintings of Jesus is the way in which a person who lived in one small corner of the earth at one period of history is made to live in lands and periods so remote from his own. An Italian artist pictures the Nativity as happening in Italy. A German artist chooses settings in Germany. Rembrandt's Bible characters seem to be from Holland. El Greco pictures them as Spaniards. Christian art reminds us that Christ is universal and belongs to every age.

A good place to rest tired feet after visiting an art exhibit is in a concert hall. While you wait for the program to begin, take a look at the repertoire of the orchestra or glance at the programs of coming attractions. If organ recitals are included you will notice how many of the great works of Bach for that instrument are based on German hymn tunes. Or if choral works are listed by a choral so-

ciety you are certain to find cantatas by Bach, oratorios by Handel, Haydn, or Mendelssohn, and anthems by practically every great composer. At Christmas and Easter times especially the great choral works are performed, often combining the talents of soloists, choirs, orchestra, and organ. You have only to listen to some of the choruses from Handel's *The Messiah* to see how thoroughly Christian great music can be.

But even in symphony concerts religious music finds a place. You will hear the music of a familiar hymn in the closing movement of Beethoven's last symphony. One of Haydn's string quartets gives the setting for another. And then there are familiar selections from operas that are based on Biblical themes. On Good Friday you may hear many selections from Wagner's *Parsifal*, a lengthy opera that contains dozens of religious themes and pictures the observance of the Lord's Supper.

How shall we distinguish Christian art from secular art, or Christian music from other music? Most persons think of Christian art as that which pictures a religious subject such as a painting of an incident in the life of Christ or the use of recognized religious symbols. But obviously Christian ideas and ideals can be expressed in other ways. For example, Albert E. Bailey in a book, *Christ and His Gospel in Recent Art*, selected a statue of Abraham Lincoln by George Gray Barnard, to illustrate an artistic expression of the theme of "burden-bearing." And music lovers are quick to point out that the compositions they



find to be most religious are movements from symphonies or concertos that have no Christian association but which still convey a spiritual idea. In the concert of sacred music especially arranged by the Chicago Symphony Orchestra for the World Council Assembly in Evanston last August, the feature selection was a Mozart symphony. No one questioned its appropriate place along with Negro spirituals and choral works from an oratorio.

Christian art and music have a well-earned place in exhibit rooms and concert halls. But they are most at home in the church. Here is where you have your best opportunity to judge how deeply the life and spirit of Christ can influence the various fine arts. Even if your church is a simple chapel it probably contains artistic symbols in its windows, in its architecture, in its decorations, and in its printed materials—all of which have a meaning and a purpose in helping you to worship. You may not use all the musical instruments mentioned in Psalms 150 to praise God, but at least you can help to sing the truly great hymns, and you can listen to the choir and instruments as they provide Christian music as a means of worship.

Even though the church is no longer a patron of the arts to the same degree that it was five hundred years ago, there are still ways in which Christian people

## Questions for Discussion

1. How would you evaluate the Christian "art" in the Christmas greetings you received? Must they contain Bible verses or Nativity scenes in order to be Christian? Were any of them so contrary to the spirit of Christ that you would call them pagan?

2. What makes a hymn or song Christian? Can the words be religious while the tune is pagan?

3. What do you think of the popular religious songs that often become hits? Do they make any contribution to Christian music?

4. How do you account for the fact that many of the finest Christian songs originated as spirituals or carols, and became a part of a nation's folk music?

5. Is good music or art ever anti-Christian or irreligious?

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can encourage the development of Christian art and music. Many churches have a strong music program, providing an opportunity for almost everyone to sing in a choir or play an instrument. Just as the choir schools of Europe produced composers who never forgot their Christian training, our church schools can lay similar foundations. In recent years there has been a new emphasis on good taste and artistic standards for church buildings and decorations.

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The Bible, whatever else it may be—divine or human—is the greatest compilation of noble thoughts and deeds ever brought together and, as such, the greatest single instrument for popular education ever devised.

—*Illustrated London News*



# Christ Raised the World's Sights

## *Aims for This Program*

1. To see how Christ's coming into the world has made it a better place in which to live.
2. To consider the higher standards that Christ set for his followers in contrast to what men had known before.
3. To find ways of translating Christian ideals into specific deeds of service and love.
4. To accept new personal standards for the coming year.

**SUGGESTED SCRIPTURE:** Matt. 5 and 6; Hebrews 1:1-2.

Is the world a better place in which to live because Jesus Christ was born almost two thousand years ago? All but a few cynics will agree that the world is much better off because Christ came. There would not be time in a discussion like this even to suggest many of the great and lasting contributions to human history that Jesus Christ made. Certainly the Christian church that now reaches around the world and binds several hundred millions of believers in a common loyalty to their Lord is in itself a tremendous asset to the world.

Yet the cynics could find plenty of evidence in almost any day's newspaper that the world is far from approaching the ideals of Jesus; the so-called Christian nations certainly do not resemble the kingdom of God of which he spoke. Even the churches appear far more weak and human than we might expect of an organization dedicated to God.

If we had time we might list the solid accomplishments that can be attributed to the influence of Jesus in our world. But perhaps

as we anticipate a new year it may be better for us to review a few of the ways in which he raised the world's sights. The standards that he set so long ago have lifted the vision of men and they continue to challenge us today. To call men to a higher righteousness was an essential purpose of Jesus' ministry in Palestine. He still calls to us through his teachings and through his church.

The simplest statement of that call is likely to be found in his famous "Sermon on the Mount." In three chapters of Matthew's gospel his teachings on several topics are compressed into a sermon that has no equal in all the world's literature. It begins with the familiar Beatitudes. It continues with an appeal for Christians to use their influence for good in the world. Then, beginning with Matt. 5:17, comes the challenge to them to raise their sights, to set new standards, and to strike out in new directions. They were not to spurn the old standards of their law but to go beyond them by being more

righteous than the Scribes and Pharisees.

Notice the way in which Jesus announced that he was raising the world's sights: "You have heard that it was said to the men of old . . . but I say to you. . . ." In a series of striking illustrations he put his new interpretations in contrast to familiar ideas. Because these deal with issues that we face today let us examine the new ideals that he set before men.

*Matt. 5:21-26.* Every person who heard Jesus knew the commandment against committing murder. Jesus went behind the act of murder to the motives that might lead to killing. He condemned angry thoughts, insulting words, bitter resentments and the failure to seek reconciliation. He urged everyone to search his own heart and to do his own part to make peace with his brother. He raised the world's sights with regard to the causes of murder and bloodshed. But we still have wars and bitter conflicts because we have not learned how to reconcile enemies.

*Matt. 5:27-32.* There was another strong commandment against adultery and the Jews had regulations concerning divorce. But Jesus wanted men to remember that broken homes begin with unfaithful thoughts, with uncontrolled desires. He set new standards for home life based upon love and deep respect for the rights of others. To the extent that we have stable Christian home life in our world, we should give credit to such ideals as Jesus taught. But our statistics show a tragically high percentage of broken homes. Have we made the

mistake of depending on marriage laws and forgetting the Christian ideals that support marriage?

*Matt. 5:33-37.* Another of the ten commandments was concerned with telling the truth, particularly under oath or on the witness stand. Jesus thought it was a sign of profanity to swear an oath in the name of God and then to seek ways of evading the sworn statement. He sought to show men that their integrity as children of God required them to be honest and forthright at all times, telling the truth just as readily outside the courtroom as when they were under oath. He raised the world's sights on honesty much higher than many Christians have been willing to go. According to Jesus a simple affirmation or denial was to be preferred to placing your hand on a Bible and swearing to tell the truth.

*Matt. 5:38-48.* Jesus had a number of things to say about the way you deal with your enemies. Some of the oldest records in the Old Testament seem to give their approval to taking unlimited vengeance on one's assailant. Cain was told that he could be avenged "sevenfold" but one of his descendants, Lamech, bragged that he would be avenged "seventy-sevenfold" (Gen. 4:24). The laws that accompanied the Ten Commandments raised the sights of the Hebrews to the level of limited retaliation for wrongs: "life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth" (Ex. 21:24). But Jesus raised a standard that was much higher. He recommended overcoming evil with good, turning the other cheek, going the second mile, and loving enemies. In Romans 12:20



## Questions for Discussion

1. To what extent can the teachings of Jesus concerning personal relationships be applied to the relations between nations? Can one nation help to feed an enemy nation? Are there other ways of turning the cheek and going the second mile?

2. How has the model prayer of Jesus (sometimes called the Lord's Prayer or the Disciples' Prayer) helped to raise the sights of Christians concerning the meaning of prayer?

3. Did Jesus set his standards too high for the average Christian to reach? Is there any excuse for our failures at least to strive toward them?

4. What teachings of Jesus, either in the Sermon on the Mount or elsewhere in the New Testament, would make good resolutions for Christians to observe next year?

Paul picked up the same idea and urged Christians to feed their enemies when they were hungry.

In recent years many Christians have made generous gifts of food and clothing to nations they may have regarded as enemy nations. But yet even our Christian leaders still speak in terms of "massive retaliation" for acts of aggression. In some respects this high standard of love for enemies has been honored. In other respects it seems to have been overlooked. Both men and nations have far to go to reach the principles set forth by Jesus.

*Matt. 6:1-18.* Just as Jesus sought to raise the world's sights

concerning human relationships, he lifted up new ideals for sincerity in worship. In the giving of alms, in the practice of prayer, and in the observance of ceremonies he turned the attention away from outward forms and pretenses and emphasized the kind of worship that is expressed in the Disciples' Prayer.

*Matt. 6:19-34.* In dealing with money and the desire for material things—even such necessities as food, clothing and shelter—Jesus sought to lift the aspirations of men to a new level where they would serve God only and seek his kingdom first.

These are only a few examples of the many specific ways in which Jesus called on his disciples first of all and the church they would form later, to live a new kind of life and to set new patterns for right conduct. From the very beginning Christians have complained that the rules were too strict, the ideals too difficult to follow. But many of these teachings of Jesus have found their way into the aspirations that have guided nations.

Just a few months ago the six hundred delegates to the World Council of Churches Assembly in Evanston, Illinois, struggled anew with the task of helping both the churches and the nations of the world to move closer to the high standards that we find in the New Testament. While they often disagreed about the best way to translate their faith into deeds, they were unanimous in their loyalty to Jesus Christ and his gospel. Since he first came he has been and continues to be the only "hope of the world."



# Daily Rations



A  
BIBLE READING  
FOR  
EVERY DAY  
OF THE MONTH

BY  
JAMES V. CLAYPOOL  
(Secy., promotion of  
Bible Use,  
American Bible  
Society)

## THEME: The Faith You Need for Today

1	All Things Are Made Through God .....	John 1:1-18
2	Kinship That Counts Big .....	John 1:19-34
3	Lost but Vially Interested .....	Luke 15:1-10
4	Jesus Will Never Let You Down .....	Romans 8:1-17
5	Jesus Will Never Let You Off .....	Romans 12:1-8
6	Jesus Will Never Let You Go .....	1 Corinthians 15:20-34
7	Achieving One's Best Self .....	Matthew 5:1-26
8	Putting Religion into Practice .....	Matthew 5:27-48
9	What Are True Treasures? .....	Matthew 6:1-34
10	The Rule and Guide to Live By .....	Matthew 7:1-29
11	Two Sons, One Father .....	Luke 15:11-32
12	God Loved the World This Much .....	John 3:1-21
13	Living Life to the Full .....	John 10:1-18
14	Expecting to Do Great Things .....	John 14:1-24
15	The Greatest Devotion of All .....	John 15:1-27
16	Don't Let the World Get You Down .....	John 17:1-26
17	Faith Keeps You From Tearing Apart .....	Romans 8:18-39
18	Love Keeps You From Smallness Inside .....	Romans 12:9-21
19	Hope Keeps You From Shriveling Up .....	1 Corinthians 13:1-13
20	Jesus Keeps You From Frittering Away .....	1 Corinthians 15:35-58
21	Preparation for Anything .....	Ephesians 6:10-20
22	Preparation for Everything .....	Philippians 4:1-13
23	Faith Alone Triumphs .....	Hebrews 11:1-6
24	The Excellent Becomes the Permanent .....	Revelation 21:1-8
25	A Living Faith in Human Life .....	Luke 2:1-20
26	Faith Grows and Expands .....	Luke 2:40-52
27	Belief Starts in Small Ways .....	John 1:35-51
28	Stand, Walk and Praise .....	Acts 3:1-10
29	Self-reliant, but Helpful .....	Galatians 6:1-10
30	Furnished Completely for Good Works .....	2 Timothy 3:12-17
31	Ready for Another Year .....	James 4:1-17



A fun-loving girl is very often a fund-loving girl.

—N.Y. Post

Marriage: A union between two people in which the man pays the dues.

—Woman

"This has gone too far," said the stern parent when his son brought home a 3-D report card.

—Kroehler News

When her husband came home from the Army he brought his pin-up pictures and put photos of Betty Grable, Marilyn Monroe and others on their bedroom walls. She re-



GRB

"Cut the ad-libbin', stupid—you're bustin' my arm!"

taliated with pictures of Gregory Peck and Stewart Granger. He merely added more lush lovelies to his display. She replied by adding one more picture—that of the good-looking young boarder in their home. The pin-up pictures were promptly taken down.

—Reveille



"Simmering in summer, freezing in winter, windswept, desolate, inaccessible . . . in fact, Gentlemen, it qualifies in every respect as an ideal spot for an Army camp."

After listening to a perfunctory rendering of "Good King Wenceslas," I heard a knock at my door last Christmas Eve. On the doorstep I found a small boy who said not a word. To break the ice, I said: "Good evening." This produced no reaction so, after a bit, I said: "You haven't wished me a merry Christmas." This broke down his reserve. He said, "I do that after I'm paid."

—Yorkshire (England) Post

"Are you going to hang any mistletoe in your house this year, Mandy?"

Mandy sniffed in disdain. "No ma'am! I got too much pride to advertise for the ordinary courtesies a lady's got a right to expect."

—Better Crops



# FAITH FOR OUR DAY



**WORLDWIDE BIBLE READING**















