

Good News Unlimited

Sola Christus — Sola Scriptura — Sola Fide — Sola Gratia

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Street I Heard of Bethlehem

by Donald J. Pratt

Its Inexpressible Gift

by J. H. G. Jones

Christmas As Usual?

by Fred McHugh

“... and the Word
Immanuel”
“God with us”

December 1976

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Editorial

Some time ago two very devout Christians knocked on our front door. After the usual courtesies, they asked if they could join me in a short time of prayer and Bible study. I agreed, and for more than an hour we sat in our lounge conversing on various biblical themes. During the conversation, one of my visitors noticed our Christmas tree with all its colorful decorations and gifts. "I believe it's wrong for Christians to use a tree in their celebration of Christmas," she said. "Don't you know that many pagan customs crept into the church during the Dark Ages?" she argued. "You are right that many of our Christmas customs have pagan origins," I responded, "but it is not accurate to say they 'crept in' as if the leaders of the church were half asleep." I reached for an encyclopedia and read the following advice given by Pope Gregory I to Christian missionaries:

Let the shrines of idols by no means be destroyed but let the idols which are in them be destroyed. Let water be consecrated and sprinkled in these temples; let altars be erected . . . so that the people, not seeing their temples destroyed, may displace error, and recognize and adore the true God . . . And because they were wont to sacrifice oxen to devils, some celebration should be given in exchange for this . . . they should celebrate a religious feast and worship God by their feasting, so that still keeping outward pleasures, they may more readily receive spiritual joys.

It seems to me, that from the beginning, the church was well aware of the pagan origins of our Christmas customs. The issue is this: Was it wrong for the Christian church to take pagan religious dates (December 25, etc.) and customs (Christmas trees with lights, etc.) and *transform* them by using them to the glory of the one true God?

My visitors answered with an emphatic "Yes!" But I think it's possible to be "overrighteous" on this issue (Ec 7:16). Think of what we would lose if we stripped our Bibles clean of all those things that were borrowed from the pagan cultures surrounding Israel. The supreme symbol of the Christian faith, the cross, would have to go, for while Israel hung a *dead* body on a tree (Dt 21:22,23), death by crucifixion was practiced by the Phoenicians, the Carthaginians and the Romans. And while some earlier studies had a tendency to overestimate Israel's indebtedness to her neighbors, nevertheless, who will deny, today, that Israel's prophets did borrow from the literature of Canaan, Babylon, etc. "Israel did not say a flat No of repudiation to the advanced culture into which it entered but rather said No and Yes," writes B. W. Anderson. "There could be no compromise between faith in Yahweh and the gods of paganism. However, Israel's No at this deepest level was usually accompanied by a Yes of appropriation, that is, by taking over forms of worship . . . and literary forms (such as the Psalm) and converting them to the service of Yahweh" (*Out of the Depths*, pp. 40,41). Many scholars would cite Psalm 29 as an example of an adaptation of a Canaanite hymn originally sung to Hadad, the god of the storm.

No informed Christian, today, doubts Israel's indebtedness to her neighbors. The crucial point to note, however, is the way her prophets transformed or adapted that which they borrowed and rendered them suitable for the worship of the one true God.

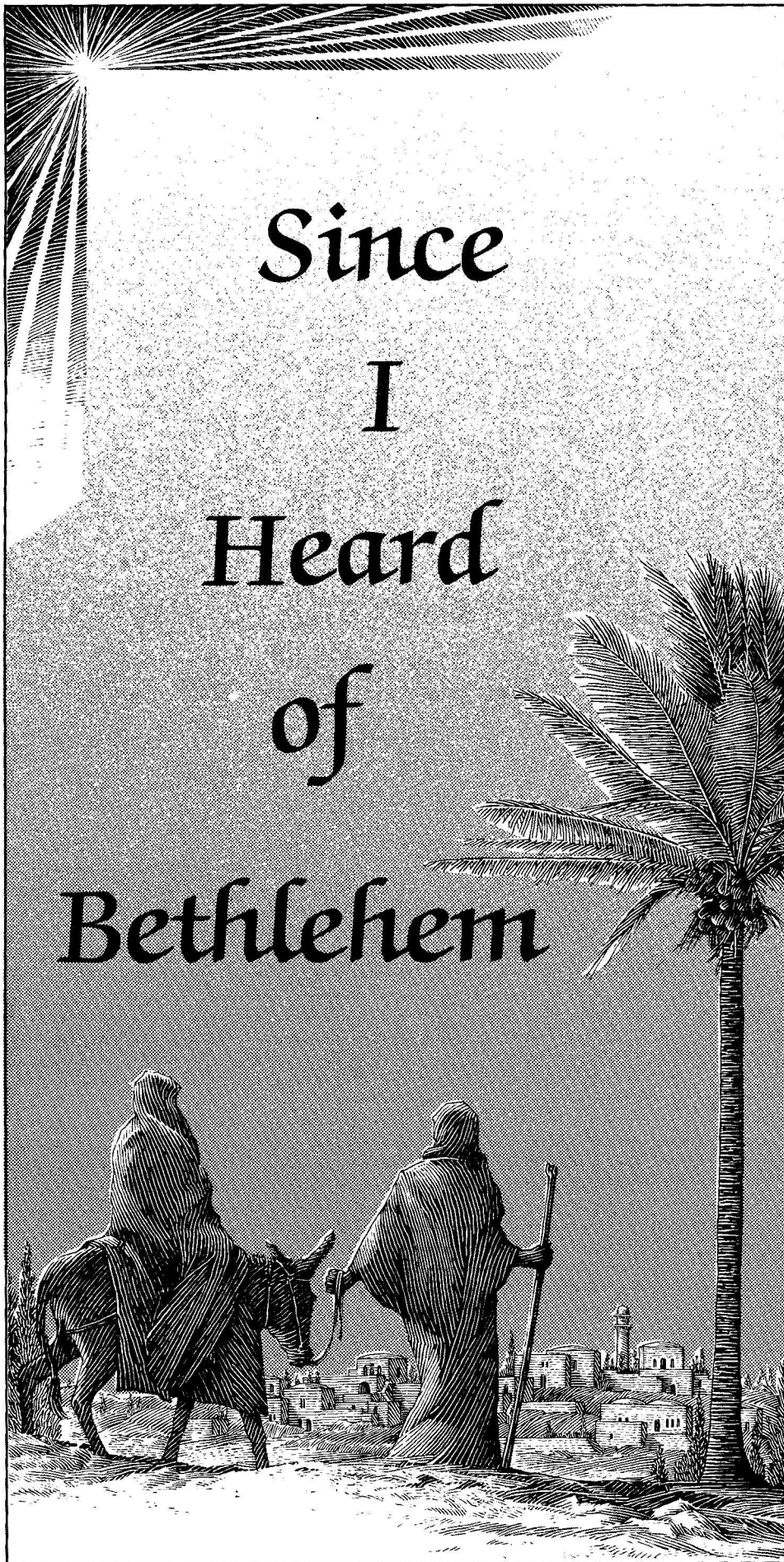
Surely this is the critical point to remember with our Christmas customs. We cannot deny their pagan origins. All we ask, is that our critics recognize that we are using them not as the pagans used them but rather to the glory of God.

I am profoundly grateful for the opportunity of setting aside one day of the year to celebrate the birth of Jesus, to enjoy the spirit of goodwill of my family and friends. I can truthfully say, that in my childhood days, even when we celebrated Christmas without any overt religious practices such as family prayer, Bible study and church attendance, etc., this special day, that brought us the opportunity to think of others, had a powerful influence for good.

And so too, Christmas 1986 will be a power for good if the customs and forms of Christmas are infused with the Spirit of Christ—the spirit of selfless love.

—Noel Mason

Since I Heard of Bethlehem



CHRISTMAS HAS many layers of meaning. At the lowest level is the layer of nostalgia—we think back on our own childhood Christmases. We longingly review those distant days of family union and reunions, of music, gifts and feasting. Oh, that they might return! And, of course, at this level, we are somewhat self-deceived, for nothing in the past (or the future for that matter) possesses quite the perfection or the terror we, in imagination, ascribe to it—except when we contemplate the world to come.

Then there is the better level of association. Christmas bespeaks a God who wonderfully condescended to become a seed in the womb of a peasant woman that he might take what was ours and give us what was his. Marvelous humility of him who is all glorious! The inn rejected him, the sacrificial animals and the shepherds welcomed him, the soldiers of Herod threatened him, but the mills of God ground on slowly and salvation was sure.

The final level is when we ask ourselves: "What have I rendered unto the Lord for all his benefits towards me? What difference has the message of Christmas made to my life?" Let me share my own experience when I recently read an old Christmas card written by Dr. Sangster a little while before his death.

Being and Doing

One day while waiting for a church service to start, I opened one of my many old notebooks and began to read again some notes from books I had read over twenty years ago. Truths, which had impressed me decades back, sprang out from the scribbled ink lines. But further reflection on the poor progress in applying these insights to my daily life brought me sadness and humility.

Meditating upon this, today, as the result of rereading an old book, I realized afresh that my old nature was just as bad as it had ever been, and that the growth of the new was

by Desmond Ford

slow, tedious, and often halted. But let me share with you what impressed me in the early sixties. The words are those of preacher, administrator, and author, W. E. Sangster, one-time leader of Methodism in Britain:

It became clear to me that what we are is so much more important than what we do; that what we do is at its best only a reflex of what we are: that the big business of life is not to crowd more and more into our days (my own life-long error) but to be in our small way an incarnation of our Lord. No day is a failure in which Jesus has really indwelt us: no day is a success (however effective in the worldly sense) in which his reflection in us has been badly blurred.

The aim, then, is to so order one's thinking: so steadily to hold the mirror of one's life up to the Lord that all my life becomes a reflection of His. Then one preaches without words; love informs all one's doings, and the slightest contact with another is capable of imparting the Lord.

Life is not to be assessed by the amount done, but by the love offered and the width of the channel I offer God for His grace.

Now read another statement from Sangster. Towards the end of his life he printed the following lines on a Christmas card which was sent to all his friends:

Slow me down, Lord. Give me, amidst the confusion of my day, the calmness of the everlasting hills. Break the tension of my nerves and muscles with the soothing music of the singing streams that live in my memory. Help me to know the magical restorative power of sleep. Teach me the art of taking minute vacations . . . of slowing down to look at a flower, to chat with a friend, to pat a dog, to read a few lines from a good book. Slow me down, Lord, and inspire me to send my roots deep into the soil of Life's enduring values that I may grow towards the stars of my greater destiny.

When his wife first saw the wording,

she exclaimed: "You can't send *that*, Will. Some of our friends need a squib to wake them up, not advice to slow them down.

Of course, she was partly right. "Man," as Luther said, "is like a drunken peasant who falls off his horse on one side or the other." None of us are quite balanced, we tend to err on either one side of an extreme or its opposite. Mrs. Sangster's protest that many err by extreme quiescence was the protest of good sense and is applicable to a large number who sit in Christian pews and to some behind the pulpit.

The Need for a Quiet Hour

But for today, I am looking at the opposite error—an error linked not only to temperament, blood sugar, hormones and the like, but also to our inborn legalism. When Herbert Spencer visited the USA in the nineteenth century, newspapers wrote up his speech with avid interest. Spencer warned his listeners that men in this country were too much involved in activity that seemed endless. He suggested that intemperance in labor would considerably shorten the lives of most American businessmen. Perhaps there is something in that. William James was a native-born American, hailed as one of the two greatest philosophers belonging to this continent, the other being John Dewey. His sentiments are identical with those of the Britisher. One of the most famous lectures of William James deals with the issue and is entitled "The Gospel of Relaxation." Allow me to quote some of its most significant words:

Your intense, convulsive worker breaks down and has bad moods so often that you never know where he may be when you most need his help—he may be having one of his "bad days." We say that so many of our fellow-countrymen collapse, and have to be sent abroad to rest their nerves, because they work so hard. I suspect that this

is an immense mistake. I suspect that neither the nature nor the amount of our work is accountable for the frequency and severity of our breakdowns, but that their cause lies rather in those absurd feelings of hurry and having no time, in that breathlessness and tension, that anxiety of feature and that solicitude for results, that lack of inner harmony and ease, in short, by which with us the work is so apt to be accompanied. (pp. 243-244)

I think William Sangster would have felt condemned by the last paragraph. I hope so. For too often it condemns me, just as does much of what James said prior to those lines.

The big business of life is not to crowd more and more into our days but to be in our small way an incarnation of our Lord. No day is a failure in which Jesus has really indwelt us. . .

Earlier in his lecture, William James commended Hannah Whitall Smith's book *The Christian's Secret of a Happy Life* and towards the close he did the same for *The Practice of the Presence of God*, by the Carmelite friar, Brother Lawrence. Both these Christian classics urge their readers to look more at their choices than their feelings, and to practice continually the sense not only of God's presence, but of his overruling providence doing all things well. The trouble is—good advice is easier to read than to follow. The good habits recommended are just that—habits, *and habits take time and effort to form*. God, ever since he made the world, has been trying to get us into these very habits. How? *By the regular practice of worship*. Surely there is no more important question. The answer may seem platitudinous and trite, but it is *the* answer. In worship we become preoccupied not with ourselves but with God. We dwell upon him until the glory of



that vision is so strong, that some of its luminescence will transfigure all our secular pursuits. Only then can our daily frenzy lessen.

Stop a while and finish the sooner. Step back and jump further. These old proverbs tell us the principle inherent in worship. Worship is a tarrying, so that our work might be done not only better but often more quickly. Because what I am is so much more important than what I do, my chief business is identical with that of Mary of old who chose that better part which could not be taken from her. That's why from the beginning God gave us liberty to be as unwise as Martha for six days if we wished, but then at least on the seventh to emulate Mary until a better balance was ultimately achieved. "Be still and know that I am God" is the meaning of the fourth commandment and the heart of every experience of worship.

The Jews came to Christ with the characteristic inquiry: "What shall we do that we might work the works of God?" and received the reply, "This is the work of God that ye believe. . . ." (Jn 6:28-29). What we believe in our heart of hearts is more important than what we do, for ultimately doing is the reflection of believing.

Wordsworth wrote:

...the world is too much with us,
Getting and spending we lay waste
our powers
We have given our hearts away, a
sordid boon . . .

Surely he had it right. In a previous article we spoke of the parable in Goethe's *Faust* where a tidal wave inundates the structures on the land which represent the church and its worship, and the family. These two are the pillars of life as God intended it to be. When they go, all goes. It's only a matter of time.

Lessons from Nature and Revelation

When will we learn? When will we cease our feverishness and rest more in the divine adequacy, and then proceed to labor in that confidence? The message is written in our bodies, though it has not reached our minds. Not only is the message in our bodies but in the universe itself and all its parts, as well as in divine revelation.

Consider the way in which cycles and rhythm characterize so much of nature—the seasons, day and night, the tides, etc. Think of bird migration, animal hibernation, human work and sleep. Did you know that many body cells work in relays? Some are working while others are resting. Only a proportion of kidney nephrons are operating at any moment of time. The time comes for them to rest while others go on shift. This is true also of the brain and of other organs. A nursing mother produces milk as the baby is at the breast, but when the infant rests so do the breasts. The case is similar with the digestive organs. Body temperature, blood pressure levels, etc., follow circadian rhythms.

Obviously, there is nothing odd about the worship and rest commandment. It reflects that reality present throughout the whole of humanity and the entire universe. We violate it at our peril. God IS much more concerned about our *being* than our *doing*, and it is by beholding that our being is shaped. "Looking unto Jesus" is the law for running the Christian race successfully. Looking thus takes time and quiet. Happy the person that forms the regular habit of adoration.

For the constant worshiper, life will gradually lose its feverish qualities, its threat of panic, its senseless demand for hectic haste. For it is written "He that believeth shall not make haste" for "in quietness and in confidence shall be thy strength."

That most energetic of New Testament theologians—James—was not one who believed in frenetic activity. He was not like those moderns who think of God as an anxious coach walking the sidelines, chewing his fingernails, while the boys act out there as though they were human counterparts to hyperthyroid squirrels. Listen to James and note how right his priorities are. Observe that the works he advocates are really "fruits" and spring from a mind-set that is peaceable:

But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy. And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace. (Jas 3:17-18)

All of which fits in with that ancient law: "In earring and harvest times thou shalt rest." Even in the busiest periods the laws of our being are not to be violated. Why? Because as mentioned earlier, being is more important than doing.

In worship we become preoccupied not with ourselves but with God. We dwell upon him until the glory of that vision is so strong, that some of its luminescence will transfigure all our secular pursuits. Only then can our daily frenzy lessen.

But there are other reasons, and one of them has only very gradually dawned on this slow mind over recent years. The flurried, exhausted soul is a poor witness for Christ. Such a person repels rather than attracts. It is virtually impossible to bear a good testimony while jaded. Times without

number, I have known the experience of avoiding folk I knew very well, just because, at that particular moment, I felt too tired to expend the further vitality drawn on for effective personal interchange. Tragic and stupid.

The flurried, exhausted soul is a poor witness for Christ. Such a person repels rather than attracts. It is virtually impossible to bear a good testimony while jaded.

Some years back scientists experimented with a flock of sheep. The sheep were given regular electric shocks until they manifested the symptoms of nervous breakdown. Then, on a later occasion, the same sheep were given the same shocks but with significant rest periods between each series of shocks. Now there were no breakdowns.

Luther said legalism is like an oil in our bones. We think our frantic activity will bring in the kingdom of God. And it is true that God has no voice but ours, and no hands but ours, that he usually chooses to use. There is no such thing as a lazy Christian. But on the other hand, is it not true that our part in the harvest, though essential, is not the major part? Seed-sowing is easy. What if

turning on the heat and the rain was also up to us? Have not the most important events in our life been those that have come out of the blue, untriggered by us, recognizably the fruitage of divine providence?

The Needed Strategy

Napoleon affirmed that many victories were gained by the way of indirection rather than frontal attacks, by strategy rather than by strength. The battle of life is won the same way. It's natural to attack with all there is of us all the time. But that method leads to ultimate defeat. To live by faith means more than the solution to guilt—it means obeying God's strategy, however repugnant its demands may be to our legalistic instincts. Only by faith alone can we "cast our deadly doing down, all down at Jesus' feet" and rest awhile in order to behold him in worship. But that has been the way of patriarchs, prophets, and apostles.

There was a time when Dwight L. Moody was making two hundred pastoral calls a day. But the world never heard of him then. When parishioners told him that quality was more important than quantity, and that they were praying for him to receive the Holy Spirit, his life changed. Now every day began with hours of worship before God with the

Word. He kept every seventh day strictly as a rest day. And he changed the world.

Some of us will do more when we do less. That is the strategy of faith, and it was never more needed and appropriate than in 1986 when many are so bent on imitating a whirlwind, that they almost have a nervous breakdown upon missing a section in a revolving door. The better way is to heed the invitation "Come unto me and I will give you rest." Then he remakes us, activates us, enables us as we choose aright—and then we will have a life redolent with the fragrance of that first Christmas in ancient Bethlehem.



DESMOND FORD

UNDERSTANDING THE WORD

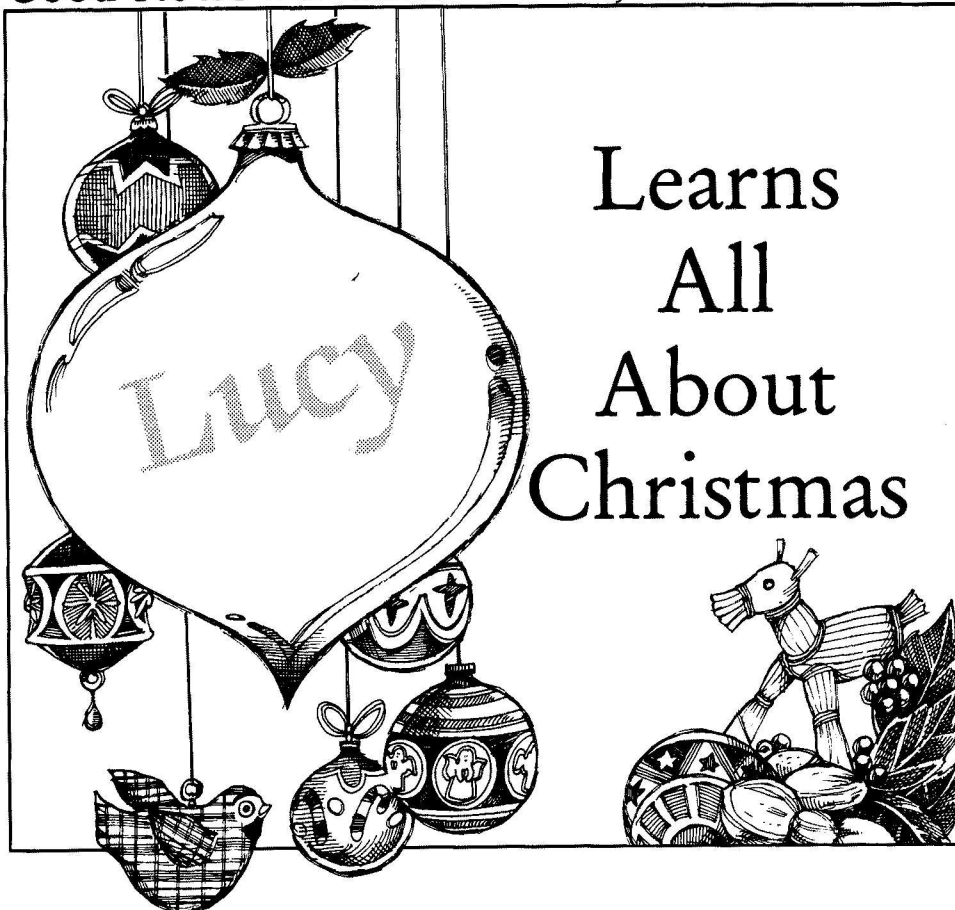
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Learns All About Christmas

IT WAS ON A Sunday night that Little Miss Lucy Ford, the white kitten, went to visit the Good News Unlimited office. Marian said she could stay there, and she would take her to the vet next day for a small surgery. However, Lucy didn't know what surgery meant, and so she had a good time. She met the Good News' cat, a black he-kitten called Desi. She spat at him the first time she saw him, and the second. Then she remembered her manners and tried to be nice.

It was Desi who brought up the subject of Christmas. He'd heard the girls in the office talk about it.

She wasn't allowed to eat after six that night, so we put her up in a room which we could close off, and Desi asked if he could go in with her

to keep her company? Even though Lucy had acted a bit stuck-up, Desi liked her spirit. He, you see, was a quiet little cat with a low-volume miaower, but he would have liked to be noisy like Lucy.

Apparently they talked a lot and became fast friends. It was Desi who brought up the subject of Christmas. He'd heard the girls in the office talk about it. Lucy had never heard of it. "I was born in March," she told him, "and there hasn't been a Christmas since—I know that!" Desi said he's heard them say it was in December, but he hadn't learned the months of the year yet, so he wasn't sure how far away it was, but he guessed it was soon.

"Well, what's Christmas all about?" asked Lucy.

"I'm not sure yet," said Desi, "but the girls talked a lot about food, parties, presents, something called Christmas carols, and what

they were hoping to get, whatever that means."

"Mmm," said Lucy, "I'll ask Ebony the dog when I get back home. She's older than I am and bound to know all about Christmas. Then if I get to come back here, I'll let you know."

The next morning, Marian and Janie, from the Good News Unlimited office, took Lucy to the vet. Janie said, "Come along now you little sweetiepie," which made Lucy feel good as she came from the Deep South too. She wasn't very happy in the car, though, and yowled and screeched to get out of Marian's arms. But you see, Marian had had three children and several cats and was a pretty tough customer, so Lucy lost the battle. When they got into the vet's office, there were two dogs inside which started Lucy spitting and screaming again. However, soon she was whisked into the vet's office and given a swift shot of anesthetic in the neck which kept her quiet for the next few hours. In fact, she didn't remember a thing till that night.

I had been at work all that day and hurried to the vet afterwards to pick up Lucy and take her home. The receptionist took down a few details about Lucy—when she was born, when she had her shots, and so on. The operation was paid for, and the receptionist called through to the back that they could bring Lucy out. I was reminded of being at the circus when they shouted back to let the lions out!

Suddenly, from the back room there came a very loud wail—probably as Lucy surveyed her shaved tummy and the cross-stitch embroidery someone had done on her. She didn't like the pattern at all. "That's Lucy," I said, hearing the familiar voice. Then she came out,

looking rather confused and frightened.

"Don't be frightened, Lucy," I said to her. "It's me, here." I picked her up and hugged her and she went as quiet as a baby. Her eyes were big and black, dilated from the anesthetic. The vet said to take her home and put her in a quiet room for the night. He said noise or any other disturbance, even petting her a lot could set her off, and she might become very wild and lively.

Suddenly, from the back room there came a very loud wail — probably as Lucy surveyed her shaved tummy and the cross-stitch embroidery someone had done on her.

I'd arranged with Uncle Des to meet me at the Good News office around the corner to help me get the kitten home. It was a good idea, because Lucy ate one box I put her in and so I was carrying her. She tried to escape and roam all over the car and it was very difficult to hold her. Uncle Des managed to calm her by chirping bird sounds—she seemed to like that very much. My arm was sore all night from the tension of holding her.

When we got home, Lucy, true to

character, wouldn't stay still in the bedroom as the vet said she should. She kept wandering out to be in the kitchen with the family. She had a bad case of the staggers and did a couple of impromptu flops and somersaults up and down steps. Once she rolled over sideways two and a half times.

Ebony the dog had been down in the dumps all day without Lucy, according to Uncle Des. Now she had perked up considerably because Lucy was home. She'd given her one lick on the nose as she was carried up the steps, and now Ebony sat outside the kitchen door and looked through the glass to make sure Lucy was all right. She was sure walking funny, Ebony thought. We wanted to let Ebony inside to cheer Lucy up, but she usually played too rough. Anyway, she smelled awful from swimming in the stagnant pond at the bottom of the hill. It was as if she had been caught in the crossfire between two skunks. So she had to stay outside.

I put Lucy on my lap and she was happy to stay there for about an hour and a half. Uncle Des was signing books to go out as Christmas presents, so I helped him by folding the covers back so they wouldn't crack. Lucy heard us talking about Christmas, but she was too fuzzy-minded to take in what we were saying. Later I took her to bed with me, but she kept

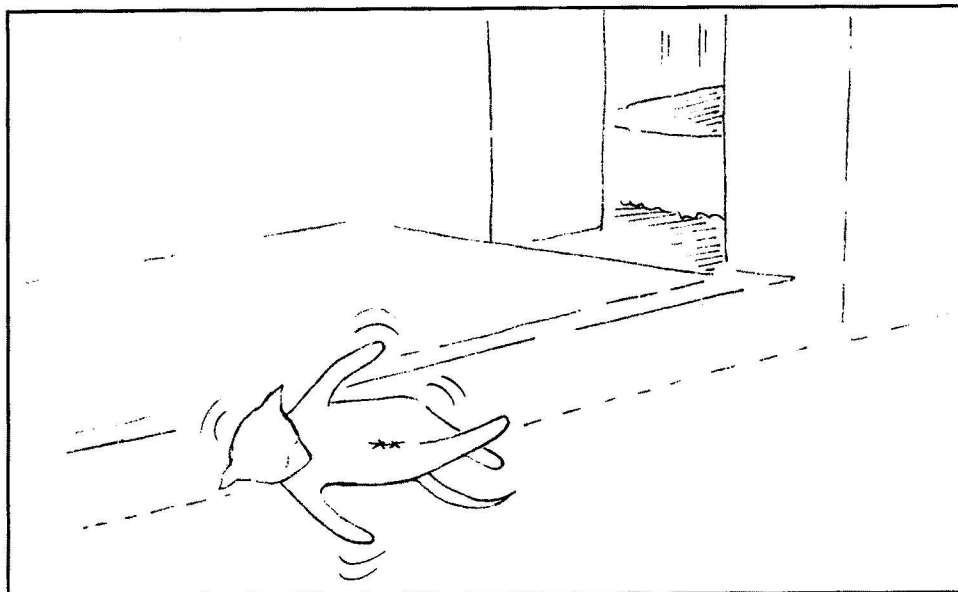
walking all over me and wouldn't settle down like a good cat. So, I put her on the laundry floor, snuggled up in a fluffy coat. I wanted to keep her, but I had to get up at five in the morning and had to have some sleep.

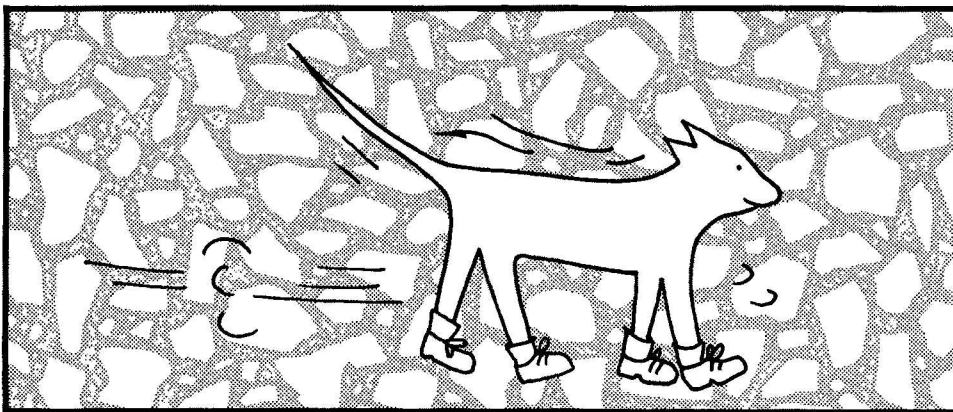
When Lucy mentioned what Desi had said about presents and songs and everything, Ebony was mystified.

The next day, Lucy was alert and able to eat. We kept her in the house for a couple of days, because Ebony didn't understand what surgery meant either, and she was in the habit of pouncing on Lucy and playing hop, skip and jump on her stomach or practicing folding her up in different shapes. So you see, Lucy didn't have a chance to talk to Ebony about Christmas. The very first chance she got was when the family went on their evening walk a few nights later.

When Lucy had first come to our home, she would keep very close to the yard. When we went walking, if I picked her up, she would struggle to get down and run up a tree. But after a few months, we were surprised to find her flitting around our feet, and it became a regular habit to go with us for a walk. Soon she was walking a mile and a half a night, but not always in the right direction. Most of the time, Ebony was considerate and left her alone. But occasionally she could not resist the impulse to tease and take a flying jump on Lucy. Then I would be very cross, and Ebony would walk away with her chin close to the ground, looking very guilty.

It was on the first walk after her operation, that Lucy thought to tell Ebony about Desi and ask him about Christmas. Ebony said yes, she did know a bit about it—some of the houses round about had a lot of colored lights hanging up last Christmas. It looked pretty, but the weather was very cold and rainy. Ebony said we were rather boring because we didn't put any lights up. In fact, Ebony said, "we didn't seem





to go in for Christmas very much. I believe it's got something to do with it being so hot in Australia where they spend Christmas on the beach."

When Lucy mentioned what Desi had said about presents and songs and everything, Ebony was mystified.

Poor Lucy was quite crestfallen. "Well, how am I going to find out about Christmas to tell Desi," she wondered. She worried about it all the way home until she heard Uncle Des asking if that was an owl standing about three feet away from him (it was dusk and hard to see). "No, dear," "I said,—it's a skunk." After that everyone got excited and preoccupied with keeping Ebony from chasing it and ending up smelling even worse than before.

Lucy told him there were at least half a dozen angels in the story and they were God's messengers. One came to tell Mary she was going to have a baby that God had placed in her tummy. She was very surprised.

It was some days later that Ebony and Lucy were sitting together on the deck in the autumn sun, with Uncle Des inside talking some thoughts onto his cassette recorder. When Lucy heard him mention Christmas, her little white ears perked up. Ebony looked interested, too, and cocked her head to one side to listen. It was a cheerful Lucy that chewed her cheese and tuna that night. (In Australia, we say tuna "chuna" so it makes a rather

nice-sounding sentence). Not too long after that Lucy went to the Good News office again (while she got her stitches out), and renewed her friendship with Desi, the black kitten.

Desi asked how she was and was she going to have her stitches out? and Lucy said, "Fine, yes." Desi looked at her scar and said, "Wow" and "y-y-u-k-k"!!! which pleased Lucy a lot.

Then Lucy sat him down and told him the *real* story about Christmas. Desi knew who Uncle Des was because he often saw him dash in and out of the office like a dachshund, so he was quite interested. He listened carefully, putting a paw up to his chin and moving first one ear up and then the other.

Lucy told him there were at least half a dozen angels in the story and they were God's messengers. One came to tell Mary she was going to have a baby that God had placed in her tummy. She was very surprised. An angel also went to Joseph and told him not to worry about Mary having a baby—"Go ahead and marry her Joseph," he said, "she is carrying the Son of God." The angel said the baby was "God with us," and that he was coming to save us from our sins. Desi didn't know much about sin, so Lucy told him all about it since she had been brought up in the alley, whereas Desi was born in the country at Janie's house (where it's not so sinful).

Lucy told Desi about Mary and Joseph going up to Bethlehem to pay the taxman. By this time Mary

was very big and about to deliver her baby. She started having labor pains, but she and Joseph were poor and couldn't afford a hotel room. However, the manager was kind and felt sorry for her and let them stay in the barn where the animals were. Lucy told Desi Jesus was a bit like her—born in a basement. She told him about the angels singing to the shepherds, and the shepherds coming to worship Jesus. She told him about the wise men from the East who had read the Old Testament and worked out the sums which showed it was time for the Savior to be born.

"So, it's like this, Desi—all those presents and songs and parties are mighty fine, but don't forget what Christmas is really about. It's about the birth of the baby Jesus, who left his beautiful home in heaven and came down here to die for our sins."

The people back east were pretty good at math, at least a lot better than the people in Bethlehem. And they were much more excited about Jesus coming.

"Word got to Herod, the king, who was a very naughty, unkind man, with long sharp claws," said Lucy. "He was jealous of the birth of this new king, as the easterners called him. He asked around the village and the local teachers told him, 'Yes, it was time for him to be born.' "But they sort of yawned as though it was boring and twiddled their thumbs. The wise men were shocked, but too polite to show it. Herod was pretty crafty. He told those wise men from the East to go and look for this king. He pretended he wanted to worship Jesus. "But really he just wanted to go and scratch his eyes out," said Lucy.

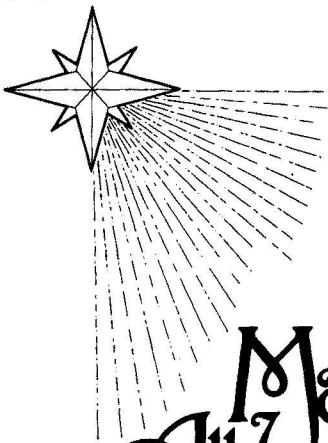
"The wise men did catch up with Jesus and went into the house where he was and gave him expensive presents of perfume, herbs and gold.

But another angel came along and warned them and Joseph to leave. The wise men went back east, and Joseph took his little family down to Egypt where they'd be safe away from that tiger, Herod.

"Then," Lucy told Desi, "It was awful. Herod got so mean and mad he had all the little children under two years old in Bethlehem killed. There was so much crying. It was terrible. That first Christmas wasn't very happy at all.

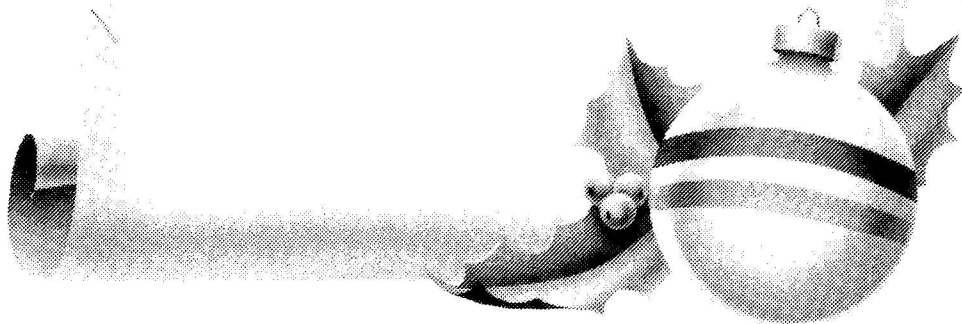
"So, it's like this, Desi—all those presents and songs and parties are mighty fine, but don't forget what Christmas is really about. It's about the birth of the baby Jesus, who left his beautiful home in heaven and came down here to die for our sins. And it wasn't any party for him. Even when he was born, he was in danger of death."

Desi really loved hearing about Jesus. "I bet he likes cats," he said. And Lucy started trying to think what to get Desi for Christmas. "Yes," she thought, "I'll get him some of those little treats that Marian gives him." And that's what she did.



May
All Your
Christmas
Dreams
Come True

Marley the Mole
and
King Moan the Magnificent
wish you a very
Happy Christmas
and want you to know
they'll be back to continue
their stories next month.



GOOD NEWS UNLIMITED

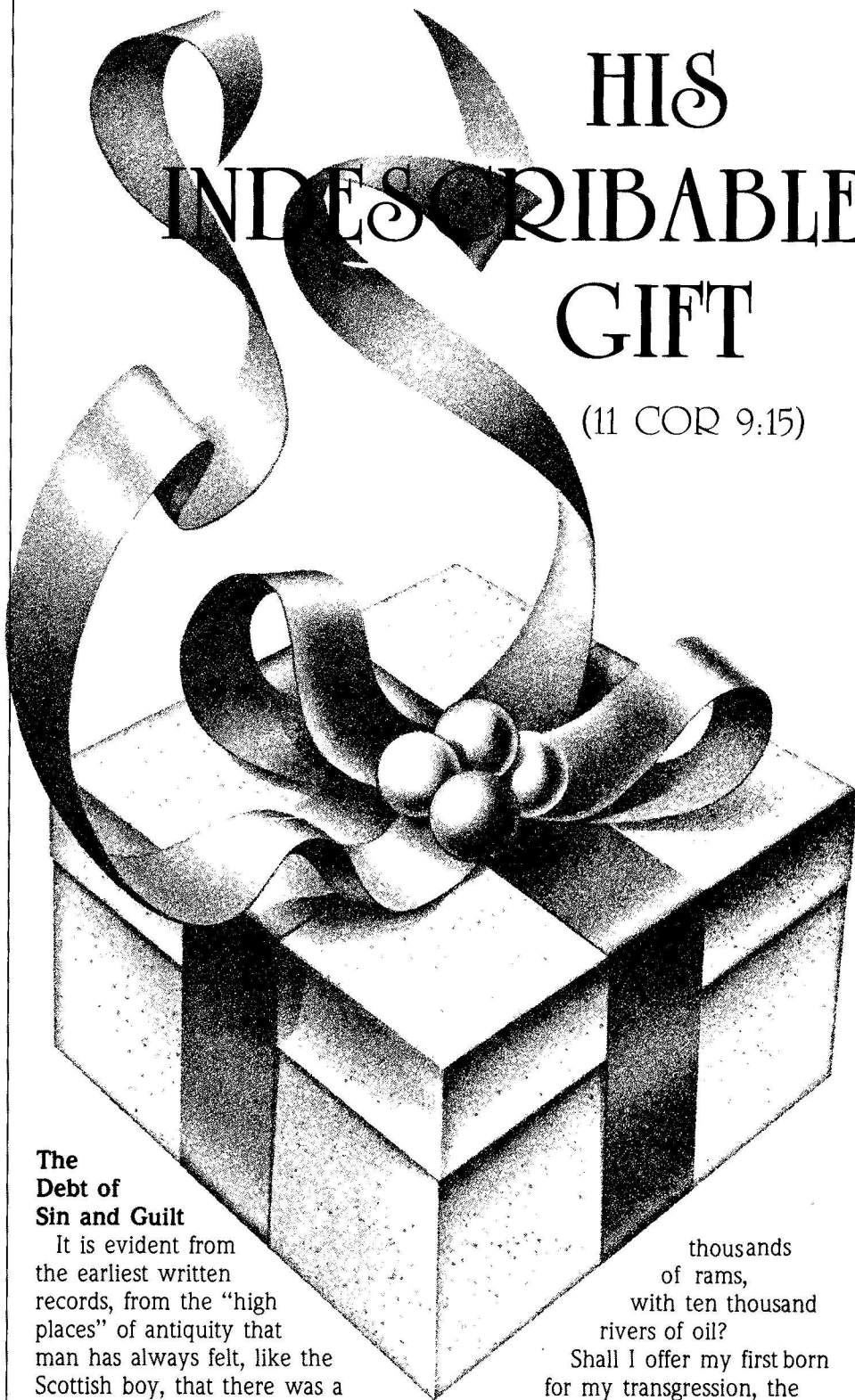
THE CHRISTMAS GIFTS I have appreciated most are those that met some basic need. A few years ago I received several gifts of After Shave to add to the surplus from the year before! We always say on such occasions, "Well, it's the thought that counts." True, but it doesn't alter the fact that we are more appreciative of a gift that supplies a real need. I recollect one such occasion. Throughout my college years I barely had enough money to meet the costs of tuition. I remember squeezing the tube of toothpaste rather gently, missing a few meals at the cafeteria, and delaying a trip to the hairdresser in order to cut expenses. But in spite of such austerity measures, my account was still in the red when the college year ended (November in Australia). I remember wondering whether I would be able to return the next year. After working twelve hours a day, six days a week for twelve weeks, I returned to college to pay off the previous year's debt. My heart was filled with gratitude when the business manager informed me that an anonymous person had gifted more than I needed to pay off the debt. I had been working excessive hours to pay for a debt that no longer existed!

"All Mine To Give" (1956) is a movie that is usually televised at Christmastime. It is an inspiring story of a young pioneer boy in Wisconsin who attempts to reconstruct a life for his siblings following the Christmas death of their Scottish immigrant parents. The boy feels burdened by the medical debt incurred by the death of his parents. There is an emotional scene in which he brings the family cow to the kind and sympathetic doctor, hoping the cow will adequately cover all the expenses. The doctor is surprised and stunned at the boy's sincerity and willingness to pay for his parents' debt. Laying a gentle hand on his shoulder, he says: "My son, the debt is not yours to pay."

by Noel Mason

HIS INDESCRIBABLE GIFT

(11 COR 9:15)



The Debt of Sin and Guilt

It is evident from the earliest written records, from the "high places" of antiquity that man has always felt, like the Scottish boy, that there was a debt to be paid.

With what shall I come before
the Lord
and bow down before the
exalted God?
Shall I come before him with
burnt offerings,
With calves a year old?
Will the Lord be pleased with

thousands
of rams,
with ten thousand
rivers of oil?

Shall I offer my first born
for my transgression, the
fruit of my body for the sin of
my soul? (Mic 6:6-7)
These questions of Balak have
been the questions of many a
troubled soul. Public confession,
prayer, fasting, sackcloth and ashes,
solemn washings and lustrations,
self-inflictions and torture—there
seems to be no end to the long list

of methods the human race has used to pay off the debt of sin and guilt. James Buchanan, in *The Doctrine of Justification*, wrote:

There is much that is deeply impressive in the sad earnestness, and almost savage fervour, of this heathen worship; and it is fraught with profound instruction since it shows that everywhere, and at all times, conscience was alive and active, even amongst the most ignorant and degraded tribes,—that it was impressed more or less deeply, with same solemn truths—the fact of guilt, the displeasure of God, and the desert of punishment,—and that in dealing with these truths, it invariably pointed to some expiation of sin, some satisfaction to justice, and some vicarious means of securing pardon, or at least, “impunity.”¹

The times have changed, but the basic needs of the human heart are just the same. Our collective history with its two world wars, the ghastly prison camps of Auschwitz, Maideneck, Dachau, Buchenwald, Belsen, Treblinka, etc., the idiotic nuclear arms race, the man-made plagues of famine that destroy 15,000 people every day (mainly children), the abortion holocaust—all add up to an intolerable debt, a terrible burden of fear and guilt. Who can live with such a history? The terror of our history forces us to ask: Who shall pay for these terrible crimes?

The times have changed, but the basic needs of the human heart are just the same.

I was in a home recently listening to a young mother grieving the loss of her only child. Her child was killed by an irresponsible drunken driver. Her lawyer was trying to console her by assuring her he would win a lawsuit worth thousands of dollars. “But nothing you can do can bring back my little daughter” sobbed the mother. How true! We blab about justice, but who can really right the wrongs of our past? Yes, indeed, who shall pay for the terrible crimes of our history?

Is it any wonder that millions flee to psychologists and counselors for a soothing therapy? “It is a commonplace,” writes Christopher



Lasch, “that twentieth-century psychiatry serves as a substitute for religion, promising the traditional consolations of personal mastery, spiritual peace, and emotional security.”² A recent handbook, *The Psychotherapy Handbook*, by Herink, lists over 250 brand-name therapies!

But where is the therapist who can pay our debt and forgive our sins? Must we not ask as did the teachers of the law: “Who can forgive sins but God alone?” (Mk 2:7). The late Ernest Becker detailed the human predicament in his book *The Denial of Death*. After stating that man constantly suppresses the terror of his true situation, Becker concludes that the only possible solution to the predicament of man is that offered by religion—God and immortality.³

A Gift Made—A Debt Paid

Fyodor Dostoevsky in *The Brothers Karamazov* has Ivan say: I trust that . . . in the end, in the universal finale, at the moment universal harmony is achieved, something so magnificent will take place that will satisfy every human heart, allay all indignation, pay for all human crimes, for all the blood shed by men and enable everyone not only to forgive everything but also to justify everything that has happened to men.⁴

What an event that would be—an extraordinary act of grace! A mag-

nificent gift that pays the debt of sin and guilt of the whole human race! According to Christian faith, such a gift has already been made. The gift has been made—the debt has been paid! The gospel is the good news of God’s free gift in Christ. “He gave his only begotten Son” (Jn 3:16). “He . . . spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all” (Rom 8:32). The thought of God’s gift to men pervades the entire New Testament. It is like treasure hidden in a field which impels the finder to sell all to buy the field and possess the treasure (Mt 13:44); or like a pearl of great price for which a merchant sells all his other pearls (Mt 13:45-46). It is an invitation from a king to a wedding feast (Mt 22:2-3).

God has entered our human predicament and like the kind doctor in “All Mine To Give” has laid a gentle hand on our shoulder and has said, “The debt is not yours to pay.” We need no longer carry the burden of guilt and sin. There’s no therapy like gospel therapy!

The Response of Gratitude

Thomas Erskine (1788-1870) the famous Scottish lay-theologian, once wrote that “religion is grace, and ethics is gratitude.” The gift of his grace and righteousness creates a thankful heart. A heart that earnestly asks the Psalmist’s question, “What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits toward me?” (Ps 116:12). The unmerited love of Christ stirs a response of gratitude which seeks a channel in service.

Jesus paid it all,

All to him I owe.

These are the heart-felt feelings of every sinner who has been freed from the debt of sin. This Christmas we will receive many gifts. May they all remind us of the greatest gift of all—the love of God in Christ. During our Christmas celebrations we can join with Paul and exclaim: “Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift!” (2 Cor 9:15)

1. J. Buchanan, *The Doctrine of Justification*, p. 49.

2. C. Lasch, *The Minimal Self*, p. 208.

3. E. Becker, *The Denial of Death*, see chapter 9.

4. F. Dostoevsky, *The Brothers Karamazov*, p. 283.

THERE IS A city called the City of Joy. In fact, it is a slum. Over two-hundred thousand inhabitants compete for space, food and life itself in an area of one square mile. It is the densest concentration of humanity on this planet. During the eight-month long summer people bake in the tropical heat until the monsoons come and turn their streets into rivers of mud, garbage and excrement.

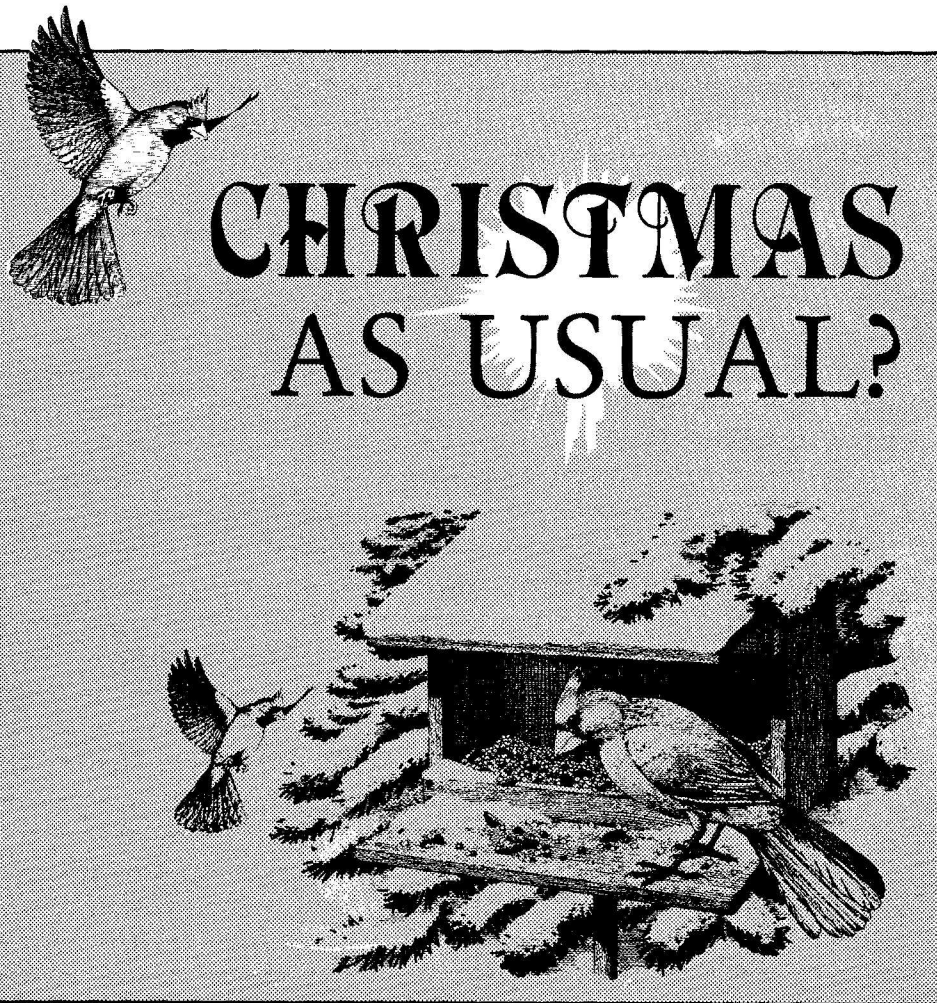
The poor look out for each other. They possess nothing in the first place, but the nothing they possess is shared with others who have less. The poorer they are, the more willing these people are to give.

No flowers grow in the City of Joy. There are no lakes or streams or parks. The horizon is never seen. The air is so filled with carbon dioxide and sulphur that pollution kills at least one member of every family. Rats are as big as the dogs that chase them. Nine out of ten people are too poor to buy even a half a pound of rice per day.

If you're lucky you may find shelter inside one of the vermin-laden buildings. But that's only if you're lucky. Otherwise, like thousands of others, you will live on the sidewalks year round, regardless of heat, rain or cold.

Life in the City of Joy is spelled S-U-R-V-I-V-A-L. Jobs are scarce. Those desperate enough sell their blood to "blood hackers" who then resell the blood to clinics for a considerable profit. Starving people line up to bleed in order to get money to buy food for children too weak to even cry anymore. One banana, even a rotten one, may prolong a child's life for another day.

But the poor look out for each other. They possess nothing in the first place, but the nothing they possess is shared with others who have less. The poorer they are, the more willing these people are to give. This is why this section of Calcutta is



called the City of Joy. Despite the surroundings, there are still signs of love and hope among the unloved and hopeless. (see *The City of Joy* by Dominique Lapierre, 1985).

Christmas and the Poor

As America prepares for another holiday season, I've been thinking about the people in the City of Joy. It's not that I want to make others, who are well off, feel guilty (although guilt is not all bad). But this year, for the first time ever, I've noticed the close relationship between the Incarnation and God's love for the poor.

According to Isaiah, the Messiah was to preach "good news to the poor" (61:1). This task was central to the self-understanding of Jesus, for after reading the above passage from Isaiah, Jesus said, "Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing" (Lk 4:18).

John the Baptist sent disciples to Jesus to inquire as to whether or not he was indeed the one who

was to come. After a day of healing and teaching, Jesus told them:

Go back and report to John what you hear and see: the blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cured, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is preached to the poor." (Mt 11:4-5)

In Luke's version of the Beatitudes, Jesus says:

Blessed are you poor,
for yours is the kingdom of heaven.
Blessed are you who hunger now,
for you will be satisfied.
(6:20-21)

Jesus is talking about those who are poor not only "in spirit" (Mt 5:3) but poor, period—in all respects, especially in material possessions. The poor are those who, because of economic and social distress, hope in God alone. Jesus pronounces a blessing upon those who are hungry *physically* as well as spiritually.

by Brad McIntyre

Too often we spiritualize the concrete demands of Jesus. We focus on our spiritual poverty and our inner hunger for meaning and peace of mind, etc. These are deep needs which the gospel certainly addresses. Yet the gospel also addresses the concrete and temporal tragedies of economic poverty and physical hunger. Our pious platitudes about the miracle of Christmas remain unconnected with the real world unless we minister to the felt needs of the poor among us.

Jesus, though rich, became poor for our sakes (2 Cor 8:9). This is the heart of the Incarnation. This world is a vast slum, like Calcutta's City of Joy. But "the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us" (Jn 1:14). God, in Christ, moved into our wretched neighborhood, took up residence with the poor, suffered with them, starved with them, ate with them, and died for them. Jesus "went around doing good and healing all who were under the power of the devil" (Acts 10:38).

Our pious platitudes about the miracle of Christmas remain unconnected with the real world unless we minister to the felt needs of the poor among us.

His followers will do the same. Tabitha, of Joppa, "was always doing good and helping the poor" (Acts 9:36). Paul, despite his theological volleys with the Christian leaders in Jerusalem, was more than willing to remember the poor (Gal 2:10; 2 Cor 8:13-15). The churches in Greece contributed generously to the poor in Judea (Rom 15:26). In fact, Paul risked his life to return to Jerusalem with an offering for the poor (Acts 24:17).

The Poor in Israel

The precedent of caring for the poor originated in Israel. Yahweh had declared:

There should be no poor among you . . . If there is a poor man among your brothers . . . do not be hardhearted or tightfisted

toward your poor brother. Rather, be openhanded and freely lend him whatever he needs. (Dt 15:4, 7-8)

Throughout Israel's history, Yahweh contended for the rights of the poor.

Defend the cause of the weak and fatherless; maintain the rights of the poor and oppressed. (Ps 82:3)

I know that Yahweh secures justice for the poor and upholds the cause of the needy.

(Ps 140:12)

Idolatry was not the only sin in Israel. Social injustice flourished during certain periods.

Woe to those who make unjust laws, to those who issue oppressive decrees, to deprive the poor of their rights and withhold justice from the oppressed of my people.

(Is 10:1-2)

Worship without justice is an abomination to God (Is 1:10-17).

To know Yahweh means to defend the cause of the poor and needy (Jer 22:16), to do justice and to love mercy (Mic 6:8). This, then, is the Old Testament precedent for the New Testament's concern for the poor.

It is not surprising to discover this theme in Mary's triumphant song after she received the news that she was to become the mother of the Messiah. Mary cannot fathom the grace of a God who would bless a poor woman like herself with such a privileged task! Her song is a litany of praise for this God of the poor:

My soul glorifies the Lord . . . for he has been mindful of the humble estate of his servant . . . He has brought down rulers from their thrones but has lifted up the humble. He has filled the hungry with good things but has sent the rich away empty. (Lk 1:46, 48, 52-53)

Conclusion

Jesus told the rich, young ruler to sell all his possessions and give to the poor (Mk 10:21). We may not be asked to sell *everything* we

have, but for Christians the test of discipleship remains self-sacrifice on behalf of those less fortunate. This is a demand that has not changed over the years. Quite frankly, most Americans I know own too much junk already, and we will overspend this Christmas, abusing our charge cards for temporal trinkets. We could give up a lot of our extras if we had to. Most of what we buy is not necessary to sustain life but perpetuates a standard of living rooted in a love of leisure and a materialistic worldview.

I don't feel it's necessary for me to move to the City of Joy. Rather, the City of Joy must move into my heart permanently. Only then will the poor reside in my consciousness and influence how I may channel my God-given resources. How I do this, time will tell. But I must do it. I cannot go back to "Christmas as usual."



BRAD McINTYRE

Questions and Answers

Q. It seems to me the church is not making much of an impact on the world, people don't seem to need it anymore. Why not turn the church buildings into hostels for the poor, etc.?

A. Your suggestion is not without some value. There are plenty of poor people who need our help in just the way you suggest. However, it may be a bit shortsighted.

It seems that modern people are paying a high price for their lack of interest in the religious dimensions of life. The American Psychiatric Association estimates that 80-90 percent of illnesses originate in the mind. Dr. John Sarno of the Institute of Rehabilitation Medicine in New York City believes that emotions—tensions, anxiety, depression—are a significant factor in at least 80 percent of back troubles! I know of no psychotherapy that can give peace of mind, that counteracts negative emotions like the gospel, and the church would have greater impact on society's ills if it busied itself in preaching and "living out" the good news.

Let's not be too hard on the church. Many churches, no doubt, could do a lot more practical work. The organizers of "Hands Across America" discovered that it is not easy to arouse the social conscience of an affluent society.

We must not yield to discouragement. Jesus said that the gates of hell would not overpower his church (Mt 16:18). Every Christian should pray and work for a revival in the church today.

Q. If Catholics believe you can be saved after you die in purgatory, why do they bother about salvation in this life?

A. I am not sure what forms the doctrine of purgatory has taken in the past, but in recent Catholic thought, it is not asserted that a person can be *saved* in purgatory. Catholic scholars such as Rahner, Von Balthasar and Ratzinger express the view that one

does not make a new fundamental choice for salvation after death. Rather the style of life that has preceded death comes to *maturity* in the final moment of life. They believe that a process of purification which has already begun in this life can be completed in purgatory by an act of God's grace.

Q. Would it surprise you, if, in the final judgment by an act of sheer grace God saved everyone?

A. Since the time of Origen there have always been those who have taught "universalism" but it sounds a little presumptuous to me. Besides, I doubt whether you could call this act of God an "act of grace." Grace always enhances human freedom. It never rides roughshod over human will.

Q. We have a Christian friend who argues that he can reconcile the first creation story with the modern theory of evolution. Do you think this is possible?

A. Every Christian is entitled to his views on this matter, but I think all attempts to reconcile the Creation stories of the Bible with the theory of evolution are misguided. What will your friend do when science discards some of its theories of the origin of the world? The classical Darwinian theory of evolution has already fallen upon hard times.

Those who interpret the Creation story of Genesis 1 to fit in with modern theories of evolution are really taking a very liberal approach to the Bible. Their interpretation is modernistic. A conservative approach to Genesis 1 will be one that conserves the primary and original meaning of the story, the meaning intended by its author. When the Creation story of Genesis 1 is understood in its own historical life situation, it will be seen that the author is primarily concerned about the polytheistic

culture of his day. The author is addressing a particular religious situation of his times. Consider the following comments by Conrad Hyers in *The meaning of Creation*:

It is toward this religious situation that the words of Genesis 1 are directed, and for this their particular usage is designed. What was in great need of clarification was not some scientific question concerning the nature and history of heavenly objects but a religious question concerning the worship and divinity of sun, moon, and stars. The type of language used is theological, not astronomical.

Genesis 1 is affirming a radical monotheism over against the gods and goddesses of surrounding polytheism. These are not divinities to be worshiped but creations of the One God, who is not to be identified with any region of the created order of things. The worship of any of these creations is idolatry, for it is a substitution of something creaturely for the Creator. (p. 21)

Q. I'm confused, we have some in our church telling us that women should not wear slacks, or anything that looks like the dress of men. How do you decide which parts of the OT are still binding on Christians?

A. The New Testament is the interpretive center of the Bible on matters of Christian faith and practice. All the important moral principles of the OT are reaffirmed by Christ and the apostles in the NT. The facts are that no Christian today obeys or practices *all* that the OT teaches. For example, what Christian parent today would wish to stone a rebellious son? (Dt 21:18f) We need to be wary of those who preach from the Bible, yet have little understanding of its progressive revelation which climaxes in the life and teachings of Christ.

—Noel Mason

Our Ignorant Prayers

Sirs:

Your ministry is a great blessing to me and to many. The way you present the gospel demonstrates deep understanding and insight, and yet I appreciate the honesty with which you treat various issues.

In the Gospel of John, Christ makes the remark that his coming can bring us more abundant life. Many of the faithful also claim abundant life through direct intervention of God in all the affairs of daily living. Some will credit the Lord for helping them find a difficult address or resurrecting a dilapidated vehicle. This faith usually is circular: if the address wasn't found, God didn't want them to go there; if the car didn't start, he was sparing them from some more undesirable consequence. Perhaps the most common petition of this type is for illness.

There is great confusion and uncertainty about this aspect of abiding in Christ. While it is very comforting to think that we can have a pocket Santa Claus for all the problems of life, such a modus operandi doesn't always wash with experience. And can it really be true that God will heal someone if we ask, but they will suffer and die if we

don't? Yet, Scripture would seem to enjoin us to include these things in our prayers. Sometimes I'm tempted to wonder if maybe my prayers don't have enough horsepower to achieve these kinds of results.

What a help it would be if you could deal with this aspect of Christian living in your monthly publication. For me, a conclusive and thorough review of relevant principles would be meat in due season.

Yours is a ministry that is unique and unduplicated. May the Lord bless you with resources and assurance.

R.W.

Bowling Green, Kentucky

[Dr. Ford has an article "Our Ignorant Prayers" which will be published soon.] Ed.

My Cup Runneth Over

Sirs:

Thank you so much for putting the life force back into the gospel, the "good" back into the news, the joy back into being a Christian. My heart is smiling and my cup runneth over!

H.S.

Australia

Kind Gesture

Sirs:

I acknowledge receipt of the clothing you sent to me and I seize the opportunity to thank you for your kind gesture. Most of the items which could not be used by adults were given out as gifts to some needy children.

I should be very grateful if you could continue sending us more of such clothing. Thank you once more.

P. B.

Afoakwa Ejisu Jr. Secondary School
P.O. Box 14
Ejisu-Ashanti Ghana

Reaching All Over Australia

Sirs:

One bitterly cold night, in early August, we were visiting a widow lady on a 6,000 acre sheep ranch near Glen-Thompson, Victoria, Australia. I walked by her bedroom late at night and heard the familiar voice of Des coming softly from her radio. The next morning I asked her if she listened to Dr. Ford often—and she replied that she does, as often as she can. Tell Des that his messages are reaching all over Australia into lonely and spiritually needy homes.

B. H.

Corona, California

Good News Unlimited

P.O. Box 1603
Hornsby Northgate
N.S.W. 2077

POSTAGE
PAID
AUSTRALIA

AUSTRALIA ALL OVER

There have been increasing requests for more Australian content in Good News Unlimited magazine. In response to these requests, Ron (Pastor Ron Allen) and myself (Pastor Neville McKenzie), will share with you month by month, news of the ministries of GNCM.

NEW PASTOR

Perhaps the most recent and exciting news comes out of the board meeting held on November the second. The board took action to hire another minister to serve congregations in Perth WA. This is a step of faith financially. We are confident, however, that the present indications of regular, systematic support will continue. Thank you for your partnership in sharing the Good News of Jesus.

NEW BOARD

Those who serve as GNCM board members give much of their time and energy. This is particularly true of the chairman and the executive. The new executive consists of chairman: Bruce Johanson, Treasurer: Paul Claus, Roy Phillips, Robert Cooper. To these men falls the responsibilities of the next twelve months. They would welcome constructive comment, I am sure.

REGIONAL VISITATION

Regional visitation this year has seen the consolidation of Fellowships in Hobart, Ballina, Albury, Numurka, Newcastle and Morisset. The mini-congress at Ballina NSW was a terrific success. The venue was a Uniting Church Conference centre with dormitory facilities. There is nothing like a 'Live-in' gathering to promote the best in spiritual and social fellowship. This was the pattern God gave Israel for the three great annual pilgrim festivals. These were times of joyful celebration through spiritual and social interaction. If Israel needed this sort of communion in their unhurried days, how much more do we need it today, if we are to develop the bonds that bind us together in the Gospel.



The source of musical inspiration at Ballina. Ruth Sisson (guitar), Jeff and Eleanor Watts (Song leader & keyboard), Pauline McKenzie (Vocal).

One of the areas we are struggling to address satisfactorily is ministry to our children. Carmen Allen with some helpers provided activities that held the attention of children at the Ballina congress. As parents we should always remember that, to the children, spiritual realities are not just the proceedings of a meeting, but the unseen currents that flow around them every day. For them the Gospel is caught long before it can be taught. Nevertheless, at meetings we should strive to create an atmosphere which is in harmony with the children's needs and capabilities. We should zealously guard against the development of negative attitudes in children, towards spiritual gatherings.



While other children were off for a run Peter and Kelly Williams stayed back to finish their projects.

VOLUNTEER MINISTERS

It is impossible for Ron and me to respond to all the needs for ministry that we hear about. It brings us great joy when we see others sharing in the proclamation of God's unconditional love. Northern Victoria is blessed with such people.



Muriel Ferris presents a historical sketch to illustrate the Gospel. Muriel frequently speaks at the Christian Fellowship at Numurka. (Above).

GOOD NEWS WATCH

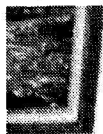
SYDNEY CONGREGATION

We have been meeting now, at the Normanhurst Uniting Church, for nearly a year. During that period we have developed a meeting format which endeavours to build faith and fellowship. We meet at 3pm for songs of praise and a sermon. Then continue from 4pm until 5 in group discussion. We started off trying to capture the dynamics of those cast out for their faith, through the record of Matthews Gospel. We still continue this theme twice a month with other subjects and speakers on the remaining weeks.



Reverend Geoffrey Paxton (above) has been a featured speaker several times this year at Normanhurst Good News Fellowship.

At our Sydney Fellowship it has been exciting to feel the sense of commitment to each other developing. We all have much yet to learn from the experience of the first century disciples who were cast out for their faith. The process involves hardship and hurt. Our challenge is to not become so absorbed by the turmoil that we fail to see the opportunities before us, for our personal faith to grow.



ANONYMOUS DONORS

GNCM is kept afloat by many friends, some of whom are unknown by name to us. Here follows a list of anonymous donations recently received. The board and staff of GNCM are most thankful.

\$246.00
\$300.00
\$490.00
\$20.00
\$5.00
\$200.00
\$10,000.00
\$30.00

MEETING PLACES

Why not attend one of the Good News fellowships in any of the following locations.

PERTH. Bayswater Christian Fellowship.
Meets Saturday mornings, 9.45a.m. at Bayswater Uniting Church, Murray St, Bayswater.

BONNELL'S BAY. Good News Fellowship.
Meets first Friday of each month, 7.30p.m. at Bonnell's Bay Hall, Station St, Bonnell's Bay, N.S.W.

SYDNEY. Normanhurst Good News Fellowship.
Meets each Saturday, 3p.m. at Normanhurst Uniting Church, Cnr of Pennant Hills Rd and Hinemoa Ave, Normanhurst.

BRISBANE. Rochedale Good News Fellowship.
Meets second Saturday of each month, 2.45p.m. at Rochedale State High School, Priestdale Rd, Rochedale.

GOLD COAST. Palm Beach Good News Fellowship. Meets each Saturday 3p.m. (Not on the 2nd Sat. of each month) at Share n Care Centre, 10th Ave, Palm Beach, QLD.

HOBART. Good News Fellowship.
Meets last Saturday of each month, 2.30p.m.
Phone: 002-310945 for details.

MURWILLUMBAH. Good News Fellowship.
Meets on third Saturday of the month 10.30a.m.
Phone: 075-395081 for details.

LISMORE. Good News Fellowship.
Meets on the first and third Friday evenings of each month at 6 Kerrabee Ct, Goonellabah.