

March 11, 1975

The Lutheran Ambassador

Magnolia Blossoms

Luoma Photos



MEDITATION MOMENTS

DEATH IS THE GATE TO LIFE

Read John 19:41-20:10

As I begin this Easter meditation, I must quote the Apostle Peter with a doxology of praise: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! By His great mercy we have been born anew to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead" (I Peter 1:3). Today a dear Christian lady of our parish has left this life of suffering and sorrow to enter that "higher life" of everlasting health and happiness. As we lower her body into the dark and cold grave, we are reminded of that glorious Resurrection of our blessed Redeemer, Jesus Christ.

Dying together with Jesus,

This is the end of strife!

Buried together with Jesus,

This is the gate of life!

Quickened together with Jesus,

By the touch of God's mighty
breath,

Risen together with Jesus,

Where is thy sting, O death?

Christian pilgrims in Jerusalem are most interested in the sites of the Lord's death and resurrection. As with many Biblical events, there is speculation over just where it was that He was crucified and buried. The best known site is the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. But there is also the Garden Tomb a block or so from "Gordon's Calvary" or "Golgotha" where most Protestants believe the burial of Jesus took place. In studying

the Gospels, we notice three things about the Easter Tomb:

First, **the tomb sheltered our Savior's dead body.** Joseph of Arimathea is credited with providing a grave for the Lord's body. It was a garden tomb in which the dead Christ rested. Located in a simple and beautiful pastoral setting, a sweet peace filled the air.

It was a **granite tomb** we touched that day. The tomb, quarried out of the hill-side, was discovered in 1867. Inside the tomb are three rock shelves, large enough to lay three dead bodies. It was a **great tomb** we entered that day. "...and in the garden a new tomb where no one had ever been laid." Joseph of Arimathea gave a very special gift when he gave his family grave site to shelter the Savior's body.

Second, **the tomb sealed the mystery of our Redeemer's resurrection.** Roman soldiers were assigned to guard the heavy, cart wheel shaped stone at the entrance of the tomb. Angels from heaven surrounded the Lord's body and later spoke to a trembling and weeping Mary Magdalene. In that dark chamber of death, God performed His mysterious miracle in the resurrection of His Son. The early Easter visitors, upon entering the tomb, found the linen cloths and napkin neatly in place, but the Lord's body was nowhere to be found. Only by faith can we measure the

mystery-miracle of the dead Christ rising to life again.

Thirdly, **the tomb satisfied the early Easter visitors of the Resurrection truth.**

At the Tomb, faith replaces fear. At the invitation of Mary Magdalene, who had come to the Tomb while it was yet dark that morning, Peter and John arrive and enter the Tomb. Bewildered and distressed at the report of Mary, "They have taken away the Lord out of the Tomb..." we see them trembling in fear. But when they see the grave clothes lying in place, they believed. Faith had replaced fear. Peter, who had denied his Lord and wept bitterly in the courtyard, was among the first to believe and rejoice that Easter morning. For these Easter visitors, hope returns with happiness. The disciples, now convinced that their Savior lives, returned to their homes, no doubt to share with others this Glorious News. We, too, must share the Gospel News of a resurrected Lord to a diseased and dying world.

For the people of "God's Kingdom," death is but the gate to life through Him who said, "I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live" (John 11:25).

BLESSED BE THE GOD AND FATHER OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST. ALLELUIA!

—Dale R. Battleson

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BEYOND THE CROSS

by Pastor W. M. Jackson,
Eben Jct., Michigan

The dawn of man's hope for immortality broke with the incandescence of the sun that first Easter morn when the "Son of righteousness rose (literally) with healing in His wings." The spark of hope, long dormant, was fanned into the eternal flame as the joyous news spread abroad, "He is risen." When the tomb yielded up the precious form of the incarnate Son of God, death groaned at having lost its hold and at being itself taken captive. The later words of the Apostle Paul would now have a wealth of meaning for the followers of Christ, "Death is swallowed up in victory!" The visual character of the empty tomb as seen by those ardent, faithful and fortunate followers of the Master, has now been etched on the minds of other followers of His, who, though they see Him not, yet believing, "rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory" (Peter 1:8).

The blessed Gospel record God gave His world concerning the incarnation of His Son, His sinless life, His vicarious death and glorious resurrection has wafted its way across all the civilized world and into the hearts of millions of hearers. It has lifted the fallen, comforted the afflicted and brought order out of chaos in many lives. The Gospel sound has found its echo of faith in the deep chambers of many a human heart. Yet, it has been relentlessly pursued by other sounds more familiar, which, as quickly as the Word finds a niche in the mind, whispers, "Incredible!" For many it is all just that—incredible! This is to say that God asks too much

of us, that He is stretching our faith beyond what is reasonable. Apparently King Agrippa held this view of the resurrection, as indicated by Paul's question: "Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that God should raise the dead?" It is not without good reason that the natural man shrinks back from accepting what to reason and his "better judgment" appears preposterous. Agrippa, like all others, would have liked to believe in a future life and a bodily resurrection. Yet, to him as to many other skeptics, what appears incredible to the mind must of necessity also be beyond the reach even of faith.

The resurrection of Christ and subsequently our own bodily resurrection is written into every basic creed of Christendom. Yet our verbal expression of "secondhand" thoughts is not enough. The record contained in the Word of God must now and ever be the foundation upon which our faith rests. The Gospel will convince us and the Gospel will sustain us in all matters of faith.

The running feet of the believers that first Easter morning, set in motion the feet of all true believers in the resurrection. Their feet have not stopped to this day. With dogged, yet determined steps, they have crossed and recrossed a thousand isles, and many Samarias, and gone even beyond, unto the uttermost parts of the world with their vivifying "HE LIVES!"

Who can blame them? Their faith did not stop when it found itself confronted by the intellectually in-

surmountable hurdle of the Virgin Birth and it vaulted as lightly over the mental chasm of His sinless life. Now, however, a tremor ripples across the sea of faith which threatens to build into tidal proportions as the two on the way to Emmaus voice their doubts and thus become the spokesmen for most: "We trusted that it should have been He which should have redeemed Israel." For all this demonstration of trembling faith, He loves; He draws nigh; and faith is full-blown again! They had learned an important lesson: they had learned to look **BEYOND CALVARY!**

It is this look **beyond the Cross** that adds the fullest dimension to our faith. The hearts of God's people thrill to the fact that the Champion of their faith "Lives and reigns through all eternity." Because He lives we can have a living faith! Because He is the **LIVING ROCK**, we can be "lively stones." This is no time and there is not place for moderation in faith with respect to the content of the Gospel report. Yea, let "God be true and every man a liar!"

Moderation, however, is a popular word in our modern vocabulary. As though everything should be done in "moderation." Whatever is beyond moderation is apparently excess. Is this philosophy to be applied to our Christian faith? Does our faith project itself in excess when we assert our belief in the resurrection of Christ? "Moderate" faith might quite aptly assert itself by grasping that part of the record which most nearly fits within the framework of the human "standard." Even if this limited "faith" can hurdle the ob-

stacle of the virgin birth it may well flounder on the reef of the resurrection. God is not looking for followers for His Son who possess that "faith" that dissects the record to find the "acceptable" parts which appear intellectually digestible. Let us, who profess the faith, not fail to take into account the "Author and Finisher of our faith;" yet, not only our faith, but all that faith rests in, namely; a finished redemption through Christ's death on the cross and His being "raised again for our justification." God authored and carried out to the final detail that which would bring alienated humanity to Himself, soul and body. Now, after Christ's resurrection and before our own, our faith may find itself "standing on tiptoes," trying to obtain a glimpse of the ultimate fulfillment of our hopes. But so be it—this is only expectation asserting itself, as of a soldier "at the ready!" Let us learn to look **beyond the cross** to the finished redemption!

God looked beyond the cross. God's omniscience spanned eternity to eternity. His foreknowledge took into account all future human need. This included not only the "Lamb slain from the foundation of the world," but also provision for His glorious victory over death. The Psalmist writes, "Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt Thou suffer Thine holy One to see corruption." God would not fail His beloved Son and He will not fail those who trust His Son for salvation.

Jesus looked beyond the cross. That Jesus' vision reached beyond the cross is without question. He referred to His own resurrection a number of times. He said, "Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up!" And again, "As Jonah was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth." He also said to His disciples, "Whither I go ye cannot come, but ye shall follow me later." He also stated, "Therefore doth My Father love Me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it up again." These, and many other passages, show us definitely that Jesus looked beyond the cross.

The angels looked beyond the cross.

Could the angels have been looking beyond the cross to Easter morning? One can almost sense a restlessness among the heavenly beings that Sabbath night as the hours wore slowly on. They, too, must have been anxious to see the greatest foe of humanity overcome. They had seen death, with its insatiable appetite, take its toll on the helpless human race since Adam. Now they were about to see the second Adam come forth from the grave victorious over death and resplendent in glory. Or, are we to think that angels are insensitive, unemotional beings, with little, if any, interest in happenings here on earth? If they are able to "rejoice over one sinner that repenteth," then surely there must have been a sense of great anticipation and a "trembling with excitement" now that at last death would lose its sting, and the grave its victory. One can almost sense the electrifying expectancy of those fortunate angels as they looked into the face of Omnipotence, awaiting the signal to go and roll away the stone. Down they come! One rolls away the stone and sits triumphantly on it. He becomes the first herald to the world that "He is not here, for He is risen!" The angels **must** have looked beyond the cross.

Men, too, must look beyond the cross. Few people in this world show interest in things which are only partially completed. This is true of pictures, of buildings, of plans and, most assuredly true of our eternal salvation. When our thoughts turn towards eternal values it is comforting to know that we "are complete in Him," as the Apostle Paul reminds us. This completeness is seen in His atoning death on the cross for our sins, His resurrection from the dead to assure our being "clothed upon with our house which is from heaven," and His return for His own according to His promise. In the meantime, He meditates on our behalf while we continue to work in His behalf. One day, when all is said and done: "We shall be like Him—for we shall see Him as He is!" Let us continue, steadfastly "looking unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith," during the remainder of our sojourn here. This means to look to the cross, but also **beyond the cross!**

THREE CROSSES

We sing of the Old Rugged Cross where Jesus gave His life for the sins of the world. We have heard it so many times, but have we experienced the real meaning of the Cross? The death and resurrection of Jesus Christ is the only way to forgiveness and eternal life.

There were also two others who were crucified that day at Calvary, one on each side of the cross of Jesus. The one criminal railed at Jesus, saying, "Are you not the Christ? Save yourself and us." This man did not repent of his sins and seek forgiveness, but rejected Jesus, and died in his sins.

His fellow criminal rebuked him and said, "Do you not fear God, as you are under the same condemnation? And we indeed justly, for we are receiving the due reward for our sins, but this man has done nothing wrong." Then he said, "Jesus, remember me when you come in your kingly power."

"Remember me," that was all, but it was spoken in the spirit of repentance. And Jesus said to him, "Truly I say to you, today you shall be with me in Paradise."

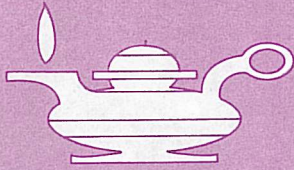
On one side was the sinner who rejected Jesus, the other repented of his sins, asked for mercy, and was forgiven. Jesus died for all people, but not all will be saved. Redemption is for repentant sinners, through the blood of Jesus. Rejecting Jesus is to reject salvation. There is no other way to be saved.

On which side are you? Do you realize that you are a sinner in need of God's mercy? Salvation is God's free gift to all who will admit their sins and their need and accept forgiveness and new life in Christ Jesus.

Three crosses—the center one is the Cross of Jesus, the Cross of redemption. On one side is the cross of rejection, on the other is the cross of repentance. Let us make sure that we are on the side that leads to eternal life.

"So I'll cherish the old rugged cross
Till my trophies at last I lay
down;

I will cling to the old rugged cross,
And exchange it some day for a
Crown." Mrs. Laura Norum
Clear Lake, Wis.



SCHOOL NEWS

ALUMNI BASKETBALL GAME

An alumni basketball game will be played at AFLBS on Mar. 21. There will be several alumni squads organized. All interested fellows are urged to come out for this event.

ITINERARY FOR THE SPRING TOUR OF THE AFLBS CHOIR

Sunday, March 30—Webster, S. Dak.
Monday, March 31—Faith, S. Dak.
Tuesday, April 1—Open
Wednesday, April 2—Kalispell, Mont.
Thursday, April 3—Everett, Wash.
Friday, April 4—Lake Stevens, Wash.

Saturday, April 5—Open
Sunday, April 6—Kirkland, Wash. (morning) Astoria, Ore. (evening)
Monday, April 7—Eugene, Ore.
Tuesday, April 8—Ferndale, Wash.
Wednesday, April 9—Seattle LBI (morning) Open (evening)
Thursday, April 10—Open
Friday, April 11—Great Falls, Mont.
Saturday, April 12—Culbertson, Mont.
Sunday, April 13—Tioga, N. Dak. (morning) Minnewaukan, N. Dak. (evening)
Monday April 14—Upsala, Minn.
The Choir is directed by Mr. Donald Rödvolld. Faculty representative on the

tour will be Rev. Richard Snipstead, dean of the school.

Please check your local newspapers for further details about the Choir's appearance in your community.

ITINERARY FOR THE SPRING TOUR OF THE AFLBS CHORAL CLUB

Friday, March 21—Kenyon, Minn.
Saturday, March 22—Chester, Ia.
Sunday, March 23—Radcliffe, Ia. (morning) Concord, Nebr. (evening)
Monday, March 24—Newman Grove, Nebr.
Tuesday, March 25—Dannebrog, Nebr.
Wednesday, March 26—Pukwana, S. Dak.
Thursday, March 27—Spicer, Minn.
The Choral Club is directed by Mr. Donald Rödvolld. Faculty representative on the tour will be Rev. Raynard Huglen.

Please check your local newspapers for further details about the Choral Club's appearance in your community.



THE CHOIR

Bottom row, left to right: June Gjevre, Cheri Carter, Rebecca Lee, Paula Benson, Patty Broden, Ruth Solheim, Judy Moan, Janet Wall, Barbara Myhre and Kave Pederson. Second row: Anne Snipstead, Dianne Hautamaki, Marilyn Eversvik, Jennifer Broden, Debbie Wire, Karla Nygaard, Kendra Broten, Becky Haugen, April Nygaard, Elaine Hill and Karen Russum. Third row: Paul Jore, Allen Herset, John Presteng, Jeff Dahl, Wanda Milton, Bob Nelson, Keith Nash, Top row: Paul Sunde, Mark Kjos, Otto Rodne, Reuben Quanbeck, Arne Berge, Wes Kvanvig, David Simonson, Steve Johnson and Doug Swanson.



THE CHORAL CLUB

Bottom row, left to right: Mary Wolfgram, Debbie Nelson, Kathy Ostrand, Pattie Erickson, Jennifer Backholm, Michele Lamar and Lori Hamann. Middle: Suzi Draeger, Glenda Aasness, Donna Palmer, Naomi Nash, Ruth Mundfrom, Miriam Stolee, Jeanette Priebe and Nancy Zwart. Top row: Kathy Livingood, Linda Butterfield, Verna Whitaker, Vonna Kylo, Diane Grothe, Joni Halstad, Vickie Bjorgaard, Susan Sorteberg and Myrtle Thompson.

Introducing Our Seminarians

ANOTHER PRODIGAL REJOICES

"Rejoice in the Lord alway; and again I say, Rejoice. Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand. Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus" (Phil. 4:4-7).

This portion of Scripture has become very meaningful to our family in that our gracious God has permitted us to see His marvelous works performed through fervent prayer. Oh, that we may "rejoice in the Lord alway" as we see Him perform His miraculous act of salvation upon repentant souls.

For such was the experience of this writer, Norman Tenneboe, senior seminarian. I shall always be eternally grateful to a patient, loving heavenly Father, who welcomed back an-

other "prodigal son" into His "household of faith." I'm also confident that the fervent prayer of righteous men had its effect as the Holy Spirit of God moved this lost sinner to the foot of the Cross to claim Jesus Christ as his very own Savior and Lord of life. When the living God had given me this walk in newness of life, He also revived within my heart the call into full-time Christian service which I had rejected during the summer after my graduation from high school. May we ever remain faithful and obedient to His call.

Marc and our daughter Kim, and I are living in Golden Valley, Minn. We have another son, Terry, and daughter, Sharon, who live in Boca Raton, Fla., and Brainerd, Minn., respectively. In addition we also have four grandchildren.

We are most grateful to be a part of a fundamental, conservative seminary whose teachers are grounded

From Lake Preston and Arlington, S. Dak., I served in the U.S. Army

infantry during World War II in the Southwest Pacific. I was engaged in farming for a good many years and then was employed by a co-operative oil company as a station attendant. At the time when I decided to enter seminary I had been offered the position of manager of the co-op.

My wife Mavis, along with our son upon the "firm foundation," the Word of God, and to be receiving sound Lutheran doctrine as we are taught in the seminary.

We are so thankful, too, not only for the prayer support of the people of the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations, but thankful to be a part of the concerns that are shared with one another. May the spiritual enrichment that has been received by the grace of God from our seminary these past few years in some way bring glory and honor to His precious name, as we prayerfully consider calls to some parish. Psalm 105:1-5.

Norman Tenneboe

The Crucifixion of Jesus

by C. Truman Davis, M.D., M.S.

In this article, I shall discuss some of the physical aspects of the passion, or suffering, of Jesus Christ. We shall follow Him from Gethsemane, through His trial, His scourging, His path along the Via Dolorosa, to His last dying hours on the cross.

I became interested in this about a year ago when I read an account of the crucifixion in Jim Bishop's book, *The Day Christ Died*. I suddenly realized that I had taken the Crucifixion more or less for granted all these years—that I had grown callous to its horror by a too easy familiarity with the grim details—and a too distant friendship with Him. It finally occurred to me that as a physician I did not even know the actual immediate cause of death. The Gospel writers do not help us very much on this point, because crucifixion and scourging were so common during their lifetime that they undoubtedly considered a detailed description totally superfluous—so we have the concise words of the Evangelists: "Pilate, having scourged Jesus, delivered Him to them to be crucified—and they crucified Him."

I am indebted to many who have studied this subject in the past and especially to a contemporary colleague, Dr. Pierre Barbet, a French surgeon who has done exhaustive historical and experimental research and has written extensively on the subject.

The infinite psychic and spiritual suffering of the Incarnate God in atonement for the sins of fallen man I have no competence to discuss; however, the physiological and anatomical aspects of our Lord's passion we can examine in some detail... what did the body of Jesus of Nazareth actually endure during those hours of torture?

This led me first to a study of the practice of crucifixion itself; that is, the torture and execution of a person by fixation to a cross. Apparently, the first known practice of crucifixion

was by the Persians. Alexander and his generals brought it back to the Mediterranean world—to Egypt and to Carthage. The Romans apparently learned the practice from the Carthaginians and (as with almost everything the Romans did) rapidly developed a very high degree of efficiency and skill in carrying it out. A number of Roman authors (Livy, Cicero, Tacitus) comment on it. Several innovations and modifications are described in the ancient literature; I will mention only a few which may have some bearing here. The upright portion of the cross (or stipes) could have the cross-arm (or patibulum) attached two or three feet below its top—this is what we commonly think of today as the classic form of the cross (the one which we have later named the Latin cross); however, the common form used in our Lord's day was the Tau cross (shaped like the Greek letter Tau or like our T). In this cross the patibulum was placed in a notch at the top of the stipes. There is fairly overwhelming archeological evidence that it was on this type of cross that Jesus was crucified.

The upright post, or stipes, was generally permanently fixed in the ground at the site of execution and the condemned man was forced to carry the patibulum, apparently weighing about 110 pounds, from the prison to the place of execution. Without any historical or biblical proof, medieval and Renaissance painters and most of the sculptors of crucifixes today show the nails through the palms. Roman historical accounts and experimental work have shown that the nails were driven between the small bones of the wrists and not through the palms. Nails driven through the palms will strip out between the fingers when they support the weight of a human body. The misconception may have come about through a misunderstanding of Jesus' words to Thomas, "Observe my hands." Anatomists, both modern and ancient, have always considered the wrists as part of the hand.

A titulus, or small sign, stating the victim's crime was usually carried at the front of the procession and later nailed to the cross above the head. This sign with its staff nailed to the top of the cross would have

given it somewhat the characteristic form of the Latin cross.

The physical passion of Christ began in Gethsemane. Of the many aspects of this initial suffering, I shall only discuss the one of physiological interest: the bloody sweat. It is interesting that the physician of the group, St. Luke, is the only one to mention this. He says, "And being in agony, He prayed the longer. And his sweat became as drops of blood, trickling down upon the ground."

Every attempt imaginable has been used by modern scholars to explain away this phase, apparently under the mistaken impression that this just does not happen.

A great deal of effort could be saved by consulting the medical literature. Though very rare, the phenomenon of Hematidrosis, or bloody sweat, is well documented. Under great emotional stress, tiny capillaries in the sweat glands can break, thus mixing blood with sweat. This process alone could have produced marked weakness and possible shock.

We shall move rapidly through the betrayal and arrest; I must stress again that important portions of the Passion story are missing from this account. This may be frustrating to you, but in order to adhere to our purpose of discussing only the purely physical aspect of the Passion, this is necessary. After the arrest in the middle of the night, Jesus was brought before the Sanhedrin and Caiaphas, the High Priest; it is here that the first physical trauma was inflicted. A soldier struck Jesus across the face for remaining silent when questioned by Caiaphas. The palace guards then blindfolded Him and mockingly taunted Him to identify them as they each passed by, spat on Him, and struck Him in the face.

In the early morning, Jesus, battered and bruised, dehydrated, and exhausted from a sleepless night, is taken across Jerusalem to the Praetorium of the Fortress Antonia, the seat of government of the Procurator of Judea, Pontius Pilate. You are, of course, familiar with Pilate's action in attempting to pass responsibility to Herod Antipas, the Tetrarch of Judea. Jesus apparently suffered no physical mistreatment at

the hands of Herod and was returned to Pilate. It was then, in response to the cries of the mob, that Pilate ordered Bar-Abbas released and condemned Jesus to scourging and crucifixion. Most Roman writers from this period do not associate the two. Many scholars believe that Pilate originally ordered Jesus scourged as his full punishment and that the death sentence by crucifixion came only in response to the taunt by the mob that the Procurator was not properly defending Caesar against this pretender who claimed to be the King of the Jews.

Preparations for the scourging are carried out. The prisoner is stripped of His clothing and His hands tied to a post above His head. It is doubtful whether the Romans made any attempt to follow the Jewish law in this matter of scourging. The Jews had an ancient law prohibiting more than forty lashes. The Pharisees, always making sure that the law was strictly kept, insisted that only thirty-nine lashes be given. (In the case of a miscount, they were sure of remaining within the law.) The Roman legionnaire steps forward with the flagrum (or flagellum) in his hand. This is a short whip consisting of several heavy, leather thongs with two small balls of lead attached near the ends of each. The heavy whip is brought down with full force again and again across Jesus' shoulders, back and legs. At first the heavy thongs cut through the skin only. Then, as the blows continue, they cut deeper into the subcutaneous tissues, producing first an oozing of blood from the capillaries and veins of the skin, and finally spurting arterial bleeding from vessels in the underlying muscles. The small balls of lead first produce large, deep bruises which are broken open by subsequent blows. Finally the skin of the back is hanging in long ribbons and the entire area is an unrecognizable mass of torn, bleeding tissue. When it is determined by the centurion in charge that the prisoner is near death, the beating is finally stopped.

The half-fainting Jesus is then untied and allowed to slump to the stone pavement, wet with His own blood. The Roman soldiers see a great joke in this provincial Jew claiming

to be a king. They throw a robe across His shoulders and place a stick in His hand for a scepter. They still need a crown to make their travesty complete. A small bundle of flexible branches covered with long thorns (commonly used for firewood) are plaited into a shape of a crown and this is pressed into His scalp. Again there is copious bleeding (the scalp being one of the most vascular areas of the body). After mocking Him and striking Him across the face, the soldiers take the stick from His hand and strike Him across the head, driving the thorns deeper into His scalp. Finally, they tire of their sadistic sport and the robe is torn from His back. This had already become adherent to the clots of blood and serum in the wounds, and its removal, just as in the careless removal of a surgical bandage, causes excruciating pain... almost as though He were again being whipped—and the wounds again begin to bleed.

In deference to Jewish custom, the Romans return His garments. The heavy patibulum of the cross is tied across His shoulders, and the procession of the condemned Christ, two thieves and the execution detail of Roman soldiers, headed by a centurion, begins its slow journey along the Via Dolorosa. In spite of His efforts to walk erect, the weight of the heavy wooden beam, together with the shock produced by copious blood loss, is too much. He stumbles and falls. The rough wood of the beam gouges into the lacerated skin and muscles of the shoulders. He tries to rise, but human muscles have been pushed beyond their endurance. The centurion, anxious to get on with the crucifixion, selects a stalwart North African onlooker, Simon of Cyrene, to carry the cross. Jesus follows, still bleeding and sweating the cold, clammy sweat of shock. The 650 yard journey from the fortress Antonia to Golgotha is finally completed. The prisoner is again stripped of His clothes—except for a loin cloth which is allowed the Jews.

The crucifixion begins. Jesus is offered wine mixed with myrrh, a mild analgesic mixture. He refuses to drink. Simon is ordered to place the patibulum on the ground and Jesus is quickly thrown backward with His

shoulders against the wood. The legionnaire feels for the depression at the front of the wrist. He drives a heavy, square, wrought-iron nail through the wrist and deep into the wood. Quickly, he moves to the other side and repeats the action, being careful not to pull the arms too tightly, but to allow some flexion and movement. The patibulum is then lifted in place at the top of the stipes and the titulus reading "Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews" is nailed in place.

The left foot is pressed backward against the right foot, and with both feet extended, toes down, a nail is driven through the arch of each, leaving the knees moderately flexed. The victim is now crucified. As He slowly sags down with more weight on the nails in the wrists, excruciating, fiery pain shoots along the fingers and up the arms to explode in the brain—the nails in the wrists are putting pressure on the median nerves. As He pushes Himself upward to avoid this stretching torment, He places His full weight on the nail through His feet. Again there is the searing agony of the nail tearing through the nerves between the metatarsal bones of the feet.

At this point, another phenomenon occurs. As the arms fatigue, great waves of cramps sweep over the muscles, knotting them in deep, relentless, throbbing pain. With these cramps comes the inability to push Himself upward. Hanging by His arms, the pectoral muscles are paralyzed and the intercostal muscles are unable to act. Air can be drawn into the lungs, but cannot be exhaled. Jesus fights to raise Himself in order to get even one short breath. Finally, carbon dioxide builds up in the lungs and in the blood stream and the cramps partially subside. Spasmodically, He is able to push Himself upward to exhale and bring in the life-giving oxygen. It was undoubtedly during these periods that He uttered the seven short sentences which are recorded:

The first, looking down at the Roman soldiers throwing dice for His seamless garment, "Father, forgive them for they know not what they do."

The second, to the penitent thief,

(Continued on page 15)

editorials

GOD'S GREAT "NEVERTHELESS"

"Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses"—and far beyond. Death reigned on that "black Friday," which we today call "Good Friday," because we know it wasn't the end after all. Then God broke in with His great "Nevertheless" and overruled the powers of evil and death.

Therefore, J. Sidlow Baxter can call Easter "this morning of mornings," for there is no day like it in all the year. In the world there is much superficiality and frivolity associated with Easter, unfortunately. But for the one who will, it is the greatest day of all.

All our readers know what a great change the resurrection of Jesus brought to the world of His time. First of all, together with the coming of the Holy Spirit, it transformed the disciples from being dispirited to assured witnesses. Then it spurred them on to a stupendous Gospel-preaching effort in the generations immediately following His ascension.

The same conviction, that Christ arose, perpetuates the Church today. It is the *sine qua non*, the indispensable foundation stone of faith, without which Christian faith and the Church could not exist. That is, if Christ is a risen, victorious Christ, life has meaning and hope. If He did not arise triumphant over death, then Christian teaching is a fraud and those of us who profess the faith have no answers. But we do believe that Jesus Christ has risen and He goes before us and there is an eternity to share with Him.

The resurrection, God's great "nevertheless," speaks to us in three ways. First, it tells us that there is forgiveness available for past sins. Jesus died for the sins of the whole world. As we bring our sins to Him, He forgives them and takes their guilt away. God's great "nevertheless" cancels that debt. But if anyone refuses to let his

sins go, then they are as a great weighted block which will drag him to eternal perdition. In Christ there is deliverance. Remember this.

Secondly, the resurrection speaks of power for the present. If forgiveness or pardon is necessary, so are power and purpose. Sinners want more than release, they want to count for something good. Hymnwriters have told of "danger all the way" and a "way besieged and thronging." Power to live a life which has something to offer in this kind of a world comes from that One who was Himself victorious. Perhaps Paul said it best of all: "I can do all things in Him who strengthens me" (Philippians 4:13).

And third, the resurrection gives us hope for the future. Forgiveness is needed, power is desired and hope is essential for life. Read again the great assurances that God gives us about hope in I Corinthians 15. As we said earlier, there were times when death seemed triumphant, but God's great "nevertheless" broke that hold. The victory is Christ's and for those who are His.

As you think about life and your life, do you feel good about them? Do you sense victory, not of your own making, but available to you? Can you read Romans 8:31-39 and feel unafraid? If you must answer negatively, in all likelihood you do not know the power of His resurrection, of God's great "nevertheless."

But where anyone lays hold of Christ's Easter victory, by faith, for that is the only way we can appropriate it, then the sense of triumph will come into life and life will assume true meaning. Our prayer at this Easter-time is that all our readers may know the power of Christ's resurrection, of God's great "nevertheless." And to the sharing of this message with the world, all of Christ's followers must re-dedicate themselves in this Year of our Lord, 1975.

A blessed Easter to you.

BIBLE CONFERENCE AT DALTON

In writing of our Bible conferences it is hard to say anything very new. They are all good conferences. The preaching and teaching are good, the fellowship is blessed, the hospitality of the host church(es) is excellent. One place seems to try to outdo another is showing hospitality (in a good way, of course).

The winter Bible conference in Dalton this year was certainly a good one. While attendance was nothing unusual, it was good and people came from over a wide area (about seven states). The Bible studies and evening messages were very practical and the other topics presented were on timely subjects. Other sessions were well received, too. The women report a rewarding WMF workshop on Friday with about 112 ladies attending.

We wonder if the Co-ordinating Committee should take a look at the possibility of going back to holding the conference on weekdays only, as in the first years. There is such an exodus by Saturday from a conference which only began on Thursday evening that it may be questioned why it is scheduled over the weekend. Extremely few pastors are present on Sunday, favoring their responsibilities at home instead. The Tuesday night to Thursday noon schedule has its advantages, providing the confer-

ence is held before Lent begins.

A hearty thank-you to the Dalton parish—Zion, Tordenskjold, Kvam and Sarpsborg—and their pastor and wife, Rev. and Mrs. Wendell Johnson, for fine hospitality shown to all of us who were privileged to attend the ninth annual winter Bible conference. And a “welcome home” to the Johnsons, just returned from a two-week trip to beautiful Hawaii since the conference, the generous gift of some real friends.

AMBASSADORS OF OUR SCHOOLS

Some of the finest promotion work done in behalf of our Bible School is that of our Choral Club and Choir while on tour or presenting individual concerts. This will be no less the case this spring in the tours planned by the two organizations. (The itineraries are to be found elsewhere in this *Ambassador*.)

Attractive trips have been arranged for the two musical groups. The Choral Club will be in Iowa, Nebraska and South Dakota, as well as Minnesota. The Choir will make

its first visit to the West Coast and points between since 1972.

Nothing makes quite as great an impression on the people of our churches, and other friends, as to see flesh-and-blood representatives of the schools they support. It is all well and good to hear a faculty representative speak about the School, but interest is multiplied when one can see products in the making, and these the members of the groups are.

The Choral Club and Choir sing excellently under the direction of Mr. Don Rodvold, himself an effective ambassador of the School. And then, too, our family of friends will enjoy to hear the spoken testimonies of faith in Christ by group members and to visit with these young people before and after the concerts and in their homes, whenever they have them as their guests.

God bless these two tours as well as any other individual and weekend appearances by these groups from AFLBS. A thank-you in advance to all congregations hosting these concerts and making all the needed arrangements. May you feel richly rewarded.



saged his chest. This went on for some time but with each time the pulse became weaker. Finally the little heart stopped and didn't respond any more. I laid the limp body down and covered it with a sheet. The anxious parents outside were waiting to hear how the baby was doing. Those were the longest ten feet I have walked. And then I finally had to tell them, “Your baby boy has gone home to be with Jesus.”

This was the third child they'd lost in the last three years. The little boy had been growing and getting so fat. I baptized him the month before, but the dreaded disease of spinal meningitis has been running out of control in many parts of Brazil. Vaccine never leaves the big cities as the epidemic is running rampant there, too. *Time* magazine, Sept. 9, 1974, had an article

(Continued on page 16)

How do you tell a mother and father that their son is dead? This was one of the most difficult tasks I've had.

In Alvorada we were called to the home of Moses (Pastor Yeddo and I cast the demons out of him some years ago) after Sunday School. Their 3-month old baby boy was very ill with spinal meningitis and the doctors would not or could not do anything for him. He was too far gone and the parents had no money.

When we came into the humble home, the grandmother was holding the limp baby in her arms as the mother lay sobbing uncontrollably on the bed. The eyes of the baby were rolling back as the high fever was all but cooking the little one.

We had a brief Scripture reading and then went to work to try to help ease the suffering one. A rag dipped

in a water and alcohol solution placed on the head, chest and back brought the fever under control. His eyes began to focus, but he had been sick too long with a high fever. He was weak and dehydrated. We put water from a spoon on his parched lips, which he swallowed with great effort.

The parents were overjoyed to see the baby responding so well. They left the room for some air as it was a hot, mucky day. But the longer we massaged the little baby and worked the legs and the arms to get the circulation going, the more I realized that hope was running out. The pulse was getting weaker and the breathing more faulty. I held him up, which seemed to help his breathing, but soon that didn't help. All of a sudden his heart stopped and a quick rap on the chest started it up again as we mas-



Key: The name of the town is the address of the deceased. Following that is listed the name of the deceased, age, date of death and the church in which he or she held membership.

NORTH DAKOTA
Hampden
Elmer Aanstad, 84, Feb. 9, Zoar

So we know these things:

1. God wants us filled (Eph. 5:18).
2. God will supply "the will and the power."
3. He is waiting to fill His own with His Spirit.

WHAT IS LEFT FOR ME TO DO?

10. (Jn. 7:37-39) _____

CONTINUOUS FILLING

Nowhere in Scripture is the heart represented as some kind of bowl to hold a certain measure of the Spirit, or even His fullness. In speaking of the disciples in Acts 13, the writer tells us that the disciples "were continually filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit." Continually. Like God Himself, it is in the present tense, but it has the thought of never ceasing (like the prayer we are to be engaged in).

So John 7:37-39 is not a once-for-all long drink, it must be 11. _____

(The WMF Bible Studies this year are being written by Mrs. Esther Farrier, 3533 N.E. 5th St., Minneapolis, Minnesota 55418.)

WMF REMINDERS

My Missionary For a Day was our project for March. Let us praise and thank God for each one of our missionary ladies and their continued efforts for the Lord. Our goal for this project has been increased by \$1000 this year, so let us pray much for guidance as we give to this project. We encourage you to use the My Missionary For a Day envelopes and become prayer partners with our missionary ladies.

April's project is Cradle Roll/Junior Missions. Our goal for this coming year remains the same as last year. However, we did not reach our goal in this project this past year and there are definite commitments we must meet. Again, I ask you to pray concerning your giving to Cradle Roll/Junior Missions.

WMF Bible Study



GOD IS FOR WOMEN . . . GOD IS FOR YOU

Lesson 4

GOD IS FOR YOU—HE WANTS TO LIVE IN YOU

Ephesians 3

Memorize Eph. 3:16

God is no respecter of persons. He does not give preferential treatment because of sex, position, status, appearance. When He sets out to bring a soul unto Himself, when He seeks to fill a soul with His Spirit, He looks only for an open, waiting heart. He does not have quotas of certain categories to fill. As the Psalmist says, God is content to dwell with any soul that is of a contrite and humble spirit.

Paul's prayer for you and me is that we may have Christ dwelling in our hearts by faith and that we may be filled with the fullness of God (vv. 17, 19).

April, 1975

Now, what are we talking about when we say that
CHRIST LIVES IN THE HEART OF THE BELIEVER?
 God speaks of the human heart in non-glowing terms:

1. Jer. 17:9 _____

2. Gen. 6:5 _____

3. Matt. 15:18, 19 _____

The modern psychiatrist speaks of the unconscious part of man in much the same terms as God speaks of the heart. The psychiatrist says that the unconscious is the seedbed of motive, will; he says that the unconscious is uneducable, unreformable; he further says that the unconscious is a kind of reservoir of every wicked and degrading thing of which man is capable.

And it is into this area of my being that I invite the sinless Son of God! The absolute wonder of it all is that **He is willing to come.** And that He does come and take up His abode in the midst of my sinfulness and uncleanness is very literally true. It is the most practical thing about salvation. My own heart is incapable of generating good; God in my heart can generate nothing but good.

So the invitation comes again and again and again.
 And the promise comes again and again and again.
 What is the invitation and the promise in

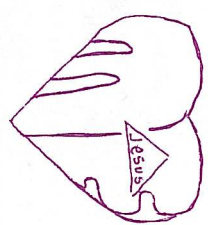
4. Jn. 1:12 _____

5. Rev. 3:20 _____

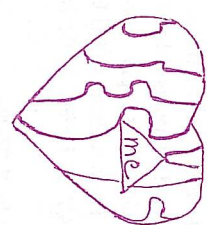
6. Matt. 11:28 _____

CHRIST IN THE HEART could be thought of like this

A. The person who is saved, who has received the Savior, but has allowed the Savior only enough of her heart to set up a small tent, barely living room.



B. The person who has grown in the knowledge of Christ and has allowed Him to take over the ordering of her life. The Savior fills the whole heart and has changed the "inner man" rather drastically.



C. The person who has really given herself totally over to God, who seeks daily to do only the will of God, who surrenders herself daily to the direction of the Spirit in the Word. This person soon takes on the likeness of Christ Himself.



THIS CHRIST-LIKENESS IS THE PURPOSE OF GOD FOR EVERY CHILD OF HIS (Rom. 8:29).

When Paul speaks of the believer's being "filled with the fullness of God" he is speaking of that person's being totally surrendered, totally dedicated to the person of Jesus Christ, who is the fullness of the Godhead bodily. With these thoughts as background, write a few characteristics that should

7. accompany being filled with the Spirit of God: _____

Fullness of the Spirit is no accident! In Ephesians 3, trace the progression, 8. like steps in a stairway, which lead to fullness:

(f) v. 19 _____

(e) v. 19 _____

(d) v. 18 _____

(c) v. 17 _____

(b) v. 17 _____

(a) v. 16 strength (in fact, the power of God Himself) _____

And, because Paul knew that this prayer for you and me was very lofty, even humanly impossible, he reminds us of something which will encourage

us up that ladder: (v. 20) 9. _____

CONTEMPLATION OF JESUS
ON THE CROSS IN THREE
LENTEN HYMNS BY BERNARD
OF CLAIRVAUX
By Don Rodvold,
Music Director, AFLBS

Bernard was a farmer; a good one. He was also a monk who lived the disciplined lifestyle of the monastery and, no doubt, this contributed to his being a good farmer. His day of weeding, seeding, hoeing, pruning, feeding and watering was long and toilsome. Little time was left for personal indulgences like eating and rest, resulting in a haggard, drawn body that wore out before its due and died from lack of care.

But he did take time for the more important things—like feeding his soul and fervently attending to the salvation of thousands.

The first two and last two hours of Bernard's day were spent in meditation and contemplation of Jesus. He would dwell intensely on the various members of Christ's body—His nailed hands and feet, His speared side, His bleeding head—and envision the passion and suffering of Christ.

He didn't do this because he was morbid or "kinky"; on the contrary, he was brilliant and eloquent as a preacher, counting Louis, King of France, among his converts as well as every last member of his own family. He was forceful, yet sensitive. You might say he was irresistible in his testimony. In towns where he had preached barely one man was left for every seven women. His reputation as an evangelist soon spread and wives were moved to chicanery to prevent their husbands from hearing him for fear of losing them.

O what precious balm and healing,
Jesus, in Thy wounds I find!
Ev'ry hour that I am feeling
Pains of body and of mind;
Should some evil thought rush in,
And provoke my soul to sin,
Thoughts of Thy deep wounds, from
sinning
Keep me in its first beginning.
Should some lust or sharp tempta-
tion
Prove too strong for flesh and blood,
Lo! I think upon Thy passion,
And the breach is soon made good:
Or should Satan press me hard,

Thinking I am off my guard,
Christ, I say, for me was wounded,
And the tempter flees confounded.

If the world my heart entices
On the broad and easy road,
And both by its gay devices
Silence ev'ry thought of God,
When the heavy load I see
Which, dear Lord, was laid on Thee,
I can still each wild emotion,
Calm and blest in my devotion.

Yes, whate'er may pain or grieve
me,
Thy dear wounds can make me
whole;
When my heart sinks, they revive
me,
Life pours in upon my soul:
May Thy comfort render sweet
Ev'ry bitter cup I meet;
Thou, who by Thy death and passion
Hast procured my soul's salvation.

Surely, this is more than the intel-
lectual verbal exercise of a poet.
These are the words of a man who
knew the Savior. It's the heart and
mind revelation of a man who knew
he was dead, who knew where life was
and the only way to procur it was as
a beggar.

Luther said of Bernard: "If there
has ever been a pious monk who
feared God it was St. Bernard, whom
alone I hold in much higher esteem
than all other monks and priests
throughout the world."

Bernard was born into a life of com-
fort and graces. His father was a
knight, his mother a person of radiant
goodness. He was converted when he
was 22 years old after the death of
his mother and immediately he set
about converting his family—his fa-
ther, an uncle and his brothers, all
but one, followed him.

To that brother Bernard said, "To
you alone our land will have to look."

The young lad replied, "Does that
mean to you, heaven; to me, the
earth? The division has not been fairly
made." He, too, followed his brothers
into the pious life.

Wide open are Thy loving hands
To pay with more than gold.
The awful debt of guilty men,
Forever and of old.
Ah, let me grasp those pierced
hands,
That we may never part,
And let the power of their blood

Sustain my fainting heart.

See how Bernard pictures Christ,
arms and hands open on the cross as
to embrace the entire sinful world?

But it would have been enough had
he written only one song; it alone
would have endeared him to centuries
of grateful Christians, who, by his
words and example, have been led in-
to a deeper, richer spiritual life, a
closer union with Christ. Consider
O sacred Head, now wounded,
With grief and shame weighed
down,
Now scornfully surrounded
With thorns, Thine only crown;
O sacred Head, what glory,
What bliss, till now was Thine!
Yet, though despised and gory,
I joy to call Thee mine.

What Thou, my Lord, hast suffered
Was all for sinners' gain;
Mine, mine was the transgression,
But Thine the deadly pain.
Lo, here I fall, my Savior!
'Tis I deserve Thy place;
Look on me with Thy favor,
Vouchsafe to me Thy grace.

What language shall I borrow
To thank Thee, dearest Friend,
For this, Thy dying sorrow,
Thy pity without end?
O make me Thine forever;
And should I fainting be,
Lord, let me never, never
Outlive my love to Thee.

Be near when I am dying,
O show Thy cross to me;
Lord, on Thy help relying,
Come Thou and set me free
These eyes, new faith receiving,
From Jesus shall not move,
For He who dies believing,
Dies safely through Thy love.

The head of Jesus laden with the
grief and weight of my sin; the God
surrounded by insensitive and out-
rageously crude people who show
their contempt by expectorating, yell-
ing insults and obscenities and shak-
ing their fists; the Man whose brow
bleeds from the thorns of the mock
crown.

"Yet though despised and gory I joy
to call Thee mine."

"What language shall I borrow to
thank Thee, dearest friend?"
Unspeakable gratitude!

There are frustrations in expressing
thanks for favors and niceties in ev-

eryday living but some sort of satisfaction is always ours when we can return the kindness.

But how can we possibly acknowledge the indebtedness of salvation, life itself? Will thousands, even millions, of thanks suffice? What can one do?

The enormity of the gift leaves one boggled and mumbling in frustration.

“O make me Thine forever; and should I fainting be, Lord, let me never, never outlive my love to Thee.”

I earnestly pray that in my ceaseless failing and faltering, I should not live long enough to alienate myself from His grace.

But this is impossible; the best part of His love is that it will never cease and I am His forever.

Letters TO THE EDITOR

STILL PRAISING GOD AT 90

Thank you for past years' service of the *Ambassador*. God has so wonderfully blessed me and many others this past year. I reached the 90 mark last fall and thank Jesus every day for His forgiving love and that my mind is fairly clear and hand steady enough to write and eyes well enough to be able to read, etc. God bless each one of us is my prayer.

Mrs. Hattie Mohn
Everett, Wash.

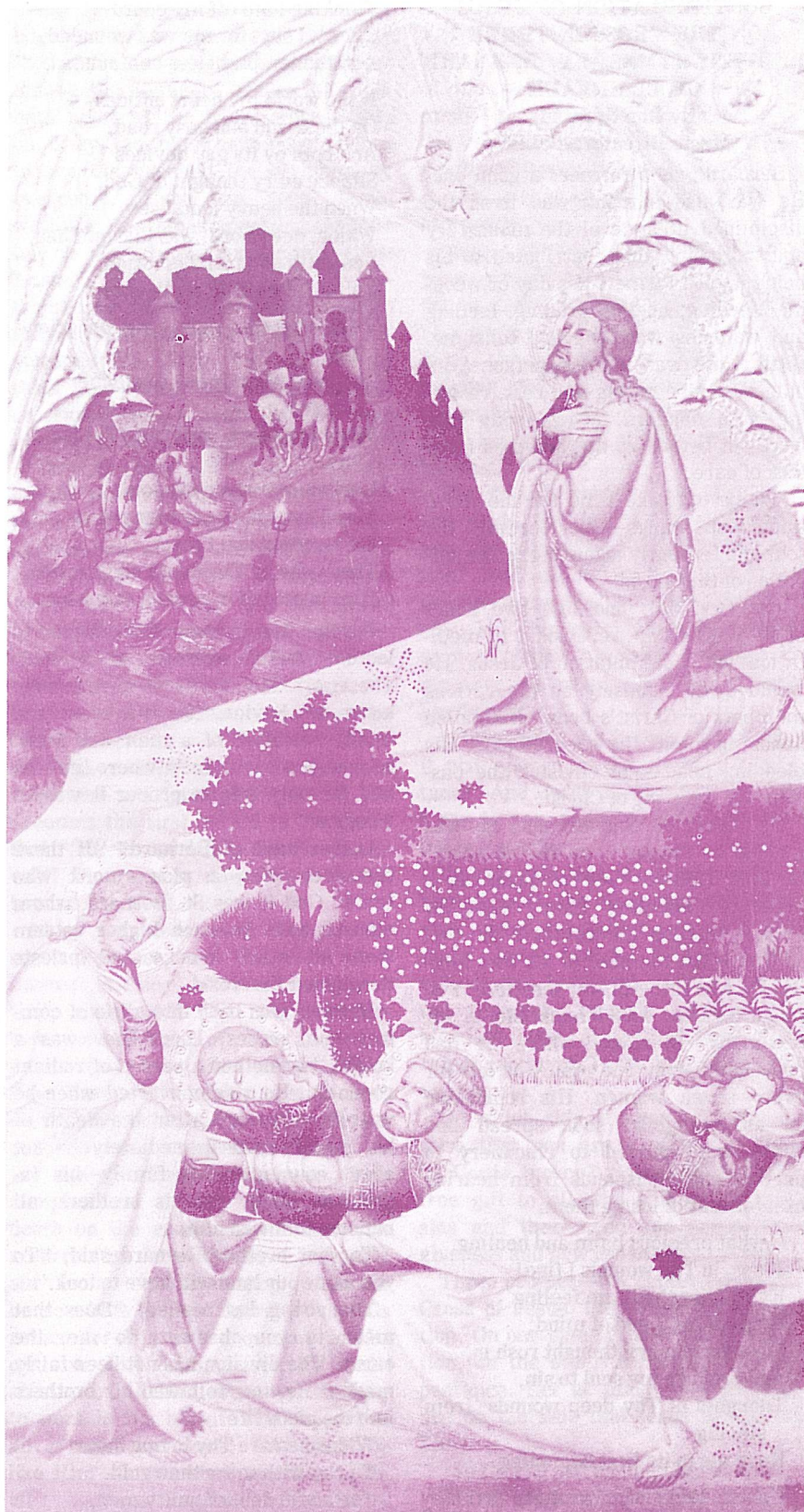
MORNING BREAKS UPON THE TOMB

Morning breaks upon the tomb;
Jesus scatters all its gloom;
Day of triumph, through the skies
See the glorious Savior rise.

Ye who are afraid of death,
Triumph in the scattered shade,
Drive your anxious fears away,
See the place where Jesus lay!

Christians, dry your flowing tears,
Chase your unbelieving fears;
Look on His deserted grave,
Doubt no more His power to save.

William Bengo Collyer
(from *The Hymnal*)



THE AGONY IN THE GARDEN

This picture by Andrea Vanni shows Christ praying in the garden, while in the background Judas hurries along to betray Him. At bottom, Christ rouses the three who came to watch while He prayed.

Religious News Service Photo



NEWS

of the Churches

(Continued from page 8)

NEW CHURCH DEDICATED AT FERGUS FALLS LAST FALL

Calvary Lutheran Church, Fergus Falls, Minn., dedicated its new church facilities to the glory of God on Sunday, September 20, 1974, in a special service at 3:00 p.m.

The service began outside the church building with the laying of the cornerstone by Rev. Julius Hermunslie, the retired pastor of Calvary. He was assisted by Stanley Christenson, chairman of the congregation, and Fred Van Sickle, chairman of the building committee.

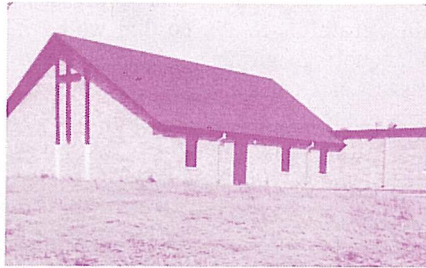
Following the ceremony, Mr. Van Sickle opened the doors of the church and the congregation marched in, singing the hymn "Holy, Holy, Holy! Lord God Almighty!"

The service in the church proper began with the reading of Psalm 100 by Student Pastor Ronald Hoehne, a senior at Free Lutheran Seminary. He directed the service which followed.

The Rev. John P. Strand, president of the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations, brought the message to the congregation. Pastor Strand challenged the members to use the building to the glory of God by being God's witnesses in thought, word and deed in the community where He has placed them. Pastor Strand then dedicated the building to the glory of God.

Greetings were brought to the congregation from sister churches and friends. Special music was directed by Mrs. Stanley Christenson, organist, and a group of ladies from the congregation sang special hymns of praise.

Pastor Herbert L. Franz, Cloquet, Minn., chairman of the Home Mission



Calvary Lutheran Church, on the northeast corner of Fergus Falls.



Stanley Christenson adjusts the cornerstone as Rev. Julius Hermunslie, left, and Fred Van Sickle look on.

Board of the AFLC, conducted a series of evangelistic services during the week prior to the dedication of the church.

Calvary is one of the congregations receiving help from the Home Mission Board. Mission money was used to help build the church and is being used to help support the congregation. The members of Calvary are deeply grateful to the people of the Association who are making it possible for new churches to be built and for mission work to be carried out in our own country. As the need continues to increase, may we ever have the vision to pray, work and support our Association work at large.

—Corr.

"Today thou shalt be with me in Paradise."

The third, looking down at the terrified, grief stricken, adolescent John, (the beloved Apostle), he said, "Behold thy mother," and looking to Mary, his mother, "Woman, behold thy son."

The fourth cry is from the beginning of the 22nd Psalm, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"

Hours of this limitless pain, cycles of twisting, joint-rending cramps, intermittent partial asphyxiation, searing pain as tissue is torn from His lacerated back as He moves up and down against the rough timber. Then another agony begins. A deep crushing pain deep in the chest as the pericardium slowly fills with serum and begins to compress the heart.

Let us remember again the 22nd Psalm (the 14th verse), "I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint: my heart is like wax; it is melted in the midst of my bowels."

It is now almost over—the loss of tissue fluids has reached a critical level—the compressed heart is struggling to pump heavy, thick, sluggish blood into the tissues—the tortured lungs are making a frantic effort to gasp in small gulps of air. The markedly dehydrated tissues send their flood of stimuli to the brain.

Jesus gasps His fifth cry, "I thirst."

Let us remember another verse from the prophetic 22nd Psalm: "My strength is dried up like a potsherd; and my tongue cleaveth to my jaws; and thou has brought me into the dust of death."

A sponge soaked in Posca, the cheap, sour wine which is the staple drink of the Roman legionnaires, is lifted to His lips. He apparently does not take any of the liquid. The body of Jesus is now in extremis, and He can feel the chill of death creeping through His tissues. This realization brings out His sixth word—possibly little more than a tortured whisper.

"It is finished."

His mission of atonement has been completed. Finally He can allow His body to die.

With one last surge of strength, He once again presses His torn feet against the nail, straightens His legs,

takes a deeper breath, and utters His seventh and last cry, "Father, into thy hands I commit my spirit."

The rest you know. In order that the Sabbath not be profaned, the Jews asked that the condemned men be dispatched and removed from the crosses. The common method of ending a crucifixion was by crurefracture, the breaking of the bones of the legs. This prevented the victim from pushing himself upward; the tension could not be relieved from the muscles of the chest, and rapid suffocation occurred. The legs of the two thieves were broken, but when they came to Jesus they saw that this was unnecessary.

Apparently to make doubly sure of death, the legionnaire drove his lance through the fifth interspace between the ribs, upward through the pericardium and into the heart. The 34th verse of the 19th chapter of the Gospel according to St. John: "And immedi-

ately there came out blood and water." Thus there was an escape of watery fluid from the sac surrounding the heart and blood from the interior of the heart. We, therefore have rather conclusive post-mortem evidence that Our Lord died, not the usual crucifixion death by suffocation, but of heart failure due to shock and constriction of the heart by fluid in the pericardium.

Thus we have seen a glimpse of the epitome of evil which man can exhibit toward man—and toward God. This is not a pretty sight and it is apt to leave us despondent and depressed. How grateful we can be that we have a sequel: A glimpse of the infinite mercy of God toward man—the miracle of the atonement and the expectation of Easter morning.

—Reprinted from *New Wine Magazine*

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P. O. Box 22888

Fort Lauderdale, Florida 33315

(Continued from page 10)

entitled "Death in Brazil." The article stated that spinal meningitis was relatively uncommon in Brazil until 1970. At first it was found mostly among slum children, but now it attacks adults, too, and people of all classes. Brazil produces no vaccine of its own to combat the dread disease, but has received help from France and was awaiting vaccine from the U.S. At the time the article was written only 75,000 out of two million children in Sao Paulo had been inoculated.

I had a brief prayer with the parents and left. What can a person do to help in such a situation, but to pray and then leave the grief-stricken parents in the hands of the Great Comforter, who can heal the wounds of a broken heart?

A few hours later I returned to the home and found the body of the child on the table awaiting the making of a casket. Burial would follow within 24 hours, which is the custom here because there is no embalming. I looked at the lifeless form of the child who just a month before was so active and now was no more.

Over the little body were flowers picked by the children and those

grieving the loss of a loved one. In the little hands of the baby, tied together with a rag, was a little wilted baby rose. I couldn't help but think of Job 14:1-2: "Man that is born of a woman is of few days and full of trouble. He cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down: he fleeth also as a shadow, and continueth not."

For some that time comes sooner and for others later. But it comes to all as long as the Lord tarries. Our days and our years are numbered and it is our Lord and Savior who holds the keys of death. "I am the first and the last . . . I am He that liveth . . ." (Rev. 1:17, 18).

We are assured that those keys rest in the very loving hands of our Lord and Savior who died for us but is now risen. This is a comfort to know. But it is far better to rest assured that we who are in Christ are going to a city where the roses never fade. As the song writer puts it: "I am going to a city where the roses never fade. Here they bloom but for a season; here their beauty is decayed. I am going to a city where the roses never fade."

Joy in His service
The Connely J. Dyruds