

February 21, 1978

The Lutheran Ambassador

Christ Fainting Under the Cross
- Dore Bible Gallery - Gustave Dore



MEDITATION MOMENTS

THE VERDICT

Please read as background, Matthew 26:57-68. "And they that had laid hold on Jesus led Him away to Caiaphas the high priest, where the scribes and the elders were assembled."

The trial of our Lord Jesus Christ was at night. Usually, in those days, the trials were held on one day and the verdicts were announced on the following day. Not so with Jesus! The trial of Jesus and the verdict happened the very same night!

These men were in a hurry to put Jesus to death. It seems as if Annas and Caiaphas were especially in a hurry. Men love darkness rather than light because their deeds are evil. And, since they were trying an innocent man, they didn't really care what charge they brought against Him. All they wanted was that the charge would stick.

Jesus' message of salvation was contrary to the teachings of the priests. Jesus offered forgiveness for sin. He claimed to have the power to forgive sin. Those who believed in Him, as today, have forgiveness because Jesus does not lie. He claimed to be the Son of God. He offered personal salvation to every repentant sinner. He spoke of a God who wanted a deep, personal relationship with the sinner. The priests could not accept the Gospel that Jesus brought to them.

Annas and Caiaphas had arranged a number of false witnesses so that they could convict Jesus of a crime punishable by death. These men found what they were looking for. Jesus had claimed to be the Son of God, for such He is! This was even more contrary to the ideas of those gathered for the trial. Now they did their evil work. They had a way they could justify putting Him to death. They had broken all the rules for a fair trial. These men who claimed to be such good followers of the law! It all came from the hearts of evil men.

Their cruel treatment of the Son of God is further seen in that Jesus was crucified. History tells us that the penalty was usually stoning, never crucifixion. This was reserved for the most hardened of criminals. One can see how selfish desire and unholiness for position can cause men to sink into the depths of sin.

Yet, when sin takes over, when insecurity over earthly positions is threatened, human beings react just as these men did. What would have happened if you and I had been present at this trial?

It seems to me, we would have joined with them. Can you not picture yourself in the midst of those who wanted Jesus crucified? In a sense we were. Jesus died for us! It was for our souls that He shed His

blood! Can we not rejoice in what Jesus has done for us? "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8).

We are the ones who are guilty of saying we are God. We should be the ones facing trial! We should be the ones facing death because we are guilty of blasphemy. "Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men unto condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life" (Romans 5:18). Praise God for the free gift of salvation to undeserving sinners.

Yes, if we are honest with ourselves, we will realize that we were the ones who put Jesus upon the cross. We were the people who caused Christ's suffering and death. We cannot point the fingers at the crowd and accuse only them for their vile deeds! We are no better than they.

Praise God! Our sins are nailed to the cross. This is the "at 'one' ment!" Through faith in Christ, even faith the size of a mustard seed, we are joined together with Christ on the cross! We died with Christ on the cross!

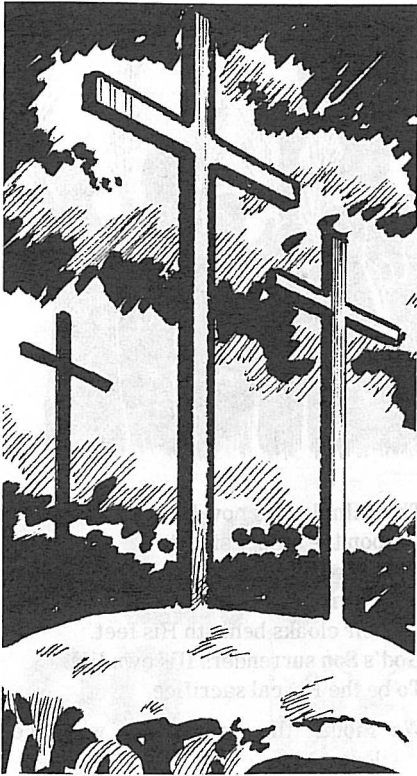
"Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Romans 6:11).

—Dennis Gray

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IT IS FINISHED

by Rev. Elias Newman



"When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, He said, 'It is finished'" (John 19:30).

When God completed His creative work, He said, "Lo, it is very good," and then rested from His work. In like manner the Messiah, having perfected and achieved upon the cross of Calvary the enormous task of Israel's salvation, cried out in triumph from the cruel cross: "It is finished."

In the Hebrew and the Greek it consists of but one word and in that remarkable word is condensed, concentrated, and summed up all the completeness and fullness of the Gospel so that no word ever spoken by mortal man can compare with it in the richness, intensity, the length, breadth, depth, and height of its wondrous implications and meaning.

It was not the moaning of cowardice, or the groaning of fear, nor was it a cry of defeat. He cried out with a loud voice that was clear and impressive. Ordinary men when dying do not do that. He manifested strength and His whole demeanor was most significant. He could easily have avoided the suffering and agony He endured. He could have saved Himself. "I lay down my life freely; no man taketh it from me." The

loud cry from the Savior's lips was not His expiring whisper, nor the expression of despair, but it was the joyful cry of divine triumph, the shout of victory. Satan's head was crushed by the Seed of the woman, and Messiah's heel was pierced. Though the cross, a symbol of infamy and shame, was raised as a triumph of Satanic hatred and animosity at its lowest depth, yet it stands as a monument to the victory of the boundless ocean of God's free grace. When all seemed lost, everything was won! Nor was the cry of the Messiah uttered loudly for the sake of His heavenly Father, who heareth our thoughts afar off and knoweth the secrets of our hearts, but for our sake, for the sake of all who stood around the cross and for all mankind that all might hear and know it.

The life of the Messiah was a life full of contrasts. On Palm Sunday the crowded streets of Jerusalem rang with the cry: "Hosanna to the Son of David," and on Good Friday the note was speedily changed to: "Crucify Him! Crucify Him!"

A friendly and brilliant halo of light had flooded the fields of Bethlehem, while a few, poor, humble shepherds were watching their flocks on the night of His miraculous birth. And now with horror and dismay we observe the sharp contrast of those dismal and miserable torches that glared gloomily on the night He was betrayed.

An angel from heaven had announced His birth amid the music of celestial choirs as the announcement of "tidings of great joy" was made. Now anxious fear fell upon the hearts of His followers and a great sorrow oppressed them and Him.

The sweet, harmonious tones of praise sung by heavenly hosts found their shrill counterpart in the fierce, accursed "Crucify Him! Crucify Him!"—in the wild ravings of the madmen who roared like the wild bulls of Bashan round about Him. He to whom the Wise Men paid homage, who was to be a King over Israel forever and of whose Kingdom there was to be no end—a devilish frenzy made Him a king of fools in sport, dressing Him up mockingly in a purple robe, scepter and crown. He was beaten and spit upon while the wicked jesters bent the knee before Him and blasphemously pretended to worship Him, the scornfully-rejected Son of God. What suffering was His!

Could there be a greater pain than this to bear, that the highest majesty of God's love, holy, undefiled and pure should be so sadly misunderstood by Israel and the world, so deeply affronted, so cruelly slighted, so that the anointed One of God, Israel's Messiah and the King of Heaven, pierced through by nails and spear, should bleed to death on a malefactor's gibbet?

A cutting word goes through the soul of a believer, his heart is torn and his spirit is draped in the black garb of night, as the sun refused to shine upon Golgotha.

What had been prefigured and foreshadowed in the sacrificial system of Israel did at last become an accomplished fact. "It is finished!" In these words we see the fulfillment of all prophecy and the consummation of all history. The Law was fulfilled and Grace began a new era. The Old Covenant was ended and the New Covenant was initiated.

The shame, the sorrow and the personal suffering of Messiah was fin-

ished. The errand upon which He came to the world was fulfilled. The human life or biography of our Savior was completed.

The battle against sin was over and the victory won, but at what a price!

The Gospel message was completed. The bitter cup of agony, of humiliation, at which our Messiah's humanity shrank in the Garden of Gethsemene, was drunk to its very dregs.

Just as the Pascal Lamb of Israel was slain and its blood sprinkled upon the door posts of their houses giving shelter, protection and safety to those under the blood, so we who believe are justified by faith and saved. As on the Day of Atonement, one goat had to die and another bearing the sin covered by the sacrificial blood bore it into oblivion—into forgetfulness and non-remembrance making a **kippur** or complete covering of sin and thereby an **atonement** with God, so the blood of the Lamb of God and the sin of Israel and the world was expiated.

By the shed blood of Messiah we are identified with Him. Through His finished work of redemption all our sin has been imputed to Him, and all His righteousness transferred or imputed to us. He accomplished and finished the work of substitution. He, Who was so rich became poor that we who were poor might through His poverty become rich. He died. We live. To His finished work in our behalf, we cannot subtract nor can we add. All separation between God and man has been obliterated by Messiah's death upon the cross. We can now enter boldly into the Holy of Holies of God's presence. Israel can again become a partaker of God's mercy through our great High Priest who has entered within the veil.

From **Minneapolis Friends of Israel, Inc., Bulletin**,
March, 1972



JERUSALEM

We lift the verdant branches high;
Hosanna to our King!

Exultant now becomes our cry
And joyful voices sing.

We do not know that death awaits
Him within our city's gates.

Ours is a hope of earthly ways,
Another David's reign.

We dream a dream of yesterdays,
A nation's sway again.

We would He wear the Jewish crown
And strike the Roman down.

The palm leaves now lie dry and brown
Upon the empty street.

Gone are the crowds that glad threw
down

Their cloaks beneath His feet.
God's Son surrenders His own life
To be the Pascal sacrifice.

We mourn the dream that we have
lost,

The king we did not find.
We nail Him to a culprit's cross;
He weeps that we are blind.

Marlene Moline
Lansing, Iowa

HE

What is God?

Oh what is He and where?

Is He a huge, old, angry man who
dares me to do wrong?

Or is He timid . . . something less
than fixed forms about me?

He cannot be!

Before the smallest building,

Before all clubs and societies,

Before all earthly courts,

He built.

He planned.

He ruled!

Is He plain and unimaginative?

Old fashioned perhaps?

These, too, He cannot be, for I see

His artistry all around:

Richest mosses woodlands carpet

Delicate fruit hangs everywhere.

All minerals and wealth He gives

And every color and fiber we know.

His great wide waters swirl and

foam

And toil for us each day

How mean must be our satellite
Near His celestial starry cope!

Is He quiet and unmusical?
Lacking rhythm and taste?

I hear the drumming of partridges,
Cymbal-like clashes of the jay,

Pines all humming folk songs,
The brook a symphony.

And all are in accord!

And from His lab above

I hear His mighty thunder,

I hear His mighty wind!

What is God and where! A great,
old, angry man?

Oh no! He cannot be. He must be of
all ages—

Firm and very kind.

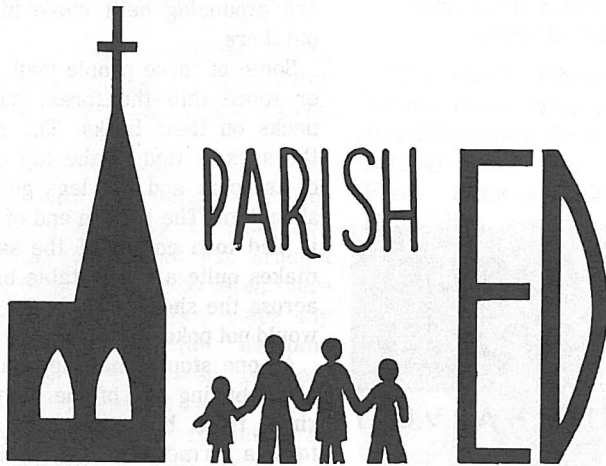
He must be everywhere! And very
near!

So near.

He must be.

He's in my heart.

Susan M. Nordvall
Roseau, Minn.



SUNDAY SCHOOL . . .

THE TEACHER'S CHALLENGE

Why teach a Sunday school or Bible class? Do we teach because we have received from the Lord? Or do we teach out of obligation? Have we first been taught and then desire to share with others what the Holy Spirit has enlightened us about from the Word of God? It is the truths taught in the Bible that must become personal and meaningful to each of us as individuals. Then sharing and teaching the Sunday school lesson becomes a meaningful assignment. Nothing drab, but life itself. "Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and Thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart: for I am called by Thy name, O Lord God of Hosts" (Jeremiah 15:16).

Why do we teach? Mark 6:34: "And Jesus, when He came out, saw much people, and was moved with compassion toward them, because they were as sheep not having a shepherd: and He began to teach them many things."

A look at the world bears enough evidence of "Much people . . . as sheep not having a shepherd." What better describes our population today? You make a list of the world's ills as you see them. Yes, it's long, isn't it? But caught up in all of this are our precious boys and girls, teens, adolescents and adults. To whom do we turn?

Someone has located over 250 references in the Bible suggesting the word teach, teacher, etc. Do you rea-

lize that it is one of the spiritual gifts as stated in Ephesians 4:11? Yes, a gift from God to be identified, cultivated and used.

The Old Testament emphasizes that: Fathers were commanded to teach their children the law of God (Deut. 6:7; 30:2); in the new nation of Israel, one tribe out of twelve was set aside as a teaching tribe (Deut. 31:9-13); when God's commands were obeyed and the law of God was strongly taught, Israel was a strong nation. When His law was forgotten, they were weakened. II Chron. 17:7-10 shows how God protected them from their enemies when they obeyed His law and taught His Word.

The New Testament talks much about teaching. Yes, our Lord Jesus was a teacher. Mark 6:34: "And He began to teach them many things." He was, indeed, the Master Teacher. He recognized the needs of the people and had compassion. Sixty times recorded in the Gospels out of 90, where He was addressed directly, it was as "Rabbi" or "Teacher." It can be said of Jesus that: He taught with authority (Matt. 7:29); He taught one-to-one—individuals (Jn. 3); He taught multitudes (Jn. 6); He taught the Twelve repeatedly and patiently (Matt. 5:2); His last command was "to teach" (Matt. 28:19, 20). Yes, the apostles were also teachers. They were found daily teaching in the temple and in houses (Acts 4:2; 5:42). Certainly Paul was a teacher.

Early church history reveals much great emphasis on teaching. Each Christian taught others. Historians

record that much teaching was done by women and slaves.

Look at the Scriptural commands by God concerning the child: "Despise not one of these little ones" (Matt. 18:10); "Forbid them not to come unto Me" (Mk. 10:14) "Offend them not" (Matt. 18:6); "Teach diligently unto thy children" (Deut. 6:6, 7); "Train up a child in the way he should go," (Prov. 22:6); "Feed My lambs" (Jn. 21:15); "Go . . . seek . . . find them" (Matt. 18:12-14).

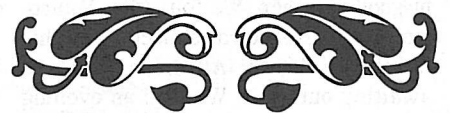
Someone has stated it this way. "With our eyes we may see the need around us. With our hearts we may feel compassion, but unless the will is moved to action, the need goes unmet." Will you teach?

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Judith B. Wold
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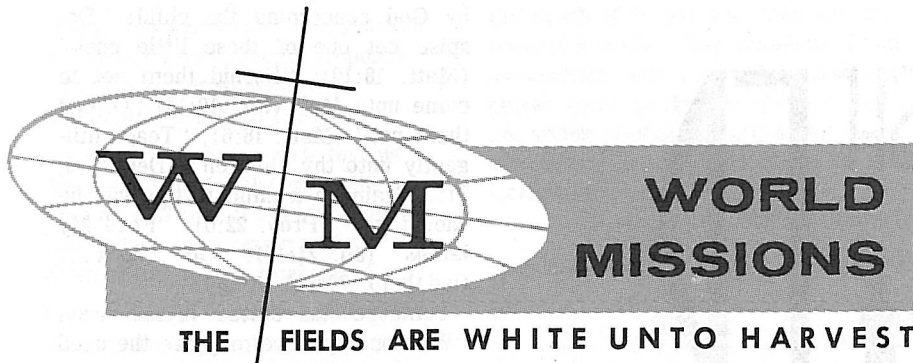


CHRIST FAINTING UNDER THE CROSS

(See Cover Photo)

The artist has given his feeling upon this heart-touching incident most sympathetic and tender expression. Christ, crushed to the earth by the cruel weight of the cross, is a conception infinitely pitiful, and the sturdy and finely-drawn figure of "one Simon a Cyrenian" is energetic and noble to a high degree. The background shows the well-grouped Roman soldiers. The design is executed with great vigor.

—Dore Bible Gallery



A VISIT TO THE BRETHREN

Psalm 32:8: "I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will counsel thee with mine eye upon thee."

Our purpose in moving here was to preach salvation in Christ, in response to the call from AFLC members who had moved here from Parana. They are scattered over a wide area in this vast Amazonia. Therefore, we made a trip to Vila Rondonia to try to visit them. The map in our Christmas letter points out this city. Since then it has become organized as a county and its name changed to Ji-Parana, an Indian name.

Our trip was an eight-hour bus ride in good weather. We found Sr. Mauro, from our Herveira church, and his family, at home. All were well and awaiting our visit. We held an evening meeting in his home and also the following evening, when we had a service for a houseful. They had then had time to invite their neighbors.

It is hot and humid in this city. There are a lot of mosquitos and malaria. The hotels have screens at the windows and fans in the rooms which give a little comfort, when there is electricity.

The Axe River runs through the town. It is picturesque with the dugout canoes of the Indians. It looks very inviting. It is clean and clear so that we could see the rocky bottom. But it is not advisable to take a dip. It is populated by a fish which gives a powerful electric shock which immobilizes, causing one to drown. While we were there a person died this way. They say it is a common thing.

We spent one whole day contacting our church members. Many of them now have sought worship in a Presbyterian church. We had good fellowship with many people that day. A late evening walk across the bridge (1/8 mile) that crosses the Axe River brought us to our sleeping place, Hotel Parana.

The next morning while it was yet dark, we caught an early bus. We notice a difference in the length of days and nights here. Since we are closer to the equator they are about equal in hours. Our trip back to our home in Vilhena took longer because it had rained. But it did not take 14 hours like it did in April, when Pastors John Abel and George made their survey trip through this area.

We saw many interesting things on this trip. There were big black balls of rubber on sticks in front of a frontier store. They had been brought in from the forest. In another town there was a lone telephone along the main street (dirt) under its plastic red cone hat. I could hardly believe my eyes.

Going and returning on this trip, we had plenty of time to wander around in some towns while the bus was being repaired. Waiting at populated bus stops (bars), one sees all sorts of people. We saw children who are already professional beggars and young couples in town to buy supplies and then return to their forest homes. They probably walk far after getting off the bus along the road.

We saw a man with a gun and his flour sack full of canned goods heading out to spend another two weeks clearing his land. As soon as the beans, rice, mandioca and bananas

are producing he'll move his family out there.

Some of these people walk 30 miles or more into the forest with these packs on their backs. The mouth of the sack is tied to the top of a pair of trousers and the legs go over his shoulders. The bottom end of each leg is tied to a corner of the sack. This makes quite a comfortable back pack across the shoulders, if only the cans would not poke one in the back!

At one stop a man approached me about buying one of the diamond (?) rings from his fingers. In another town a farmer had a pole across his shoulders with four chickens tied to it, fore and aft. (This is a common sight in Brazil.) A car drove up beside him and the driver bargained for the chickens, made the deal, and threw them into the trunk. The farmer threw away the pole, fondled his money, shook out his flour sack and headed for the grocery store to stock up on supplies before returning to his forest home.

All along the 300-mile trip we saw the remains of a telegraph line that had been installed by Marechel Rondon, for which this territory is named. Vilhena, where we live, is named after an engineer who worked with him.

So we saw all types of people, each one needing a Savior. Each one wrapped up in his own little world with the cares of today. Very few are preparing for a good future, the future of their souls, the welfare of their souls.

"Blessed is the nation whose God is Jehovah." Pray for Brazil as a nation. "Our soul hath waited for Jehovah: He is our help and our shield. For our heart shall rejoice in Him, because we have trusted in His holy name. Let thy loving kindness, O Jehovah, be upon us, according as we have hoped in thee" (Psalm 33:12a, 20-22).

Yes, we hope, and in a big way because we have a great God.

We pray for the work in all our AFLC ministries here in Brazil. We invite you to do the same.

Missionaries
George and Helen Knapp



A PAGE FOR CHILDREN

Happy Acres



TRUBLE IN THE POTATO FIELD

Mark always felt good when a hard job was done, and he knew that he had done his share of the job. He knew that he would be eating his full share of next year's crop of potatoes, that was certain. But he kept wishing that he could have a try at Steve's way of helping with the potato planting.

Steve was now coming close to Mark and Dad as the tractor and plow neared the end of the furrow.

Several times, with his father beside him, Mark had driven the tractor while plowing. Driving straight down a furrow had been simple. It was turning the tractor around at the end of the field that was harder to do. So Dad had showed him how to slow the tractor, and then it was much easier to turn around and get straight into the furrow again. Mark knew that he could manage the tractor now in the potato field.

He turned to his father. "Dad," he said, "I wish I could take Steve's place. Why can't he set potatoes for a while—and let me make a couple rounds with the plow?"

"Thnik you can keep those big wheels hugging the furrow tight—and not squashing the potatoes we've set?"

"Yes, Sir!" replied Mark. "I'll be extra special careful."

"Okay, Sir!" grinned Dad. Then he signaled Steve to stop the tractor. He shouted to his elder son, "Stevie,

we're changing shifts. Mark will drive the tractor for a couple rounds, and you can set potatoes in his place."

It was plain for Mark and Dad to see that Stevie did not like getting down from the tractor and then go lugging the potato pail down the furrow. However, Mark soon forgot how his older brother felt as he joyfully shifted the tractor into gear and carefully drove ahead.

As he passed Ann, coming to get her pail filled again, she looked at him in surprise. He sat proudly on the tractor seat, his hands fast to the big steering wheel. Ann looked up at him and shouted, "Oh, you, you smarty! You get out of planting potatoes—all because you're a boy and can drive a tractor!"

Then while she dumped potato cuttings into her little pail, she thought of Lucia Hackley again and murmured, "She never has to help with work like this! She never gets her hands in the dirt! Her mother paints her fingernails for her to make them look extra stylish."

Her pail full again, Ann hurried down the furrow. She could hear her seven-year-old sister Melissa laughing gleefully as she played with little Beth in the sandbox back of the house.

"Hmm," Ann grumbled, "and there's Melissa! She could be out here helping, but all she has to do is to play with Beth and Paul. But I'm the

oldest girl so I'm always getting the worst jobs."

That evening, when the Johnsons opened their Bibles, Dad asked them all to read together the Thirteenth Chapter of First Corinthians. If you will read that same chapter in your Bible now, you'll know why Ann and Mark and Stephen grinned rather foolishly at each other as they read certain verses.

MEMORY VERSE: Love is patient and kind; love is not jealous or boastful. I Corinthians 13:4 (RSV)

Family Discussion

1. What was the trouble with Mark, Stephen, and Ann? Which verse, then, do you think made them realize what was the matter with them?

2. Instead of envying people, what should the Christian do? (Proverbs 14:30 and 23:17; Romans 13:13; Galatians 5:26)

3. Can you think of people in the Bible who were envious of one another? (Cain toward Abel—Genesis 4:5; his brothers toward Joseph—Genesis 37:11; Haman against Mordecai—F.ther 5:13. Others, Daniel 6:4; Matthew 27:18; Acts 13:45).

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LUTHER LEAGUE ACTIVITIES

TEMPTATION—THE WORLD

We have been talking about temptation and how it comes to us in different ways. The last two articles have dealt with temptations of the flesh and temptations that come from the devil.

There is another area of temptation that we must all deal with and that is temptation that comes from the world.

How does the world tempt us? What is the philosophy of the world? It is the idea of wanting to be, wanting to have, to appear, to dominate. We are never more like the world than when we want to be recognized and given credit for everything we do. We are never more like Jesus than when we say, "I want to get the work done and I don't care who gets the credit."

The rich farmer in Luke 12:16-21 was called a fool by Jesus because he was worldly and all he thought about was his barns and his crops and what he was going to do and how he was going to live. It is very easy to get so wrapped up in what we want to do and have that we forget why we are in this world. It is very easy to get so busy making a living that we forget to make a life. The farmer forgot that he had a soul and that he was soon going to die. This can also happen to us in this busy world.

The Bible says, "If a man professes himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceives himself." The world tries to make us think that we are something in ourselves.

As it says in Romans 12:2, may we not let the world squeeze us into its mold but, instead, may we present our bodies living sacrifices, acceptable unto God.

Pastor David Molstre

Perhaps I was DREAMING

THE GOSPEL IN A WORD

Sometimes a single word may embody a whole world of thought; for example, mother, home, heaven, time, eternity.

And such is the Hebrew word *shamar*, which occurs in the Aaronic benediction. In our English Bible it is rendered by the word *keep*—the Lord bless thee, and keep thee.

Other languages (German, French, Norwegian, Swedish) choose some word which means to guard or protect—the Lord protect thee, the Lord guard thee.

But the Hebrew word itself has various meanings. *Shamar* means not only to protect but also to give notice, to give attention—may the Lord notice you, may He not overlook you, may He give attention to you.

Dare I take that to myself? Dare I hope for anything so great? There are said to be nearly two billion human beings in the world right now. What am I among so many? A drop in the ocean! Dare I believe that God will pay attention to one little individual like me?

God replies by giving me the word *shamar*, and in giving it He implies that He will do even so.

Men of learning tell us that "there is not a star so far away, nor a speck of dust so small that either of them can move a hair's-breadth in any direction except in constant and perfect obedience to the laws of nature"—which we prefer to call the Laws of God. Then why should I doubt?

And besides, it was Jesus who spoke of sparrows remembered and hairs numbered (Luke 12:6-7); it was God Omniscient who dictated the Benediction; and it is He who authorizes the man at the altar to pronounce it in His name.

C. A. Wendell

editorials

GOOD DAYS AT FERGUS FALLS

A news report on the Winter Bible Conference in Fergus Falls, Minn., earlier this month, will be delayed in order that some pictures taken then can appear in conjunction with the report.

But it can be said now that another very fine Bible Conference was experienced. Inspirational evening services, stimulating Bible studies and sound lectures in the other sessions made up a very worthwhile program. Rev. John P. Strand, Association president, filled in as Bible teacher at the last minute due to the illness of the scheduled teacher, Rev. Rao Dasari of the Association Schools. Pastor Strand chose the Book of Philippians for his studies.

Attendance seemed to be good, reaching a peak on Friday, particularly at the evening service. Co-incidentally, the Women's Missionary Federation workshop was conducted between the afternoon and evening sessions that day. By Saturday morning conference attendance was dramatically diminished.

It was good to have a visit from an Association Bible School Gospel team, The Living Hope, at the Friday night service. Their presentation was refreshing and they left a good witness for the Lord.

The weather for the conference was good, if cold. Heavy ground drifting on Saturday did prevent some from getting home that day, but other than that, the weather was good.

Sincere thanks goes to Calvary and Stiklestad Lutheran Congregations for co-hosting this year's Winter Bible Conference. We mention the pastoral leadership of the Julius Hermunslies, Melvin Wallas and Harry Molstres, who, together with all of the wonderful lay people of those churches, opened their hearts to all who attended. Everything was handled so well.

And thanks above all to the Lord for His many benefits and blessings at Fergus Falls. We all carry many good things of spiritual value away with us.

BONDAGE INEVITABLE

Some men are entitled to be known as "prince of preachers." Such a one was J. H. Jowett. He also authored a number of books.

In one of his books, he wrote this: "Now there is no

realm where the lawless are the free. In whatever way we wish to go we must accept bondage if we would discover liberty."

How true that is! How true! Sometimes there is the delusion abroad that the person with the devil-may-care attitude or who is hellbent for pleasure has experienced a real freedom. Such are also what Jowett calls the "lawless." They live boldly, brashly, brazenly. They dare God and they seem to fear no man.

But in reality they are serving a hard taskmaster. They can be said to be "lawless" as far as God's moral law is concerned, but they cannot get away from the law that the "wages of sin is death." Surely and inexorably that law will track them down and they will experience hell forever unless they permit divine intervention.

So the lawless, whether they be brazen or refined, are not free. Neither, however, are the "lawful" or the believers in Christ, if by free is meant doing what one pleases. No one does exactly what one pleases in this life, even though we use that expression. You see, we can serve one of two masters, God or Mammon. These are the only choices anyone has.

Therefore, even though those who are free in Christ are in bondage. But the reason that that bondage is real freedom is because it is a right relationship to the One who has made them. In servitude to God through Christ they can become what they are meant to be. This is their glory and it will be consummated in heaven.

The lawless, who are not really free, cannot be what they are meant to be and this is the tragedy behind their apparent worldly freedom.

Only darkness awaits them, unless they accept the nail-scarred hand reaching out to save them from the inexorable fate they must otherwise share.

I SEE YOU WALK UP CALVARY

I see You walk up Calvary
As if it were today,
But the path is a fearful one
And my heart turns away.

I see you reach Your hand to mine—
How can You still love me?
Your back is weighted with my sins,
They hold You to the tree.

And yet You gaze at me with love,
Though I have caused You pain,
Though I have turned my back on You
And scorned Your holy Name.

But love has come and love has won
What earth cannot detain;
And I reach out my hand to You
And keep the path again.

Marlene Moline
Lansing, Ia.

REV. M. E. HELLAND

Rev. M. E. Helland, 90, passed away on January 26 at this home in McVile, N. Dak. The funeral service was held in New Luther Valley Lutheran Church, McVile, where we was a member. Burial will be in the church cemetery.

Rev. Kenneth L. Anderson, pastor of the church, officiated and preached the sermon. A greeting was brought by Rev. John P. Strand, president of the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations. Mr. Rudy Rishovd sang the solo "My God and I" and Miss Christine Borman, a granddaughter, sang "Behold a Host Arrayed in White." The recessional hymn was "I know of a Sleep in Jesus' Name." Mrs. Albin Haugen was the organist.

Pallbearers were Vardon Quanbeck, Robert Lofthus, Alfred Haugen, Orlin Quanbeck, Albin Eversvik and Robert Knutson. The pastors present served as honorary pallbearers.

Michael E. Helland was born in Fitjar, Norway, on June 16, 1887, the son of Kristoffer and Eline Helland. He immigrated to the United States in 1905, settling in the McHenry, N. Dak., area. He worked there until 1907, when he left to attend school in Minneapolis, Minn. He was graduated

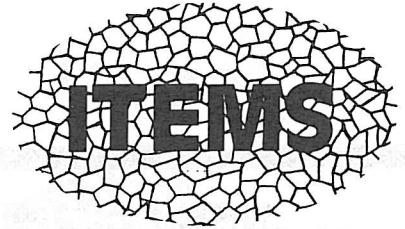
from Augsburg Academy in 1910, Augsburg College in 1914, and Augsburg Seminary in 1917. He was ordained into the ministry of the Lutheran Free Church on June 17, 1917, at Fargo, N. Dak.

He married Jennie Christianson on June 1, 1918, at Nelson, Minn. They served parishes in Govan, Sask., Canada, Amery, Wis., Luverne, Minn., Sacred Heart, Minn., and Binford, N. Dak. He retired from the ministry in 1960, and they moved to McVile. After that time he served as interim pastor in the following communities: Luverne, Minn., Thief River Falls, Minn., Petersburg, N. Dak., and McVile.

Surviving members of the family are his wife Jennie and daughter Mildred, at home in McVile; daughter Florence, Mrs. Dennes Borman, Montevideo, Minn.; three sons, Philip, Burnsville, Minn.; Jean, Sioux Falls, S. Dak., and Rev. Erling, Fairview Park, O.; 12 grandchildren and two great grandchildren. He was preceded in death by three sisters, three brothers and one granddaughter, Mary, a daughter of Philip.

Blessed be his memory.

(Ed. note: See also "Life on the Edge of Town," page 13).



OF

INTEREST

FROM PUKWANA

Pastor Hubert DeBoer has been busy serving the Pukwana-St. Olaf parish of Pukwana, S. Dak., since October, 1977. His home is at Thief River Falls, Minn.

The holiday season found St. Olaf and Pukwana caught up in the festivities. The Pukwana W.M.F. entertained the ladies of the parish with a festive noon luncheon one day. The program was the Christmas story told plainly, simply and beautifully by the Pukwana ladies.

Another highlight of the holidays was a 5:00 p.m. candlelight service in each church. This was the first such service at Olaf in many years, much to the delight of the congregation. The church was full of members and guests. Rev. DeBoer gave a sermonette. The remainder of the program was presented by the youth of the church.

Cheer boxes were presented to two families at St. Olaf this year. Rev. DeBoer presented the one gift given after the Sunday School program, explaining that it was a gift of love. The other box went to Rev. DeBoer and his family.

Rev. DeBoer was honored at a holiday pot luck dinner at St. Olaf. A gift was presented by the St. Olaf W.M.F.

On Dec. 21, he was honored at a pizza party given by the confirmation class. A caroling party was also well attended by Luther Leaguers and friends.

St. Olaf held its annual election of officers Jan. 29, with Ralph Gray in charge of the meeting. Rev. DeBoer had Scripture and prayer.

Rev. Philip Featherstone and his wife, of Colfax, Wis., will be coming to Pukwana in February to serve the parish on a permanent basis.



Pastor and Mrs. Helland at their golden wedding in 1968.

IN LOVING REMEMBRANCE

Jude 21: "Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life."

These were the words from Scripture on which my husband, Pastor Raymond Larson, based his last meditation. The Holy Spirit has brought them to remembrance so often these three and one-half years since my beloved husband heard his "Welcome Home" from the Lord Jesus in whose love he kept himself. I see more and more how needful it is for me to be reminded of these words, because it seems so easy to look around me, within me, and even ahead of me, and be overcome with fear. The Bible says "Perfect love casts out fear"—so I see how imperfect my love is. This verse from Jude encourages me so much because it says to keep myself in "the love of God"—in other words, just rest in Jesus (the perfect revelation of God's love) and not look to my love. Jesus, the Author and Finisher of my Salvation, then casts out fear.

I always felt so "secure" with Ray—one of the many blessings of being the wife of a godly husband. Now as I am literally thrust into "the world," I realize more and more the need for "keeping myself in the love of God." There, under His wings, am I, safe and secure.

The many and precious promises of the Lord are for His children to claim. Great is our inheritance!

I often think of the singleness of purpose with which my husband lived. My prayer is that I follow his example and in like manner keep my eyes upon Jesus until I, too, hear His "Welcome Home."

In the love of God,
Mrs. Esther Larson
Rolfe, Iowa

(Ed. Note: The above tribute was also printed in *Morning Glory*. Pastor Larson was serving the parish at Hampden, N. Dak., at the time of his passing.)



**GRANITE FALLS CHURCH
HONORS WOMEN**

Mrs. John F. Johnson, left, and Mrs. Emma Olson were presented Women's Missionary Federation life membership pins and certificates at Faith Lutheran Church, Granite Falls, Minn., recently.



PERSONALITIES

Rev. Forrest Swenson has resigned as pastor of the Tioga, N. Dak., parish (Zion, Beaver Creek, Norman, Lindahl, St. Olaf and Scandia) to accept the call from Calvary Lutheran Church, Fergus Falls, Minn., and Stiklestad Lutheran Church, Doran, Minn. He and Mrs. Swenson and family will not move to Fergus Falls until July 1.

Rev. and Mrs. Dean Casselton and family returned to the U.S. from Brazil the later part of January due to health reasons. Their address is 662 Kjellberg's West Park, Monticello, Minn. 55362. Telephone: 612-295-4108. After a period of rest, Pastor Casselton will be open to call from a parish here at home.

The address of Rev. and Mrs. Terry Olson and family in Minot, N. Dak., is 2606 4th St. N.W., Apt. No. 8. The zip code is 58701.

The area code for Rev. Einar Unseth's telephone number was incorrectly given in the 1978 Pastor's Handbook. It should be (605) 947-4814, Ortleby, S. Dak.

ASSOCIATION OF FREE LUTHERAN CONGREGATIONS

3110 East Medicine Lake Boulevard
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55441

February 1, 1977—January 31, 1978

	Total Budget	Received During January	Total Rec'd	Amount -short or +over	% of Total
General Fund	\$ 72,680.00	\$15,064.62	\$ 70,361.10	-\$ 2,318.90	96.8
Schools	119,452.00	23,759.69	99,808.19	- 19,643.81	83.55
Home Missions	75,000.00	10,776.84	72,456.34	- 2,543.66	96.6
Foreign Missions	85,345.00	12,488.25	94,608.84	+ 9,263.84	110.85
Praise Fund	30,000.00	3,621.68	21,128.79	- 8,871.21	70.4
Total	\$382,477.00	\$65,711.01	\$358,363.26	- 24,113.74	93.7
1976-77	\$402,524.00	\$62,480.16	\$334,639.44	-\$67,884.56	83

Overall increase in receipts from previous year—7%

HAIL THEE, SAVIOR AND ATONER!

Hail Thee, Savior and Atoner!
Though the world Thy name dishonor,
Filled with love my heart proposes
To adorn Thy cross with roses
And to offer praise to Thee.

Oh, what moved Thee so to love us
When enthroned with God above us
That for us Thou all wouldst offer
And in deep compassion suffer
Even death, that we might live?

Love alone Thy heart was filling
When to die Thy soul was willing.
Rather givest Thou than takest;
Hence, O Savior, Thou forsakest
All, to suffer on the cross.

Ah, my heart in deep contrition
Feels its sad and lost condition.
Cold and barren like a mountain,
How can it repay the fountain
Of Thy love, my Savior dear?

Yet I know that from Thy passion
Flows a stream of full salvation
Which can bid the mountain vanish,
Which can sin and coldness banish
And restore the heart to Thee.

Lord, with tears I pray Thee ever:
Lead into my heart that river
Which with grace unbounded cleanses
Heart and soul of all offences
And removes my guilt and shame.

Yes, my heart believes the wonder
Of Thy cross, which ages ponder,
Shield me, Lord, when foes assail me,
Be my staff when life shall fail me;
Take me to Thy Paradise.

—N. F. S. Grundtvig
Hymnal for Church and Home

DATES SET FOR AFLC FAMILY CAMP

The Association Family Camp for 1978 will be held July 24-30 at Galilee Bible Camp, Lake Bronson, Minn.

Please pray with us that God might pour out His Spirit upon our camp.

We encourage families and individuals to set aside this time for a special meeting with the Lord. The theme for this year's camp is "The Lord is the strength of my life . . ." (Psalm 27:1).

See you there!

(Advance registrations may be sent to Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Arneson, Spicer, Minn. 56288.)

THE CROSS

The Cross is the way of peace for sinful men. No one has every plumbed the depth of it, yet everyone who has trusted it knows that somehow, from somewhere new life and pardon and power come to the soul from it. It is not understanding the cross that saves sinners; it is the acceptance of the Christ of the cross that saves.

Doran's Ministers Manual



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.

SOUTH DAKOTA

Wallace

Howard Groves, 81, Feb. 1, Calvary

PREUS REPORTS TO CTCR ON SYNOD INVITATIONS FOR FELLOWSHIP TALKS

ST. LOUIS—Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod President J.A.O. Preus has reported on responses to his invitations to begin or continue discussions on fellowship with other Lutheran bodies, a measure called for by the Synod's 1977 convention. He gave the report in comments to the church's Commission on Theology and Church Relations, which met here Jan. 23-25.

At the time of the Dallas 1977 convention, the Synod was involved in discussions only with the American Lutheran Church. Though the two churches have been in fellowship since 1969, certain changes in ALC doctrinal stances led to a 1977 LCMS convention decision to declare a "state of fellowship in protest" with the ALC.

Preus told the CTCR that a Jan. 12 meeting of the LCMS-ALC fellowship commissioners, the first since the Dallas convention, had been cordial, and that "the need for much more discussion is evident." He stated that agreement on the meaning of fellowship should be a priority of the meetings, and expressed hope that the joint commission's plan for representatives from each of the two churches

to present papers on specific topics at the May 22-23 meeting would result in "fruitful dialog." These presentations will deal with major doctrinal and ethical issues facing Lutherans today, an exegetical study of a portion of I Corinthians, and the nature and basis of fellowship in the Lutheran Confessions and other church documents.

The LCMS president related that he had met with Rev. John Strand, President of the Association of Free Lutheran Churches. Although this church of 175 congregations with about 15,000 members has no formal stance on fellowship, Preus said he anticipates a second meeting.


Preus admitted that there are "many complex problems" with the Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches, the one-year old body formed by LCMS dissidents, and with which the LCMS is not in altar or pulpit fellowship. Preus said that the LCMS is eager to discuss doctrinal differences between the two bodies, such as the ordination of women to the pastoral office, and he indicated that he expects discussions to begin "within a short time."

He reported that to date 136 congregations have left the Synod to join the AELC, and no more than twenty continue to maintain dual memberships in both bodies.

Preus commented on the decision earlier this month of LCMS Southern Illinois District President Rev. Alvin Kollmann to remove four pastors and a congregation from the LCMS roster because of such dual memberships—an action that carried out a Dallas convention resolution. "These were especially difficult cases, because Southern Illinois is the first District affected by the Dallas ruling. I think Pastor Killmann acted in a very courageous, and yet very pastoral way. He certainly did not rejoice in it," Preus stated.

In a related matter, Preus said that he has agreed to extensions of deadlines for removal from LCMS membership for two dual membership congregations, one in Southern Illinois and the other in the California-Nevada-Hawaii District. "To my knowledge," he said, "these are the only congregations requesting such extensions, and I was happy to agree that their District Presidents should grant them."

Life on the Edge of Town



REV. M. E. HELLAND

There is an obituary for Rev. M. E. Helland on another page in this *Ambassador*. You may read it for the details of his life and the funeral service on January 30.

When I learned that Pastor Helland had passed away, I made arrangements to go to the funeral. There was a special reason for this. You see, he was a close friend of my father, now long departed, and I want to honor those links to the past as much as I can.

M. E. Helland and my father came from the same part of Norway, although they didn't know one another over there. He was born in Fitjar, Stord, my dad on the island of Huglo. They lived about nine miles apart, as the crow flies, give or take a mile. There was less than nine months difference in age. Dad immigrated to the

U.S. in 1904, M. E. Helland in 1905.

When my father passed away in 1938, Pastor Helland wrote a beautiful tribute to him in *Folkebladet*, the Norwegian language magazine of the Lutheran Free Church. In it he beautifully described the natural setting from which his friend had come, and which he knew from personal acquaintance, and how that had helped to shape my father. My father was a poet and Pastor Helland felt that his home region in Norway had had its influence on that talent in life, too.

When these two sons of Norway met in America, I can't say for sure. It may not have been until 1911 when Dad had come back from the West Coast to enroll at Augsburg Seminary in Minneapolis, where M. E. Helland was a student in college. They spent four years together there and the friendship was truly forged.

M. E. Helland took his first parish at Govan, Sask., Canada, and married Jennie Christianson. In the fall of 1918 my parents married and then honeymooned in Saskatchewan, headquartered at the Helland's. Later on our family would live in Govan, when my father took over the parish in 1930.

In the years following seminary, Dad and M. E. Helland would meet at annual conferences of the church, perhaps rooming together during the conference days. They enjoyed these visits very much. Perhaps they met also at Norwegian "lag" or regional meetings. I know of one such time for certain, in Colton, S. Dak.

I didn't have so many visits with him myself, but there were several at his retirement home in McVile. A few years ago he wrote several articles for the *Ambassador* about church life and history in Norway. The last time I saw him he was lying in his bed. He was aware of the infirmity of his body but his mind was quite alert. His faith was strong in the Christian hope. His last several years required many ministrations, given lovingly by his wife and daughter Mildred.

At the beautiful funeral service at New Luther Valley Lutheran Church in McVile, I traced in my mind the journey M. E. Helland had taken in leaving his home in Norway to come to America, as thousands of others had done. Sailing from Norway to Hull, England. Overland by train, perhaps to Liverpool. The voyage across the Atlantic. Arrival in New York or some other port. The train ride to mid-western United States. He came to the McHenry-Binford area of North Dakota. For others it was some place else.

M. E. Helland passed away at age 90. One of my sisters wrote after hearing of his passing: "So another 'boy from the Vestlandet' is laid to rest." Some of you will know what that means. There aren't so many of that generation of immigrants left. The journey which began on Norway's West Coast has ended in the "city which is to come." As one of the soloists at the funeral sang, "My God and I shall go for aye together."

—Raynard Huglen

Now that my two years of Bible training ends this year, I am so very thankful that I came to AFLBS immediately after high school."

Kevin Spading, Kirkland, Wash.

"Have you ever sensed the lack of good, close fellowship with your Christian friends, a lack of zeal in your Bible study, or a lack of the abundant joy and life that the Scriptures say is a part of Christian living? Bible School is a great place to find fulfillment in all these things."

Joel Quanbeck, McVile, N. Dak.

"At the beginning of this year, I looked at school as a year I was giving to God. But now I see that God has given it to me. The fellowship of other Christians, studying the Word, and just the way that God has taught me through daily living have been far better than I thought they could be. The Lord has really used this time to build my faith and my love for him. I wouldn't trade it for anything."

Brian Peterson, Wanamingo, Minn.

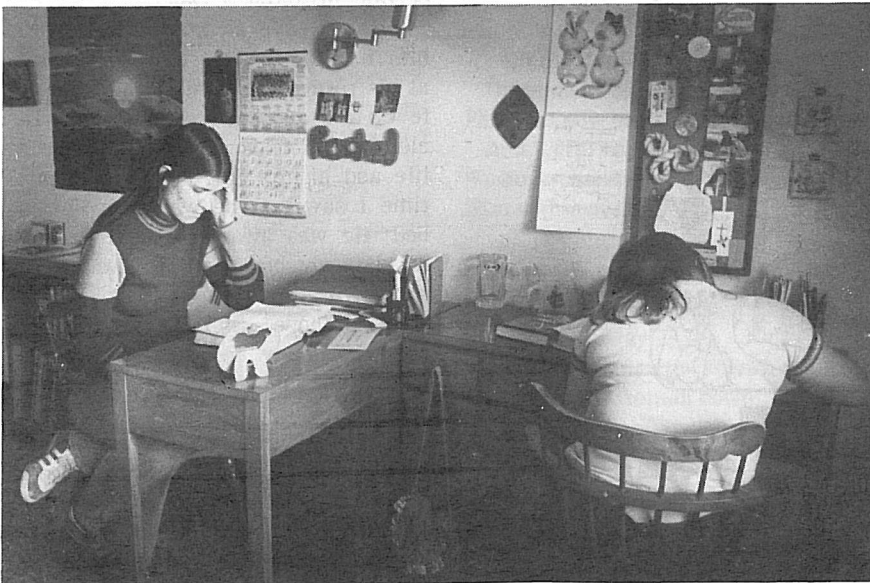
"A person develops that closer love for Christ by studying the Bible. In doing so, one is better equipped to show love and concern to others. Knowing God's Word is basic to witnessing and being a living testimony.

"... One matures in responsible thinking. Prayer life grows. Personalities improve. We meet friends who will remain friends in Christ forever.

"Above all else, Bible School is learning and doing God's Word in loving obedience to our Lord."

Jim Larson, Osakis, Minn.

Perhaps AFLBS is the next step God has in the blueprint of your life. Seek His will, diligently pray for guidance and "in all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He will direct thy path" (Prov. 3:6).



A quiet Sunday afternoon of study for Rachel Mudfrom, Nogales, Ariz, left, and Joanne Hanson, Ferndale, Wash.

WHY ATTEND AFLBS?

by Candi Weinkauf

"Lord, what would You have me to do? I like medicine, yet music would be good, too. Maybe I should stay home and help my family... Perhaps I'll get a raise. It isn't wise to leave my job now. I don't know, Lord. Please show me. Someone mentioned AFLBS... is it worth it? I can study the Bible at home..."

Sound familiar? Don't feel alone in your seemingly overwhelming struggle to KNOW God's Will for your life. Current AFLBS students have all experienced the same struggle in one form or another. Their decision to come to Bible school is history. They are here and this is what they have to say.

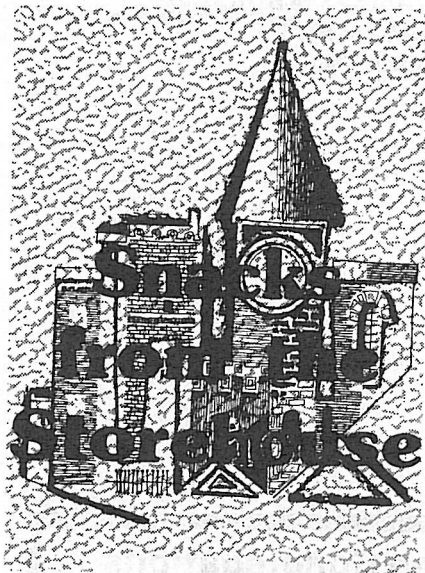
"When I first came to Bible School

it was because of the encouragement of my parents. Now I am thankful for their encouragement then. Being here has strengthened my dedication to the Lord. It has also created a stronger foundation for my life in Christ which will help me to stand in Christ more fully when I leave.

"Being here has caused me to realize the importance of a daily, personal walk with Him and the discipline needed to do this. I just praise the Lord for His wonderful works and infinite wisdom."

Karen Gauger, Burnsville, Minn.

"I came to Bible School to get to know Jesus Christ in a more personal, powerful, and life-directing way. Christ has an upward call for us as Christians and desires for us to serve Him with total surrender.



IMPOSSIBILITIES

“And Joshua rose early in the morning; and they removed from Shittim, and came to Jordan, he and all the children of Israel, and lodged there before they passed over” (Joshua 3:1).

Yesterday they seemed to be on the way. On the way to the land of their dreams. Canaan—the land of Abundance. They were tired of the wilderness. Tired of the manna. Tired of the same sand blowing in their face—day by day by day. But today they weren't so sure of themselves. “Go over this Jordan.” Those were the instructions. Jordan stood as a symbol of death. Besides, it was overflowing its banks at that time of the year. “Lord, did you hear us right? We asked for Canaan with all its possibilities. Canaan with its peace, and joy, and victory. You ask us to cross Jordan. No. No, Lord. Not that.” Wouldn't that be about the way we would react? We want the fruits of Abundance but we want it **our** way.

Joshua didn't argue with God. He “arose early in the morning,” to follow God's leading into the Land. He knew his God. He didn't always understand His ways but he had learned to rely on Him. To the many, Jordan stood as a mountain obstructing their path. Joshua saw adventure ahead in spite of Jordan. “Tomorrow the Lord will do wonders among you.” And that's the way it turned out—with the Ark leading the way through the impossible.

Is there a “mountain” across your

path? You feel so empty at times and your heart is longing to be filled with His Abundance. You are burdened about a son or daughter or friend, and everything seems to go wrong. You are ready to give up as you wonder whether He hears—and cares. Listen! Those “mountains” thrown into our path or those of our friends may be His answer. It was in the case of the folks out there in the wilderness. It opened the Way to Canaan.

Karl G. Berg

N. N. RØNNING

Inspiration

I came to believe in the inspiration of the Bible not through arguments but through an experience. I realized that I had to decide for or against Christ. There was no honorable middle ground. He was either what He claimed to be or He was not. If He was what He claimed to be, I did not see how I could escape Him; I had to deny Him as Lord and Master or accept Him as Lord and Master.

I wrote to Rev. M. G. Hanson, Grand Forks, N. Dak., who in a certain sense was my guardian, that I could no longer teach parochial school and gave him the reason why. With return mail came an invitation to spend part of my vacation at his home. “You need a rest,” he said.

He did not debate with me, but told me when we sat alone late at night in his study what Jesus had come to mean to him. He did it in the indescribable, gentle way of his. Then he gave me this advice: “Read the Bible till you come to a passage that fits you.”

Why not try it? I read about Abraham begetting Isaac and Isaac begetting Jacob, about the Philistines, and justification by faith. Nothing hit me. Then I came upon a verse that

startled me with its simplicity and audaciousness: “Whosoever cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out.”

How simple! Just come. But it was not so simple after all. To come called for some sort of an effort. What was that effort and could I make it? Again I was up against a stone wall. But it did give me satisfaction to know that I was turning my face in the right direction, if there was a right direction. I kept on repeating Christ's challenge. No other man in the world would have dared to make such a promise. He was either a God or He was a fanatic.

Then late one evening as I passed Hanson's door, I heard my name mentioned. Had He called me? I stopped. He was praying for me. Something broke within me. I went to my room, threw myself on the bed and cried as I had not cried since my mother died.

A new hunger for the Bible came into my soul. I found one precious promise after another. After a while it dawned on me that by exposing myself to the Word of God I had been coming. With a flash of genius Luther says that we cannot believe or come to Christ without the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit works upon us, in us, through the Word. I no longer doubted the deity of Jesus. I never seriously had.

What about the inspiration of the Bible? By reading, studying, teaching the Bible, the conviction grew upon me and finally became overwhelming, that God does reveal His will and His ways in the Bible. I am not arguing, I am testifying. Once a year or so I turn to Ibsen, Bjørnson, Garborg, Browning, Keats, Shelly, Tennyson for a brief evening or two with each one of them, but I can read and do read the Letter to the Ephesians, the last chapters of Isaiah, the Twenty-third Psalm, the thirteenth and fifteenth chapters in First Corinthians several times every year and find new truths and new beauty. For the life of me I can't help believing that there shines through these and other portions of the Bible which I often read, a light from above. Mere man could not have written these things unaided, unguided.

(from *Fifty Years in America*, 1938)



In Memoriam



THE LUTHERAN AMBASSADOR
 3110 E. Medicine Lake Blvd.
 Minneapolis, Minn. 55441

Second-class postage
 paid at Minneapolis, Minn.

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
 Lankin (formerly of Fairdale)
 Halfdan Hølt, 79, Jan. 10, Aadalen,
 Fairdale

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