

# THE LUTHERAN AMBASSADOR

November 11, 1980

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*"Thine alabaster cities gleam" Katharine Lee Bares*

Photo by Roger C. Huebner, D.D.S.

# AT THE MASTER'S FEET

## MASTER'S

Pastor Ralph M. Rokke



## Faith that moves mountains

Mount Everest has always been considered one of the most difficult mountains in the world to climb. In fact, no one had ever succeeded in climbing to the top of Mount Everest until Sir Edmund Hillary did it on May 29, 1953.

The first American to reach the summit of Mount Everest was Jim Whittaker. At the time that Whittaker was preparing for the climb, a psychologist examined him. The psychologist asked Whittaker, "Will you get to the top?"

Others had answered that same question by saying, "I certainly hope so" or "I'll do my best," but Whittaker answered confidently, "Yes, I will!" He succeeded and his faith was undoubtedly a big factor in his success.

Galatians 5:22 tells us that *faith* is a part of the fruit of the Spirit. The

kind of faith that is referred to there is not the basic kind of faith in Christ which brings salvation, but it is a confidence that God can and will do great things. It is the kind of faith that says, "Yes, God will!" It is the kind of faith which God gives to His children assuring them that they can not only climb mountains, but even move mountains in His strength, if necessary.

This kind of faith overcomes fear. A soldier was once preparing for battle. He saw his knees shaking and said to them, "I don't blame you for shaking. If you knew where I'm going to take you, you would shake a lot more than you are." He was afraid and yet he overcame his fear and went where his duty demanded.

Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, who lived about 550 years before Christ, really showed how this kind of faith overcomes fear. These three men were given a choice by powerful King Nebuchadnezzar. Either they had to bow down and worship an idol that Nebuchadnezzar had set up or else he would have them thrown alive into a fiery furnace.

The three men gave this answer to the king, "Our God whom we serve *is able* to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and *He will deliver us* out of thine hand, O king. But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that *we will not serve thy gods.* . . ."

These men knew that God could save them. They believed that He would, but they were not going to whine and complain if He did not. They were simply going to trust Him and honor Him no matter what.

When they were thrown into the furnace, one "like the Son of God" appeared among them. Perhaps it was

Jesus Himself. They did not burn, and when Nebuchadnezzar called them out of the furnace, there was not even any smell of smoke on them. Nebuchadnezzar said, "Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego." Their faith had moved the mountain of a proud king's heart.

This kind of faith also causes Christians to dream big dreams, think big and accomplish much. Usually those who found churches, mission agencies and charitable institutions are men and women blessed with this gift. They are people like David Livingstone, who said, "I'll go anywhere provided it is forward."

According to I Corinthians 12, not all Christians are given this kind of faith in equal measure. Some possess more than others. Those who have much of this kind of faith also have need of love and patience, because it is easy for them to get frustrated with other Christians who do not seem to have as much vision or enthusiasm as they do for new projects.

If God has given you the gift of great faith, then praise Him for it! Undoubtedly He has a special work for you to do. Just be patient with other Christians who can't see opportunities as clearly as you can.

If God has not given you the gift of great faith, check your life. Is some sin hindering Him from doing so? If so, confess it.

If, however, the Holy Spirit does not bring any sin to your remembrance, then pray that He will increase your faith. As you rely upon Him, He will, and this promise that he gave to Paul is also for you: "My grace is sufficient for thee: for My strength is made perfect in weakness." Amen. †

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## PRAISE . . .

see if the truths expressed there concerning the mercy of God will not make your heart respond in a deep sense of awe and gratitude. A right spiritual relationship with God, then, is a must in order to have and manifest the attitude of thankfulness. Most of the offerings or sacrifices of the Old Testament had to do with sin and guilt indicating to God the repentant attitude of the offerer. However, there was one sacrifice, the peace or thank-offering consisting of cattle, sheep or goats, the fat being burned, the rest eaten, partly by priests, partly by offerers, that indicated a right spiritual relationship with God, expressing good fellowship, gratitude and obligation. Romans 12:1,2 calls us who are in Christ Jesus to be such living sacrifices of thankful service to God.

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*“One of the greatest hindrances to a thankful attitude is the specific sin of selfishness.”*

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Colossians 3:17 reveals that all our words and deeds must flow from true faith in Jesus, the Redeemer, and be spoken and performed to His glory, all our words and actions being expressions of our thankfulness. What kind of sacrifice are we offering to God for the world to see? Is it the sweet smelling savor of thanksgiving, of grateful service? (Heb. 13:15,16). Or does God have to turn up His nose at the stench of our sin-filled lives and say that what He really desires is a broken and contrite heart? (cf. Ps. 51:16-19). Notice how it turned out for the Pharisee and the publican who went to the temple to pray. The first prayed from a self-righteous, selfish heart to see what he could gain for himself, certainly only the praise of men, Jesus said (Matt. 6:5). The publican plead for mercy, received it, was justified and went home rejoicing, a changed man. Note the experience of Zacchaeus! What has been your prayer and experience? I thank God for His mercy unto me through the blood of Jesus.

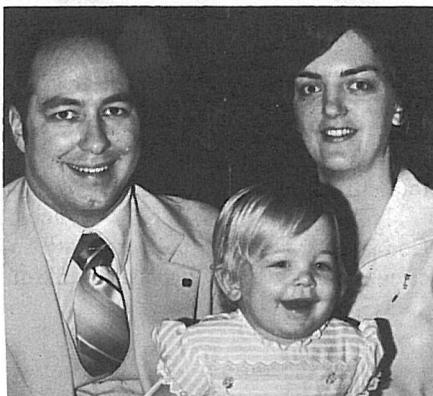
One of the greatest hindrances to a thankful attitude is the specific sin of

selfishness. How often we think we deserve or merit the good things that come our way. It is sad that so often we give gifts on the basis of “what do you want?” This has the effect of stimulating the selfish attitude and of minimizing the thankful attitude of having received something I did not expect nor deserve. For the person has already thought in a selfish way, “I expect to receive such and such. . .” How did God give His unspeakable gift to us? When we were yet sinners, enemies of His, deserving only hell-fire punishment, He freely gave us His own Son.

Jesus came unto His own, but His own received Him not. But to as many as receive Him, God gives the blessing of becoming His children. How often in His ministry Christ met those who realized that they did not deserve to be healed and forgiven, but when Christ blessed them with healing and forgiveness their grateful praise to God could not be contained, but was contagious to the point of keeping Jesus on the move. Oh, that our thanksgiving to God might also be likewise contagious, bringing others to Jesus.

So I ask you, what kind of a Thanksgiving are you going to have? Is your giving of thanks this season and evermore going to overflow from a heart that is right with God? Oh, that this may be a most joyful Thanksgiving for you and may we meet for that eternal Thanksgiving unto our Blessed Savior in Heaven. †

*Mr. and Mrs. Charles Knapp will be under call from the Board of World Missions beginning on January 1. Ordination for Mr. Knapp is tentatively set for January 18, at Medicine Lake Lutheran in Minneapolis. The Knapps hope to leave for Paraguay at the end of January. They will be our first resident missionaries there. At present they are residing with Mrs. Knapp's (Joyce) parents, the Harry Lindgrens. They have a daughter, Rebekah.*



*By Pastor T.K. Skramstad  
Minnewaukan, North Dakota*

There has been a powerful movement within the United States in the last two decades which suggests that Christianity and involvement within the military are incompatible. The popularity of the conscientious objector status has begun to be headline news once more with the re-establishment of draft registration. Rather than be simply swayed by popular opinion, the Christian has an obligation to discover the will of God through the Holy Scriptures.

If an individual is a Christian, the argument goes, he certainly could never kill another human being in a war. The Bible very clearly states: “Thou shalt not kill” (Ex. 20:13). Jesus Himself quoted this commandment and further stated: “Resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on the right cheek, turn to him the other also” (Matt. 5:39). Paul continued with the matter of non-resistance when he wrote: “Avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath” (Rom. 12:19) and “Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good” (Rom. 12:21).

If one were only to look at these verses without considering the total context of Scripture, it would be very easy to conclude that all involvement with the military should be stopped. The Bible, however, is not as simplistic as some would make it out to be.

No matter how much any of us would want all war to eternally cease, we know from the Scriptures that before Jesus Christ returns there will actually be an increase in wars and rumors of war (Matt. 24:6,7). The very concept, then, that Christians can in some way eliminate all war by merely being opposed to it or by refusing to participate in it, is unrealistic. This does not excuse the reckless abandonment of diplomacy and the wise use of peaceful solutions which are at the disposal of government leaders, however.

*The Lutheran Ambassador*

# Military Service and the BIBLE



The pacifist would also argue that if one nation were to abandon its militaristic goals and eliminate its armies, peace would come as other nations follow the example of such a high ideal. As much as anyone would desire that this happen, it is an impossibility as long as man is controlled by a fallen nature. Since Adam's fall, our conscience has been darkened. The sin which is inherent within us all has the tendency to warp our sense of justice. Therefore, human governments are fallible because sinful men are in control. Even if every government were headed by a Christian, there would still be the potential for wars simply because of the sin within our deceitful hearts.

From the Fifth Commandment,

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**"The Bible . . . is not as simplistic as some would make it out to be."**

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then, we begin to understand that there must be more to its explanation than a prohibition against murder. If God were to command a total abstinence against the taking of human life, then He would be contradicting Himself in other portions of the Bible. Exodus 21, for example, points out the law regarding capital punishment. If a man has murdered another man, and he is properly judged to be guilty of this crime, then he is to be executed. The executioner is not mentioned as

having sinned, but rather as only doing the work of God.

The wars in the Old Testament, also, cannot always be compared to our present age, yet there remain certain comparisons for our use. If God considered all military action sinful, then did He Himself sin by commanding the Israelites to destroy the armies and at times even the cities of the Canaanites?

The men of the Bible, too, not only served in the army of Israel, but also in the armies of foreign governments. Joseph, Moses, Nehemiah and Daniel were never condemned by the Lord for their work, but were praised on several occasions.

In the New Testament, whenever Jesus talked with soldiers, He never demonstrated contempt for their profession. John the Baptist and the apostles instructed the soldiers and jailers to repent of their sins and live morally upright lives. None of the soldiers were ever told to leave their jobs. It would seem misleading of the Lord to tell men to repent and believe, but never to rebuke them for a type of work totally out of line with His character and will.

We see analogies to spiritual warfare and armaments which a true soldier of the cross must be careful to put on in other Scripture passages as well.

If one were to agree that Christians can and may even have an obligation to serve in the military, there may still be the unresolved question about killing another human. Let it be said, that just because one serves in the military

(or on a police force) does not mean that a free-for-all license to kill has been issued. Nor does the requirement to kill mean that this action can be enjoyed. We are still responsible individuals held accountable for our actions by both the government and the Lord.

To be opposed to war is a fine and noble position. I am personally acquainted with many in the armed forces who are currently holding that position. If there is any way possible, they are in the forefront to oppose military action. They realize that it would be their lives which would be lost, not those of the protesters, in the event of

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**"We are still responsible individuals held accountable for our actions by both the government and the Lord."**

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another war. It would be their families who would feel the pain of separation and the fear of wondering if a loved one will return. To assume that all military personnel are blood-thirsty warmongers, is to be totally ignorant of the feelings and beliefs of the men and women in uniform.

Much of the propaganda to discourage young people from military service has come from the humanists who look to man for the solution to all of life's problems. Man should logically be able to reason everything out peacefully, they claim. We have already pointed out the fallacy of such logic. The mature Christian should assist younger Christians in seeking the wisest course of action. Not everyone is physically, mentally, or emotionally equipped for military service. Even within the military, a large proportion of jobs are not concerned with actual combat. The most important consideration is to discover where God wants us in life. There are opportunities for Christian service within the military just as we find possibilities for serving Him in civilian life. Let us be true to the whole counsel of God and follow what He wants in our lives. †

by Arlo R. Kneeland, Summit, S. Dak.

We are stewards of God, when we give ourselves to Him! I Cor. 4:2 says, "It is required in stewards that a man be found faithful."

Let us consider how faithful we are in our giving and sharing of our material blessings. This often reveals what kind of steward we really are. We can be a steward of God, of the devil, or of ourselves.

As I search God's Word on giving, it makes me realize there is so much in it about our responsibility in this area. I've heard it has been checked out and something about giving or sharing material blessings is mentioned over 300 times in the New Testament. This surely makes it clear how important this subject is.

The Macedonians were faithful:

1. Under severe affliction
2. In extreme poverty
3. They had abundant joy

Their joy makes me think of II Cor. 9:7: "Each one must do as he has made up his mind, not *reluctantly* or under *compulsion*, for God loves a *cheerful giver*." The Macedonians were not regretting their giving even a little bit.

*Verses 3 and 4:* "For they gave according to their means, as I can testify, and beyond their means, of their own free will, begging us earnestly for the favor of taking a part in the relief of the saints."

St. Paul was really thrilled with the liberality of the Macedonians. He saw their response as an expression of spiritual maturity. They gave according to

themselves to the *Lord* and to the *ministry*. Giving themselves to the ministry, too, is really having the right attitudes, giving ourselves to the business of winning and holding people for Christ, at home and in the world.

*Verses 6-7:* "Accordingly we have urged Titus that as he had already made a beginning, he should also complete among you this gracious work. Now as you excel in everything—in *faith*, in *utterance*, in *knowledge*, in all *earnestness*, and in your *love* for us—see that you excel in this *gracious work* also."

Apparently Titus had a special gift of traveling from congregation to congregation and explaining the needs of the saints in Jerusalem, also teaching right attitudes on giving and sharing.

Then verse 7 really sums it up. We all want to *excel* in faith, in communicating our joy of salvation or witnessing to others. We want to excel in all these things, knowledge, earnestness, etc.

Paul challenges us to see that we excel in this gracious work, too.

We should have the same earnest desire to excel in the gracious work of *giving* and *helping* other Christians as we have in any other service for the Lord.

God promises blessings, too, when we give with the right attitude and for the right reasons. If we give with the idea of receiving blessings, it would not be a right attitude. But that is a beautiful promise in II Cor. 9:8: "And God is able to provide you with every blessing in *abundance*, so that you may always have enough of everything and may provide in abundance for every

## A STUDY IN STEWARDSHIP

The passage, II Cor. 8:1-7, brings out many good principles of giving that are verified in other places in Scripture. (*Verse 1:*) "We want you to know, brethren, about the *grace of God* which has been shown in the churches of Macedonia."

Giving or sharing our material blessings is by *the grace of God*.

What is the Grace of God?

1. Unmerited favor from God! How true that is!
2. The Grace of God is also freely given!
3. The Grace of God is sufficient for *all human need*!
4. It is also the Grace of God that *empowers* men for service.

This is how it is used in this text: The Grace of God empowered the churches of Macedonia for this service of giving and sharing with the needy saints in Jerusalem.

Paul is challenging the Corinthians to excel in this *gracious work*, too. *Verse 2:* "for in a severe test of affliction, their abundance of joy and their extreme poverty have overflowed in a wealth of liberality on their part."

This is a real example of *stewardship*! It is required of stewards that they be found faithful.

their means. Look at Deut. 16:17. Give according to ability. They surely did this.

They even gave beyond their means. They were so joyful about helping the other Christians - even begged for the privilege of taking part in the relief of the saints.

*Verse 5:* "And this, not as we expected, but first they *gave themselves to the Lord* and to *us* by the *will of God*."

I think this is the secret to the Macedonians' right attitudes on giving

"... sharing material blessings is mentioned over 300 times in the New Testament."

and sharing material things. Unless we give *ourselves* to the Lord and desire to do the *will of God*, we will be giving reluctantly or under compulsion. As we are admonished *not* to do, in II Cor. 9:7: "For God loves a cheerful giver." Whenever Paul writes about "us" in his letters to the Corinthians, he seems to be meaning "the ministry" or the "missionary group" that is with him.

The Macedonians then gave them-

*good work.*"

I can truly testify that this beautiful promise is very real, just like all the other promises in God's word!

We can all *thank God* for *faithful stewards*. Thank Him, too, for the *grace* that *empowers* men for service.

**God bless all of you in your giving and may we all desire to excel in this gracious work.**

*Fidelia Fiske*

*Missionary to Persia (1843-1864)*

“What is she like?” “What is he like?” These are natural questions to ask about people, are they not? When we think about Fidelia Fiske of Persia, and ask what she was like, we seem to hear what more than one friend said of her, that “she was like Jesus.” She made others think of what the Saviour was like when on earth, loving to pray to His Father, and “going about doing good.”

The love for missions and the wish to be a missionary came very early to the girl Fidelia, who heard the work talked about a great deal in the family from the time she could remember. A relative who went to the foreign field was often spoken of, and “a real live missionary” was not a myth to the child.

The seminary for girls, at Mount Holyoke, founded by Miss Mary Lyon, was a good training school for missions. So much was said upon the subject, and the interest of Mary Lyon was so great, that missions seemed to be in the very air. In the first 15 years there was but one class of graduates that did not have one or more members on the foreign field, while there were hundreds who became Home Mission teachers, or wives of missionaries. It was to this school that Fidelia Fiske went as a pupil, and there her interest grew apace. It was fed, for one thing, by the many letters that came from those who were busy in the work.

One day a missionary from Persia came to the seminary. She wanted a teacher for a girls’ school, and begged earnestly for one from Mount Holyoke. Said Fidelia, “If counted worthy, I shall be willing to go.” There were all manner of difficulties in the way, but finally she sailed for Persia with Dr. and Mrs. Perkins, and reached Urumia in June, after a journey of about three months, in the year 1843. It was perhaps not a longer trip in those days, but travellers did not go so fast, and it was very tiresome, we may well suppose.

The government of Persia was intolerant, that is, would not bear anything with which it did not agree, and the poor people were very degraded. The parents did not wish their daughters to go to school. Indeed, they thought such a thing very improper indeed.

A few day scholars had been coaxed in before Miss Fiske came, but she was anxious to have a boarding-school. She wrote home to a friend that the first foreign word she learned was daughter, and the next was give. Then she went to the people saying, “Give me your daughters.”

It was very hard to get scholars because it was thought a disgrace for a woman to know how to read, and because it was thought the better way to marry the girls off very early. To be sure, the cruel husbands beat them, and the quarrelsome, coarse women knew nothing better and took it all as a matter of course, but it was all the more pitiful for that.

At last, when the first day set for beginning school was almost over, a Nestorian bishop came bringing two girls saying, “These be your daughters and no man shall take them from you.” More came after that—ignorant, dirty, greasy creatures that must be taught to keep clean first of all; but they had souls, and were patiently taught. The people were poor, there were few books, and things were very hard. But the Bible was taught three hours a day, and a great deal of Scripture learned by heart. Miss Fiske and her teachers prayed and toiled on, and by and by a wonderful improvement was seen.

The busy missionary visited the women in the dark, dirty homes, and brought them to her room to pray with and teach them. By and by a Nestorian woman believed the truth and said to others, “The Lord has poured peace into my soul.”

**Our Memory Verse**

“And I will very gladly spend and be spent for you.”

II Cor. 12:15

One day there was a strange visitor before Miss Fiske’s door. It was a Koor-dish chief, one of the worst of men. He came with gun and dagger, and acted as if he would defy everybody. But he brought his daughter and left her in the school. His heart was reached at last, and he was wonderfully changed. He kept saying, “My great sins—my great Saviour,” and he led the rest of his family to the Lord Jesus. One time this man was praying in a meeting. When he rose from his knees he said, “O God, forgive me. I forgot to pray for Miss Fiske’s school.” He knelt again, and prayed earnestly for it.

In the year 1846 a most wonderful blessing came to the school. The Holy Spirit touched the girls’ hearts. They looked for places to pray, and used the teachers’ rooms for prayer-closets, and even the wood-cellar. It was not the only time that many conversions occurred. When the school was 19 years old 12 such seasons as this had come, and more than two-thirds of the scholars had learned to know Jesus Christ. Miss Fiske was full of joy, but she was much worn out. One time, after several such services, she was so tired that it seemed as if she could not sit up through the preaching service. A woman came and sat down behind her, so that she could lean on her, and said, “If you love me, lean hard.”

Worn out, Miss Fiske returned home, and failing to recover strength she died in 1864, in Shelburne, Mass., where she was born. She was in her 48th year. A grieving Nestorian girl wrote to America: “Is there another Miss Fiske in your country?” (Ed. note: Children, remember that Persia is the old name for present-day Iran. The word “Nestorian” refers to a branch of the Eastern Orthodox Church.)

—Julia H. Johnston, *Fifty Missionary Heroes Every Boy and Girl Should Know*, Fleming H. Revell Company

By Pastor F. E. Olderr, S.T.D.  
Watertown, S. Dak.

In his first article, Dr. Olderr told how he became involved in personal work and began an outline of how this work with seeking souls may be done. He continues that description in this second of two installments.

We come now to the dealing section.

Turn to I John 1:9 and let him read with you, as you point to the words here, and in every verse you use. "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." "Does that include you?" "Yes". "What does God say to you?" "If I confess my sins He will forgive me." "How do you know He will?" "I don't know". "Suppose I met you yesterday and made an appointment for today. Could you be sure that I would be here?" "Yes." "How do you know?" "You said so." "If God is sure in His Word that He forgives you, how sure can you be?" "I can be sure."

Continue, reading, pointing, "...cleanse us from all unrighteousness." "Do you know what God does when He forgives all?" "No." Turn to Hebrews 8:12, "Their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more." "What happens when a person does not remember?" "He forgets." "Well, if God can not remember that you have sinned, then He must deal with you as though you had never sinned?" "Yes".

"God has given us other passages so that we may know how much He forgives." Turn to Isaiah 1:18, "...sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow." "How much red is in pure white?" "None". To Psalms 103:12, "...the east is from the west, so far hath He removed our transgressions from us." "How far apart are east and west?" "They never meet." "Doesn't it begin to dawn upon you how much God has forgiven you?"

To John 1:12 "...power to become the sons of God." "What does "receive" mean?" "I don't know." "Well, let us suppose you are expecting company. The knock comes on the door.

You go to it and open the door. You extend your hand and ask the caller to come in. What have you done? Have you received him?" "Yes". "What does God say you will do if you receive Him?" "Become a child of God." "How do you know?" "He says so." "Are you a child of God?" (He says either, "yes" or "no" here. It doesn't matter at this point. Just go on, even if he doesn't answer. This is a "trial balloon." Even if he says "yes" you still have more dealing to do. You must not stop here.)

"Now, God has forgiven all of your sins. God has forgotten all of your sins. He will remember them no more. You have received Him into your heart and He has made you a child of God. Therefore, you have been born again." "Oh, I am born again! But I don't feel anything." "Was there ever a child unless it was born?" "No." "Also, there was never a child of God unless he was born again. Did you feel anything when you were born into this world?" "No." "So, do not worry if you cannot feel being born again. Feelings do not affect your salvation."

At this point we could stop and thank God for what He has done. The one before you has been "born again." Some public evangelists do stop here. But our job is not done yet. We have made the beginning. The seed has been sown and some harvest has been gathered. But only a partial harvest. If we stop at this point we will have won a soul, but may lose a Christian worker. We need many Christian workers in this age! Let us press on! Let us train soul winners for our churches!

Let us press on! Let us train soul winners for our churches!

We continue speaking. "You know, just as in our physical life we need food, rest, and exercise, so in our spiritual life. We need these same things: food, rest, exercise. As to food (Matthew 4:4, reading), 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.' John 6:35, 'I am the bread of life: he

that cometh to Me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on Me shall never thirst.' When we are healthy we crave three good meals a day. If our spiritual life is growing we will need hours a day with Jesus." "What shall I do?"

"Get a good readable Bible of your very own. Read the Gospel of John over and over for the next year. Let's look at John 20:31, '...life through His name.' Find as many examples of 'life through His name' that you can. Next, have regular, definite, daily private and (if he is a family person) family devotions."

"We also need rest. If we do not have rest, we become nervous and irritable. I Peter 5:7, 'Casting all your care upon Him.' We do this by prayer. Jesus carries our burdens, if we will let Him. Bring it to the Lord in prayer is what the hymn tells us." At this point Pastor Rydbeck would tell us the story of the old Jew peddler. Daily he carried a heavy bag. It always seemed to be most heavy. As the day wore on he accumulated more and more until it was bulging. When filled, he would trudge homeward. On this day a kind driver stopped with his horse and buggy. The peddler scrambled aboard. The driver clucked his horse and started off. They could be seen going down the road, the horse, the buggy, the driver, and the peddler sitting beside the driver, with his bag still slung over his shoulder! In time, the driver asked, "Don't you want to let down your bag in the box?" "Oh," replied the peddler, "you have been so kind to give me a ride, I couldn't ask you to carry my bag also." Jesus wants us to let Him carry our bags.

"Philippians 4:11, '...in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content.' Here, Paul, a prisoner, about to be executed. He had been beaten on the chest so he could not stoop. He had been beaten on the back so he could not lie down. He said he was content. Paul knew the secret of rest through prayer.

"Last is exercise. Although we have food and rest, if we do not exercise, our body will not grow. Ephesians 5:8, 'Walk as children of light.' Walking is

[Continued on page 10]

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# editorials

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## THANKS TO GOD

Our Canadian friends observe Thanksgiving Day on the second Monday in October. There's something to be said for having it then. It comes closer to the main harvest season, for one thing, and farmers and gardeners have more recently gathered in the produce of a summer's work.

In the U. S. we celebrate Thanksgiving on the fourth Thursday of November. On either day it is a time in which to say "Thank You" to the Lord for all His mercies and benefits in the year. And so it is that we gather in our churches to raise our voices in the hymns of thanksgiving, to lift our hearts in prayers of praise to God and to hear a meditation on the topic of being grateful. In most services, too, there is an offering to some worthy cause and through which we may share of our bounty.

And we have received much. Certainly the times have been more difficult for us economically. We may have had to forego one purchase or other that we might have made in better times, but we haven't suffered. Not most of us anyway. We still have so much of this world's goods that the temptation of materialism is always near at hand.

If we have good health, that is much for which to be thankful, too. Some have it better than others that way. Some have no problems, others are just grateful to be up and around, to be able to manage in spite of their aches and pains. Some have been restored to health this past year. Now they can be thankful for what they learned in the hard places.

This wasn't meant to be a list of things for which to give thanks to God. However, we hope you are making such an accounting. But we do want to add our challenge to all our readers to be grateful people, to give thanks where it is due. And first of all that means to the Lord. We've written of the material benefits. Ranking above them are the spiritual ones: the Word, the Savior, the Church. How richly we are blessed!

"Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless His holy name!" (Psalm 103:1).

## WORSE THAN WE THINK

Many of us live in rural America, in small towns and cities and on farms. We are close to nature and can easily get away to walk in quiet in the countryside. In northern regions and Canada we have just recently watched again the changing of the seasons, summer into autumn, and have praised God for the beauty we beheld.

We live lives of tranquility, really. It is a rare occurrence to hear of a break-in or robbery near by. Not as rare as it once was though. Occasionally we learn of youth in our com-

munities involved with drugs and alcohol, but largely we are untouched by these things. There is some looseness with sex also in rural America, and we don't condone it for a moment, but we have to agree that life is quite sheltered for us compared to some places.

Compared to New York City, for example. The most heart-rending thing we've read in a long time came from one Covenant House on West 41st Street, an independent Roman Catholic mission, begun by a priest who accepted his own challenge to others to "get involved."

Let's read a paragraph in his newsletter. "There was an article in today's paper about a bust the cops made last night at the Club Sansoci, an after hours joint a couple of blocks from Under 21 (one of CH's homes). They auctioned off kids there, to pimps, to the highest bidder, for money, drugs and guns. The pimps, the buyers, could check out the merchandise (the kids) before they bid on them. The average price for a kid was 10,000 dollars. The auctions have been going on for years. According to police reports, hundreds of steady customers used the place as a central market to buy kids. About 50 pimps and girls were in the place when it was raided. The owner of the place is a member of the Genovese crime family. His name is Louis Sorrentino and he has an arrest record dating back 30 years: gambling, loan sharking, narcotics, burglary and possession of dangerous weapons. Mr. Sorrentino ran a place where you could buy a kid for 10,000 dollars and then put her on the street to make 300 dollars a night for you. At that rate, not a bad return on your investment. If the kid lived."

The female prostitute has been on the scene for a long time. An accompanying article by a news reporter quotes the priest: "It's on the Minnesota Strip, ten blocks along Eighth Avenue with one hundred sex-related businesses: massage parlors, topless bars, fleabag hotels, thousands of girls and young women, boys and men. It earns one and a half billion dollars a year."

A newer phenomenon is the male prostitute. Some of the boys who sell themselves for sex are as young as 11. These are "children" who have been cut adrift and have no means of supporting themselves except through sex, unless they confine themselves to robbery and violence. Drugs are almost always involved, too.

They have no hope *unless* help comes from the outside in one of two ways, hopefully both. First, that the courts, prodded by concerned society, "throw the book" at the pimps (those who control the prostitutes). This means to strike at the heart of the industry.

Let us quote the priest one more time. "The American Civil Liberties Union can be selectively and highly indignant. I wish they would spend time defending these kids held in involuntary servitude. They could bring a class action against the city for failing to enforce the laws, but they won't do that. But they'll protect the right of someone to stand outside my church and pick up men. The stupid, stupid moral ambiguity. If I were to publish an ethnic slur in my newspaper, oh, there would be such an outcry. But I could write a book on how to seduce children and they would defend my right to publish it."

The second way in which hope can come is through social

## EDITORIALS . . .

agencies and Christian missions, especially the latter because they are concerned with the soul as well as the material. A city like New York is so huge. Any one effort to fight evil, to reclaim human lives looks so small, even if a few hundred or a few thousand are reached. But that doesn't mean no effort should be made.

We look toward the day when graduates of our Bible School will be involved in mission work among the lost souls as described above. It doesn't have to be in New York City; it could be in the Twin Cities, in Seattle or Cleveland. We look toward the day when the Association itself can be engaged in such a mission of reclamation. We don't know when that will be possible, but let's keep the idea before us.

### COMMITMENT TO PRAYER

The Covenant House mentioned above has about 30 workers. Rules are simple and there are no vows taken, only a shared agreement. One thing *is* required; each member must spend three hours each day in prayer, two shared, one private.

That's quite a thing. So much to do. The task is overwhelming, impossible, but there has to be a commitment to prayer.

We like that idea. We probably wouldn't do it ourselves, but we recognize the principle. It reminds us, as good Lutherans, of Martin Luther, who spent more time in prayer the busier he was.

A required three hours of prayer can be only form, too. It can be mere recitation of words. Then it would be wrong. There has to be an effort toward sincerity, an openness toward the Lord.

Our own attempts at prayer for one hour straight have been few. Not prayer *and* meditation, not prayer *and* Bible reading, but only prayer for an hour. However, there is no question but that it is a salutary experience for spiritual strength and health.

One can wonder what the state of the Christian church would be today if all professing Christians were much more in prayer—shared and private—than is the case. Likely we all shy away from setting regulations for others in reference to prayer. For ourselves we might with profit set higher goals of time spent in prayer than we have been content with up to now, not for personal glory but to tap into greater experience of the Lord's supply of power.

### GET THE PICTURE

Something must be said about pictures which are submitted for publication. We've had to turn some down because they are too dark, or too blurred or don't tell the story they're supposed to tell. At other times when we've tried to give the sender the benefit of the doubt, the result hasn't been a happy one for him, for us or for our readers.

Pictures in black and white are certainly preferred. But any picture—black and white or colored—which is dark to begin with will only be darker when it is printed. Try to send photos which are distinct.

At any rate, we trust you'll understand if we have to reject a picture because we don't think it will reproduce well or for some reason it doesn't fit in. †

## SOUL-WINNING . . .

good exercise. Walk in holiness."

"There is one thing more. Suppose a lawyer should draw up a contract for you and me. I sign it. What if you don't sign it?" "*It is not a contract.*" "Right. Romans 10:10, 'With the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.' Now it is true that God has imputed righteousness unto you because you have believed. He has fulfilled His part. God is asking you to fulfill your part and to confess. Confess what? Matthew 10:32, ' . . . confess Me before men.' To whom are you willing to go tonight (now, today) and confess Christ?" Here, have him answer, to give a commitment.

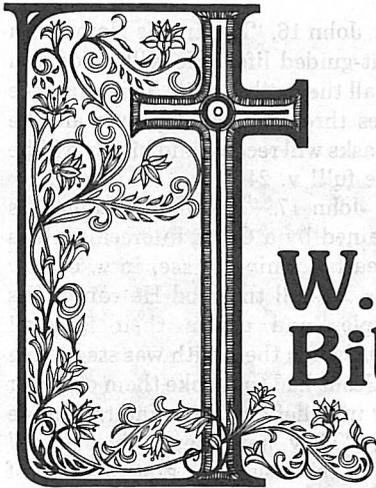
This little outline has been used of God to bring many to faith. It was the secret behind the revival of Messiah Lutheran Church in Chicago. It is a guide for any who can say with St. Paul, "The love of Christ constrains us."

Some might ask, does it really work? Certainly, it does. God has promised that His Word will not return void. Then did every person come through to the blessed assurance? No. They did not. Why not?

You may have this experience. Sometimes a person is coming along nicely. He assents to the truth of I John 1:9, Hebrews 8:12, and it seems also with John 1:12. But a "miscarriage" has occurred. Why?

There is still sin in the way. The person may have confessed *sin*, but not *a sin*! This unconfessed sin is nearly always against certain people or a certain person. When you sense something happened to sidetrack or miscarry, you look at the person and say: "John, there is still one unconfessed sin." Ask him if he won't go to this person and ask his forgiveness. Until he is willing to do that it is futile to deal any further with him. Tell him kindly that nothing more can be done until he (she) is willing to seek forgiveness.

We hold fast to the faith delivered to the saints when we share that good news of the Gospel with others. May God give us many of His children who will rise up in our Lutheran Church with the light of the Gospel of salvation and its assurance in this dark age. †



# W.M.F. Bible Study

December 1980

## Life in His Name concluding Bible study in John

by Mrs. Harvey Carlson  
Annual WMF Convention  
June 11, 1980  
Valley City, N. Dak.

The Gospel of John is called the heart of the Gospels. It was written after Matthew, Mark and Luke. John included many things about the life of Christ which the other Gospel writers left out. The lovingkindness and tender mercy of our heavenly Father is surely revealed in this wonderful book.

John, the writer, was the one who leaned against Jesus' breast at the Last Supper. He refers to himself five times as "the disciple whom Jesus loved." Obviously he found the nearness of Jesus very comfortable and with a heart overflowing with love for his Lord, wrote this fourth Gospel.

The key verses, John 20:30, 31, reveal God's call to us and John's purpose in writing: "Many other signs therefore Jesus also performed in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; but these have been written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name."

Notice that John could have written much more. He was selective and wrote so that the earnest seeker, the honest doubter and even the skeptic could be convinced that this very ordinary-looking man wasn't ordinary. He

was extra-ordinary! His first words, in chapter 1, exalt Jesus, Who, he said, was in the beginning—with God, and that He was God the Creator. John makes clear that in Him is that certain quality of life—eternal life—that is also light and lights up every man. God reveals His glory through John, who wrote, "we beheld His glory, glory as of the Only Begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth!"

God calls us, in John, to *believe* that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God—the Preeminent One—worthy of our worship, full allegiance and all our love. More than that, God wants us to *have* or possess "Life in His Name."

In this short space we will try to examine just some of the qualities of this all-important "Life in His Name" and then the practical question, *how* we may have it, enjoy it and share it with others?

God does want us to know Jesus and to have the solid assurance of "Life in His Name." It is easy to be deceived and this is the reason we have so many Jehovah's Witnesses, Mormons, Moonies and zealous, hard working religious people in churches who are so sure they are right but really are without "Life in His Name." Either we have *life* or we do not have it. If we do not possess this "Life" we are still outside the door of the Good Shepherd's fold and we can not share this life with anyone else. All our works are just "wood,

hay and stubble" and will one day be burned up. We cannot afford to take this "Life" for granted!

As a young woman, I was one who did this. I had only a false assurance. In my home town of Moose Lake, Minnesota, I was known and even honored as a Christian girl. But when I was at Augsburg College, during a Spiritual Emphasis week, the Word of God became alive to me. The words of Jesus, from Matthew 12:30, "He who is not with Me is against Me," were driven home to my heart by the Holy Spirit. I saw I had been all for *me*. I thought Augsburg should be so grateful to have *me* as a student; I was convicted of awful pride and rejecting Jesus as Savior from sin.

I earnestly prayed for forgiveness and received Christ by faith as my only hope. I shared with my friends back home, my pride, my decision and my heart's desire. I discovered a brand new life, "Life in His Name." There was in my heart a sweet assurance, a witness (Romans 8:16) and a new love for Jesus Himself. A new appetite for the Word stirred me and I noticed a new warmth in my heart for that little old-fashioned janitor of my church whom I had looked down on before. "We *know* that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brethren" (I John 3:14) gave me solid assurance. My joy was so full! Knowing and possessing this wonderful Lord made me secure and free. I didn't need anyone else on earth. Jesus was all-sufficient and that was all that mattered.

Now we will just dip into some of the chapters of John and see the unfolding of this vital "Life in His Name."

A. John 2. It is like the very supreme wine that Jesus created at the wedding feast. Look at v. 10. It was so good that it brought comment, a refreshing new creation! "If any man is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold new things have come." As a beautiful example, I think of a timid, frightened, pretty little mother with her two small children, who came regularly to our Sunday worship service. This was in one of our former parishes. She listened so eagerly to the Word. She was so hungry! One day she heard that if God would forgive and forget her sin, she could

forgive herself and forget her sin, too! She went home, got down on her knees and prayed a long time, until 2 a.m., in fact. Then she dialed the parsonage and exclaimed, "I'm praying and Jesus is here, I know He is! I'm so afraid He will leave. Please say something to strengthen me and tell me He won't leave me!" John 1:12 and Revelation 3:20 were given to her. The following Sunday morning, relaxed and radiant, she said, "I have peace! Even the old wallpaper in my kitchen looks beautiful!" She was a brand-new creation in Christ!

B. John 3. This "Life in His Name" is a new birth brought about by the Holy Spirit. Vs. 5, 7 read, "Unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God . . . you must be born again." I don't have any problem believing I received new life in baptism. But I believe I fell away from that grace. That was easy. I had to be brought back by the Holy Spirit through godly sorrow over my sin and a living faith in Jesus as Savior.

C. John 4. This "Life" is "living water" that quenches the thirst of one whose heart has been torn to pieces by terrible failure. The Samaritan woman had tried hard to find happiness with five marriages and every one failed. With the sixth man she didn't even bother to go to the marriage altar. She must have been in the pit of despair, despised and rejected by men, but not by the compassionate Savior. He broke through the race barrier and the sex barrier, v. 9 (it was a shock that He would speak to a Samaritan and a woman). He broke through the moral barrier, v. 18, and told her Who He was, v. 26. The results were beautiful. Many believed in Jesus because of the word of this once despairing, despised woman, this failure! She drank *living water*—others did, too!

Are you suffering because of terrible failure in your life or failure in your family? Take comfort. Jesus is still saying, "Whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him shall *never thirst*; but the water that I shall give him shall become in him a well of water springing up to eternal life."

D. John 5. "Life in His Name" is healing in the most hopeless cases. Here was a sin-sick soul. No one had

been able to help him for 38 years, then Jesus came and all was changed.

E. John 9. "Life in His Name" is a persecuted life. Because of the blind man's humble testimony of Jesus, he was troubled by curious neighbors, deserted by his parents and finally put out of the synagogue by the Pharisees. He was hurt. But Jesus came and comforted him and gave him a new revelation of Himself.

F. John 10. "Life in His Name" is an abundant life, v. 10. I think of it as "life with a surplus" or an overflow of "Ps." There was the *protection* for "His own" in the Garden of Gethsemane, in John 18. The *provision* of breakfast for "His own," in John 21. There was His *peace* the Sunday evening after the resurrection when the panic-stricken disciples were in that locked room wondering who would be the next victim of crucifixion. Then suddenly, His Presence and His word, "Peace." Then they were glad! John 20. They also received *power* when He breathed on them the Holy Spirit.

G. John 11. "Life in His Name" is victory over death. Our separation from our loved ones is only for a little while. We do not sorrow as those who have no hope. If we believe, we will see the glory of God, v. 40.

H. John 13. "Life in His Name" is humble, loving service. The disciples must have been just stunned to see their Master disrobe, gird Himself with a towel, and get down on His knees and wash their dirty feet. Then He said, "If I then, the Lord and the Teacher, washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet." The little humble deeds of mercy do not go unnoticed by our Lord.

I. John 14. "Life in His Name" has the cure for the troubled heart. There are at least nine cures recorded here but I will mention just one. Jesus' promise to come again and receive us to Himself, to take us out of this world of tribulation, is our blessed hope that should soften every blow.

J. John 15. This *life* is a fruit-bearing life. There is in my heart a holy fear as I read, "Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit, He takes away." The fruit is Christ *in the believer*—His love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.

K. John 16. "Life in His Name" is a Spirit-guided life. "He will guide you into all the truth," v. 13. This guidance comes through earnest prayer and he who asks will receive and his joy will be made full! v. 24.

L. John 17. "Life in His Name" is sustained by a Great Intercessor. It is so heart-warming to see, in v. 6, how Jesus tells all the good He can of His disciples and covers their failings! Even though their faith was staggering and Jesus had to rebuke them often for their unbelief and other faults, yet He said, "They have kept Thy Word." This is the consistent gracious way of our High Priest!

M. John 18, 19. "Life in His Name" is possible because the Good Shepherd laid down His life for the sheep. God's love went to the limit on the cross. We are going to spend all eternity singing, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain!" God forbid that we glory in anything else but the cross!

*"If anyone loves Me, he will keep My Word; and My Father will love him, and we will come to him, and make Our abode with Him."*

*John 14:23*

N. John 21. "Life in His Name" has as center and compelling motive love for the Lord Jesus. The Lord asked Peter three times if he loved Him. This is the real test of our relationship to God. That little mother who prayed until 2 o'clock in the morning went to work with the Sunday School. We did not have to beg her to volunteer. She had so much love for her Lord she couldn't do enough. "This is the love of

## Luther League Federation

# LEADERSHIP RETREAT

December 28-29

Hear:

Pastor Kenneth Pentti

Pastor Francis Monseth, Mr. Don Rodvold

All League leaders

Plan to come

to the ARC, Osceola, Wis.

God, that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not burdensome." "We love, because He first loved us" I John 5:3; 4:19.

This is just a scanty summary of "Life in His Name," the Life that our loving heavenly Father desires for us. He loves us and offers it to us without money and without price. The question is, how can we have it, enjoy it and share it?

God calls us to open wide the door of our hearts to His only begotten Son in Whom He is well pleased. John was inspired by the Holy Spirit to use simple words to make the way unmistakably clear. Words such as, receive, behold the Lamb of God, follow, obey, hear, eat His flesh, drink His blood, confess, abide, love, tend My Lambs, shepherd My sheep.

I want to use our theme verse as a summary: "If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and we will come to him, and make Our abode with Him" (14:23).

Seven years ago our 28-year-old daughter, mother of four little girls, was slowly dying of leukemia. My little prayer group faithfully joined me every Thursday afternoon to pray for Sharon, her family and us. One afternoon, Sharon joined us and prayed the same words that Peter used in John 21, "Lord, You know that I love You!" This is all I have needed for comfort! I know my precious daughter is in the presence of our loving Savior because she loved Him! She had confessed her sin and felt her own unworthiness.

Now, I ask myself, "Do I love the Lord Jesus?" Do you? Have you seen your unworthiness, realized His tender love for you as a sinner and then have you fallen in love with Him?

"We will come to him, and make Our abode with him." Here is the greatest blessing of all—the Father, Son and Holy Spirit will come to us—settle down and make Himself at home in our hearts. This is what it means to have "Life in His Name." God calls us to receive it, share its abundance, and live and pray to share it with others. †

## Personalities

Rev. Sterling Johnson, LEM evangelist, is speaking at special meetings in Bethany Lutheran Church, Bluegrass, rural Sebeka, Minn., this week, Nov. 9-13. Local pastor is Rev. Fred Carlson.

The address for Rev. and Mrs. John Rieth and family in Williston, N. Dak. 58801, should be 1823 10th Ave. E., not the house number previously given.

Rev. Gerald F. Mundfrom, Osceola, Wis., was the guest speaker at special meetings in Salem and Golden Valley Lutheran Churches, in the Wannaska, Minn., area, Oct. 5-9. Mr. Paul Flaten, Newfolden, Minn., serves the congregations.

Rev. Raynard Huglen, Newfolden, Minn., began serving Bethlehem Lutheran Church, Greenbush, Minn., on Oct. 12. It had most recently been served by Mr. Jerry Olson, Newfolden.

## With our evangelist

Here are two November appointments for our evangelist, Pastor Kenneth Pentti. Pray for these meetings.

Everett, Wash.

Calvary Lutheran Church

Nov. 16-21

Leslie Galland, pastor

St. Paul, Minn.

Hauge Federation's Couples' Retreat, Salvation Army Retreat Center

Nov. 28-30

## Laymen to meet

The Northern Minnesota Lutheran Laymen's Society will meet at Westaker Lutheran Church, Newfolden, on Sunday, Nov. 23, at 2:30 p.m. The text for discussion will be Revelation 19. All are welcome.

Art Joppru, Chairman  
Joe Jacobson, secretary

## WMF Honorary Membership pins given . . .

### Strathcona, Minn.



Poplar Grove Church honored Mrs. Cora Wiskow. Her daughter-in-law, Mrs. Cordell Wiskow presented the pin.

### Astoria, Ore.



Bethany Lutheran Church awarded Miss Nan Johnson a pin for her many years of service to the church.

### Granite Falls, Minn.



Faith Lutheran Church WMF president, Mrs. Reuben Wee presented Mrs. John Arlen Johnson with an Honorary Membership pin. Mrs. Jack Randall assisted in honoring her mother.

## WMF PROJECT DOLLARS

Send to: National WMF Treasurer  
Mrs. Emil Haas, Jr.  
Rt. 1,  
Valley City, N. Dak. 58072



The Bible Faith Lutheran Church, Reddipalem, recently celebrated the dedication of their church. It is built with a pole frame, hay and palm leaves. Pictured L. to R.: Mr. Premananda Reddy, local church lay leader; Mr. Ch Samuel, BFLC vice president; Pastor B. Yesupadam, local lay pastor; Mr. V. Benerji, BFLC president; Pastor G. Prabhudass; Mr. D. Satyanandam, BFLC treasurer.

## BFLC leaders gather for dedication of church in Reddipalem, India

Many BFLC workers gathered to celebrate the church's temporary building dedication. It was also the spiritual birthday of the local pastor, B. Yesupadam. The drums and lanterns were purchased at \$30 each from money sent by AFLBS mission shara-thon.



## Evangelize

Give us a watchword for the hour,  
A thrilling word, a word of power;  
A battle-cry, a flaming breath,  
That calls to conquest or to death;  
A word to rouse the church from  
rest,

To heed her Master's high behest—  
The call is given: Ye hosts arise,  
Our watchword is Evangelize!

The glad evangel now proclaim  
Through all the earth in Jesus' name;  
This word is ringing through the skies,  
Evangelize! Evangelize!

To dying men, a fallen race,  
Make know that gift of Gospel grace;  
The world that now in darkness lies,  
Evangelize! Evangelize!

Henry Crocker (*Youth's Favorite Poems*)

### GIVE US YOUR NAME SUGGESTIONS

The Board of Trustees and the executive committee of the Schools Corporation are seeking suggestions for names for the two dormitory-classroom buildings and perhaps for the chapel at Association Free Lutheran Bible School. All suggestions should be sent to Rev. Ralph Rokke, secretary of the Corporation, 5837 Pleasant Ave., So., Minneapolis, Minn. 55419.

Actual naming of these facilities will not be done in haste and only through proper procedure. Securing these suggestions is only the first step.

General areas in which names may fall are Bible names or words or names of people associated with the Bible School's history or other Lutheran history.

Suggestions should be submitted by January 1, 1981.

Pastor Raynard Huglen  
Chairman, Schools Corporation

## AFLBS Christmas Concert December 14

4 pm



The recently completed new church for Beaver Creek Lutheran of rural Tioga, N. Dak.

*When a man does love his enemies, he knows that God has done a tremendous work in him, and every one else knows it, too. Oswald Chambers*

## News Notes

**Badger, Minn.**—The parish Young Adults met at the high school gym one evening in September to play volleyball. In the devotional program, Marty and Barb Johnson shared from God's Word.

**Ferndale, Wash.**—The Mission Society began its new year in September with a potluck dinner. Mr. Verle Dean, Spicer, Minn., was the guest speaker.

At Sunday School rally day the film "Whispering Mountains" was shown. It is the story of a young boy in the Swiss Alps. Mr. Olve Willand is S. S. superintendent.

**Boscobel, Wis.**—The Sunday School teachers at Trinity Lutheran were installed on Reformation Sunday, Oct. 26.

Rev. Richard Snipstead, AFLC president, preached at the services in Trinity last Sunday, Nov. 9.

**Sedan, Minn.**—On Sunday, Sept. 28, the annual fall festival was held at Scandia Lutheran. Tony Stockman, first-year student at Free Lutheran Seminary, was the guest speaker. He is married to the former Rita Ward of Scandia. Music was provided by the Sunday School and the WMF. Margaret Berg, president of the Scandia WMF, was in charge of the program.

An offering was taken to support Rev. and Mrs. David Abel. Much produce and other food supplies were brought to be given to the Bible School in Minneapolis.



Mr. and Mrs. Tony Stockman and Royce, with some of the food gifts for AFLBS.



## A Minister's Musings

Pastor Einar Unseth



### Why do mission work?

Mark 16:15

"After all, these people have their own religion and are happy, so why not leave them alone?" These indifferent words came from an American tourist on a train in Japan some 20 years ago. Being seated beside this tourist, I had asked him about himself. After he had told me about himself for a long time, he finally asked me, "And what are you doing in Japan?" When I replied that I was serving there as a missionary, he shocked me by commenting, "After all, these people have their own religion and are happy, so why not leave them alone?"

Apparently the customary smiles on the faces of the Japanese people had led this man to assume that all Japanese are truly happy. He had not had the privilege that I had had of hearing a broken Buddhist saying, "I have to do something about this sin problem." Obviously he himself lacked spiritual awareness. Therefore he did not realize that we are all created for fellowship with our Maker and that it is consequently impossible for us to have a satisfying life until we experience this right relationship to Him. He ignored Christ's command to do mission work when He said, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature."

The necessity of doing mission work was brought afresh to me last evening when I heard a message from a Christian Totonac Indian named Manuel. This man is from a tribe of 250,000 people who live in the mountains of Mexico. One writer states that to the casual observer, these Totonacs appear happy and seem to live unburdened by the ponderous problems associated with

modern society. However, the situation is exactly the opposite. Many of these people are hopeless alcoholics early in life. After a village fiesta, it is not uncommon to see many of the women sleeping off a drunken stupor in the tall grass beside the mountain trail, oblivious to the plaintive cries of the children strapped to their wooden idols, yet they are very unhappy and fear-filled. One of the things that aroused Manuel's interest was the account of Jesus Christ casting out an unclean spirit from a man. This prompted him to inquire, "Is this truth—the words that Jesus is stronger than all evil spirits?" He admitted that his people have a great fear of evil spirits and that he wanted to be freed from the fear of the evil spirits of death.

Hearing of Christ led Manuel to believe on Christ as his Savior. However, this important decision led to a great problem for his father drove him out of his home. This homeless boy was taken in by his missionary friend who helped him to obtain an education. After receiving this education Manuel returned to his own people to tell them the Good News of salvation in Christ. He wanted to obey Christ's command to preach the Gospel to every creature. He knew that every creature has sinned and is guilty before God and therefore needs Christ to help him and save him. This is why he is doing mission work.

And this is why, we, too, must do mission work—because Christ commands it and because people without Christ can never be happy or saved even though they have their own religion. Can we withhold the Gospel from those who have never heard it? †

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