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FJ-63

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And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord” (Luke 2:10-11). John R. Rice shows how important the angels were in the birth of Christ.

There is a package under God’s Christmas tree, wrapped especially for you. Your name is on the tag. Will you open it? Will you receive “A Gift Too Wonderful for Words”?

Christmas tree lights twinkled over the room and the emotion of the night flooded her soul. Soul-searing sorrow. Indescribable joy! Incrediblealoneness. A quivering wonder that throbbed for an explanation of why her husband had been brutally murdered on Christmas Eve.
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The New Scofield Study Bible, New American Standard
**Real dismay**

It was a joy to be introduced to your magazine this week. Yet I read with dismay “Should We Legislate Morality?” (July/August). I believe that the author may have misunderstood the theonomists. I am presently editing *John Witherspoon’s Works*. Witherspoon was the pastor who signed the Declaration of Independence. I can confidently affirm that Dr. Witherspoon meant the Law of God when he used the term “natural law.” There is a long and rich history connected with that term. The meaning has changed over the years, and evidently Dr. Geisler was not aware of it. He may have been unaware of other things concerning theonomy too.

For an accurate representation of the other side, I believe theonomist Gary Demar of American Vision or Dr. Herb Titus of the CBN School of Law should have a chance to answer Dr. Geisler’s criticism and clarify their position in your magazine.

Keep up the good work.

David C. Paul
Madison, Wisconsin

**A message from prison**

Baby Doe #410, a prisoner of Jesus Christ, to our beloved brother Dr. Falwell and fellow saints reading the *Fundamentalist Journal*.

Please rejoice with us. We are overwhelmed at the privilege of carrying our cross in this way! I am so unworthy of paying such a price, but by the grace of God, he has counted me—and the other Baby Does—worthy through Christ.

We sense the pressure increasing all the time. However, “There is no counsel against the Lord,” and the weapons formed against us turn back on our foes every time. The more we are abased, the more we identify with not only the unborn, but also with the prisoners who are not here for being involved with Operation Rescue. A few have already been saved.

We feel the effects of the prayers and fasting of our brethren the Lord is using on the outside. We love all of you. This hour of testing is nothing compared to what the apostle Paul went through, but we are confident that we are following him as he followed Christ.

How wonderful to serve a God who received a prison record as a loving service to us!

Pray for the unborn babies.
Remember our bonds.
I am indefinitely committed to this service of being incarcerated for my Saviour. Therefore I say I am *fated for (pro-)Life!*

#407, also committed indefinitely to being imprisoned, sends greeting. #99, a carpenter and father of five, sends his greeting. #609 sends greetings.

We all appreciate you very much.
Please pray for the black community. It seems like many of them see Operation Rescue as a white-man’s movement. It is not. It is a move of the Lord’s people.

Grace and blessings to all of you.

Baby Doe #410
Fulton County Jail
Atlanta, Georgia

**Home-schoolers—high achievers**

We appreciate the fair treatment you gave the home-schooling movement. We also appreciate Jerry Falwell’s comments on “Bearing Our Brothers’ Burdens.” We need a lot more of this sort of thing.

Perhaps most important is the careful reporting from Kay Raysor. We think she did a superior job. We were a little bit worried about the Larry Kiser perspective. Although he is not unfriendly, he presents a typical church-schooler’s point of view, and we would simply like to pass on to him what I think Kay has tried to do, namely that there may be problem parents once in a while in home-schooling, but they are very few.

Our studies nationally have found that not only are home-schoolers by far the highest achievers, but also the best socialized. We have found that it makes little or no difference about the parents’ educational level. The main thing is that they are warm and responsive (most important) and that they can read, write, count, and speak clearly. In fact, we even have some excellent home-schooling parents who are blind or deaf.

Raymond and Dorothy Moore
Hewitt Research Foundation
Washougal, Washington

**Free because of Jesus**

After reading “Legalism, the Tie That Binds and Gags,” by David R. Miller, I want to applaud you for your courage to put in print what many of us have experienced. I trust many will receive Dr. Miller’s message as a source of help and encouragement. Rest assured, you will be highly criticized, but truth rings loud and clear in the article.

Because of legalistic demands, many people are unsaved, unchurched, and their lives in upheaval because of confusion, doubt, and inability to live up to expectations of other Christians. In short, they have no joy!
Thousands of pastors and counselors have already found "The Search For Significance" to be an important and useful addition to their library. Contact Old Time Gospel Hour Counseling Center to order your copy/copies of Robert McGee’s book... Call 1-(800)-LIFEAID

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I am free because of Jesus Christ and His work at Calvary. My life honors Him by my love, reverence, and respect for who He is and not for what I don’t do.

I make no apology for being a born-again Southern Baptist who one day—a surprise to many—will be in heaven praising our wonderful Lord for all eternity!

Linda Montgomery
Florida

**A little concerned**

I read David R. Miller’s article concerning legalism in the family, and am a little concerned about the way he uses the term *legalism*. Many misinformed people react to biblical standards by crying “legalism.” Legalism is applying self-effort to earn salvation by works. It does not refer to God’s command for Christians to live holy and godly lives.

As Fundamentalists, many of us fail to properly train our children “up in the way they should go” and “in the nurture and admonition of the Lord!” and do not admit our failure/responsibilities as fathers to properly train our children. Then we blame our failures on the system or on “legalism.” Relaxing biblical standards (in all areas) causes us to lose both ways.

Bob Wallace, Pastor
Galilean Baptist Church
Cedar Hill, Texas

**Glaring inconsistency**

With interest I read Dr. W.A. Criswell’s article, “The Curse of Liberalism” (October 1988). Everything he said is true. He openly admits that “in great areas of our Baptist lives we have lost our denominations and our Christian institutions, our colleges and universities.”

One of the reasons for this great loss has been an attitude of coexistence rather than one of cutting off the support of false teachers. Somehow I have a hard time with such glaring inconsistency. What would people think if Jesse Helms wrote an article on the curse of political Liberalism, and it was revealed that he actively supported the ACLU? In principle and practice that is what the Conservatives in the SBC do through the Cooperative Program.

Sam Tillman
Minnetrista, Minnesota
DEVELOPMENT.

“Give a man a fish and he’ll eat for a day. Teach a man to fish and he’ll eat for a lifetime.

Centuries later, the words of the ancient Chinese still ring true. In fact, they resound with a wisdom that can change the lives of suffering people around the globe.

The old proverb is not meant to imply that one ought not to feed a hungry person. Rather, it is saying that building self-sufficiency for the long term outweighs giving charity for the short term. To help a person toward this goal is to give him a lasting gift; and this is the essence of development.

Clearly, there are times when immediate relief must be given, when people must receive sustenance to survive. But, after the provision of food and shelter, something else is needed: opportunity.

Opportunity to learn, to grow, to strive for one’s potential. Physical relief helps a man to his feet; social and spiritual development enables him to walk.

In the Third World sense of the word, development is not skyscrapers and shopping centers. It is doing simple things which make profound differences.

Digging a well in a drought-ravaged African Village. Planting trees in a deforested region of Ethiopia. Building a school in the highlands of Guatemala. And giving the most liberating and lasting of gifts — the gospel of Jesus Christ.

For without the spiritual dimension, there is no true development.

These are essential roles of Food for the Hungry. Our commitment goes beyond the quick fix; our concern encompasses the whole person. For 17 years, Food for the Hungry has been at work in 14 nations. And thousands now gladly testify, it’s been a great development.”

Ted Yamamori
President, Food for the Hungry

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How important is the doctrine of the Incarnation? How does it compare to the doctrine of scriptural inerrancy, or the deity of Christ, or His substitutionary death, or His Resurrection, or the Second Coming?

All these doctrines are interrelated, but if one of them is the cornerstone of the rest, it is the Incarnation—the fact that in the Bethlehem manger, by physical birth, God literally became one of us. He never surrendered any of His deity, yet never in any way did He compromise His perfect humanity. He lived for 33 years on this earth, that He might become our faithful, sinless High Priest.

If He were not God wrapped up in human flesh, if the Babe in the Bethlehem manger were anything less than perfect God and perfect man, His death was meaningless. He was simply a man dying for men. Had He not been God He could not have come out of the grave. There would have been no Resurrection and we would be without hope.

The Incarnation reveals the nature of God. There never was a time when God the Son did not exist. “In the beginning was the Word... The same was in the beginning with God” (John 1:1-2). Isaiah 9:6 says the Child was born, but also the Son was given. He was always the Son of God. Our Lord Jesus, the little virgin-born Babe, was with the Father from all of eternity. He possessed all of the virtues and attributes of deity and was equal with the Father and the Holy Spirit.

The Incarnation reveals the works of God. “All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made” (John 1:3). Jesus, the living Word of God is the Creator. One morning before breakfast, He spoke the whole universe into existence. Imagine that now. That little Babe, in a barn, in a dirty trough, lying there 2,000 years ago, had created the entire universe before He came here. Imagine the stars looking for Him and following Him. Why shouldn’t they? He spoke those stars into existence. And the angelic beings coming and announcing His birth. Why? Because He made them. The Incarnation speaks of His work as Creator.

Imagine the stars looking for Him and following Him. Why shouldn’t they? He spoke those stars into existence.

The Incarnation speaks of His work as Life-giver. “In him was life; and the life was the light of men” (John 1:4). There is no life in the universe apart from Him. If you are separate from Christ you are dead while you are still alive. If you are not a born-again believer you are spiritually dead, separated from God. You are a corpse while you are walking around, dead in your trespasses and your sins. Jesus is not a way. He is the way.

The Incarnation speaks of Christ as the Light of the World. “And the light shined in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not” (John 1:4-5). Wherever the incarnate Word of God is lifted up and taught and preached, light follows. Christ is not a light. He is all the light there is.

The Incarnation speaks of Christ’s works as the Redeemer. “As many as received him to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God” (John 1:12-13).

If He were not the Creator, if He were not divine, if He were not the Life-giver, if He were not preexistent, if He were not coequal with God the Father and God the Spirit, if He were not with God, then His death on the Cross would have no value. We needed more than a martyr at Calvary. We needed a divine Redeemer, who in one moment, one act, could take all the sins of all of humanity, past, present, and future, and pay the penalty forever. Only deity could do that. Only God could do that. He is our Redeemer. The Incarnation is the cornerstone of our redemption.

The Incarnation reveals the glory of God. “The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.” The Incarnation speaks of God’s grace and God’s forgiveness. How could a great, holy, just, and mighty God come down to earth, live as He lived, and die as He died? By the grace of God. The Incarnation speaks of that great condescension from heaven to the manger, from the manger to the Cross, from the Cross to the borrowed tomb. The Incarnation says that God so loved us that He gave His Son to keep us out of hell. He became one of us that He might pay the price for our sin in full.

The Incarnation speaks of the truth of God. There is no truth except the truth that is in Jesus. The truth is not in science. It is not in religion. It is not in education. It is not in the media. It is not in politics. Jesus Christ is the truth. The Incarnation brought all the truth there is to this earth 2,000 years ago.
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Christmas
A Time to Remember

AND HIS NAME SHALL BE CALLED WONDERFUL COUNSELOR MIGHTY GOD
EVERLASTING FATHER PRINCE OF PEACE
It was early, early morning, that delicate time of day just before sunrise when it seems as if all of creation is asleep. In the cold, gray light she gazed at the infant sleeping in her arms. Less than an hour old, this tiny miracle shone perfect in every way. She drew him close to feel the rhythm of his steady heart beating against her skin. A tear fell from her eye, rolled across his cheek, and with her tears came the memories.

How amazed she was the day she found out she was pregnant! How exhilarated and yet, how terrified. Trying to justify her condition to her parents proved difficult, to say the least. But more excruciating was the afternoon she stood guileless before the man who graciously took her in for several months. She was finally hers!

Nothing of the past mattered anymore. He was finally here! Naked, exhausted, quivering in her arms.

Facing rejection on every side, she fled to her aunt who graciously took her in for several months. She often awoke with the nausea of morning sickness, and would lie in bed as the room spun around her. In her confusion and uncertainty, she cried out to the God she loved and planned to marry. She found no words to make him understand. All he perceived was the awful truth: the baby she carried was not his child.

Was it a miracle when the man she loved took her back and married her anyway? Or was this somehow part of God's mysterious plan? When the time was right they left their small town together, as husband and wife, with her due date rapidly approaching. Then the labor began—tightening her abdomen with such force she feared she would not be able to bear it. Perspiration streamed from her forehead. Finally the urge to push overwhelmed her, and the baby was born.

Nothing of the past mattered anymore. He was finally here! Naked, exhausted, quivering in her arms.

Now, as the first silver streaks of morning pierced through the cracks in the stable, she carefully, tenderly, wrapped him in swaddling clothes and laid him in the manger.

Robin Jones Gunn is a free-lance writer in Fremont, California.
And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. —Luke 2:10-11

What a big book one could write on Christmas! How many sermons can be preached on holy themes from the Scriptures about the birth of our Saviour. I would like to preach a dozen sermons at Christmastime. One sermon could be on the text, ‘And his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, the everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace’ (Isa. 9:6). One sermon could be on the Old Testament prophecies of His birth, of the tribe of Judah, with a virgin mother, in the town of Bethlehem, in the fullness of time. One sermon could tell of the wise men from the East, their faith in the promises of the Scripture in Daniel about the Prince, the King of the Jews, their following the Scripture and the star, their gifts of gold and frankincense and myrrh. One sermon could be on the inn, where there was no room for Mary and Joseph. And there is enough material for many other sermons. But I want to write to you about the angels and their message to the shepherds in the fields and the blessed tidings of great joy that a Saviour was born.

At the top of every Christmas tree, tradition says, there should be a large star or a bright shining angel. And in the minds of many, nothing will do but an angel. For the angels had so much to do with the birth of Christ and the Christmas story. A beautifully pictured angel seems to bring back some of the awe and mystery and miracle and joy of the first Christmas when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea.

How fitting that angels should gladly announce the coming of the Saviour. Do not ever make the mistake of thinking that this earth and its population are but an incident in the thoughts of God and the angels. Far from it! Scientists tell us that the

The angel's message is as much for one who reads these words today as for the shepherds in the field that starry Christmas night!

by John R. Rice
Jesus was born on earth, all the angels Jesus came as a Saviour for Joseph, all heaven was in a hubbub, a flut-1 Timothy 1:15 the apostle Paul, by divine praise and glory. Perhaps when an angel Jesus did not come as a teacher, perhaps sinners; of whom I am chief.” And Jesus Himself said, “The Son of man is come to Jesus did not need a pattern; he needed a Redeemer.

Jesus did not come to civilize the world, to change society as a whole, to stop wars and crime and poverty. The Modernists who leave off revivals, who stop having supernatural conversions, and talk piously of the church “bringing in the kingdom of God,” have utterly missed the point of the gospel, the point of Jesus’ coming. Jesus came to save individual sinners from hell. He came to make black hearts white in the blood, to give new life to those dead in trespasses and sins. Joseph was told by the angel, “Thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins” (Matt. 1:21). Zacharias, filled with the Holy Spirit and with the baby John in his arms, prophesied, “And thou, child, shalt be called the prophet of the Highest: for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare his ways; to give knowledge of salvation unto his people by the remission of their sins” (Luke 1:76-77). The angel announced to the shepherds, and we should always emphasize his message, that “unto you is born . . . a Saviour.”

Jesus Christ and Christianity have been the greatest influence for civilization in all the world. Regenerated Christian hearts live as unsaved men cannot live. Men who are born again, saved by the blood of Christ, have done all the best of the world’s literature, and art, and culture. Genuine Bible-believing Christianity has mothered hospitals, has sponsored missions around the world to civilize while they preach the gospel. Bible-believing Christianity as held by saved, forgiven, born-again sinners, has founded orphanages and hospitals, has sponsored peace movements, taught the protection of the weak and the care of the helpless, and has earnestly and powerfully

Jesus Himself is God’s Christmas gift, and He brings with Him forgiveness and peace of mind, and sure hope of eternal blessedness hereafter.

The announcement of the angel in the field near Bethlehem, just as true as Jesus gave it to the disciples after His Resurrection. We have a message to tell to the nations, and no Christian has done his duty until he does all he can to see that the last creature on earth hears the gospel. The angel’s message is as much for one who reads this words today as for the shepherds in the field that starry Christmas night! The Saviour wants to be your Saviour. He wants the joy to be your joy.

Jesus came as a Saviour for sinners. The angel said, “Unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour!”

Jesus did not come as a teacher, though He often taught the people and “he spake as never man spake.” The world has other teachers, even other teachers sent from God, like the holy men who wrote the Scripture, and all of God’s prophets. But Jesus did not come as a teacher. He came as a Saviour. In 1 Timothy 1:15 the apostle Paul, by divine inspiration, writes, “This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief.” And Jesus Himself said, “The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost” (Luke 19:10).

Jesus said plainly that God’s love gift to the world was in order “that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life.” Jesus did not come as a teacher, philosopher, but to save people from their sins. When Nicodemus came to Jesus by night and said, “Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God,” Jesus abruptly answered, “Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God” (John 3:2-3). What Nicodemus needed was not a teacher but a Saviour. He did not need a pattern; he needed a Redeemer.

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preached moral righteousness. But the first and most important thing that Jesus does for anybody is to save his soul, forgiving his sins and changing his heart.

Remember, all the changes made in human society by Christianity and the gospel were made by the old, old gospel, not by the modern so-called social gospel of unbelievers and infidels who reject the deity of Christ and the inspiration of the Bible. Modernists save no drunken bums on the Bowery in New York City. They cannot change individuals from sinners to saints. Modernists do not change society because they do not change the human heart. These unbelievers in the church have only the carnal mind which is enmity against God and cannot be subject to the law of God because of spiritual blindness. That is why they try to change men without regeneration. That is why they try to change society without changing men.

The name of Jesus means Saviour, and Jesus came to save. No one really has Jesus until he has Him as a Saviour in his own heart and has his own sins forgiven and his soul saved.

The most important thing for each reader this Christmas is that he make sure that he has come to Jesus as a poor lost sinner needing saving and that by faith he has accepted and received Jesus into his own heart as the Forgiver of his sins, the Pardoner of his transgressions, the Saviour of his soul.

The Child born is Christ the Lord, God Incarnate. The baby Jesus was not like other babies in one respect. This baby is God come in human form! Here is the Creator of the world wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger! For the angel took pains to say that this Saviour born in the city of David is Christ the Lord. Jesus is the Christ of the Old Testament, foretold as the anointed One (Messiah) of the second Psalm. He is the Seed of the woman that should bruise the serpent's head, of whose stripes we are healed. He is the Prophet like unto Moses, foretold as the New Prophet, the Law in flesh (Rom. 8:3). He is the Prophet Isaiah, chapter 7, verse 14, saying, "Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins" (Matt. 1:20-21). And we are told that all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet Isaiah, chapter 53, verse 11, saying, "Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us" (Matt. 1:23).

And we may be sure that when the shepherds gazed into the baby face of Jesus they looked with awe. Doubtless they knelt and worshipped Him as did the wise men. For He is Immanuel, God with us, Christ the Lord. There is no real Christmas for anyone who does not admit that Jesus is God and who does not bow to Him as Lord.

I believe that the shepherds went away after perfect surrender of hearts to this message, this Christ, this Lord. They ignored their defenseless flocks in the field to tell the Good News. I think their hearts had knelt to Jesus. I think their wills had surrendered to Him. I think they had taken Him into the throne room of their hearts to be Lord of their lives. And that is what I hope every reader will do this Christmas. Let Jesus sit with you at the Christmas feast; yes, let Him be verily the head of the house. Let Jesus preside at the Christmas tree and make sure that every gift and every carol and all the fellowship is subject to His approval and controlled by His will. I wish my knees could bow in that lowly stable before the manger today! I long to give myself anew to the Lord Christ who came that happy night. Let us not only trust Jesus as Saviour, but let us surrender to Him and exalt Him as Lord and Master, as Christ and God. Have thy blessed way with our hearts, O Christ Jesus, this Christmas and forever!

It was wonderful news that the Saviour was born in Bethlehem. But the angel gave specific instructions as to how they should find and know the baby Jesus, "And this shall be a sign unto you; the angel said, 'Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger'" (Luke 2:12). And sure enough, "They came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger" (Luke 2:16). What a pity to hear about Jesus and never know Him as your Saviour! How sad these shepherds would have been in afterlife if they had not come to see for themselves the babe in the manger of whom the angel had told them.

Well, it is Christmas and in many ways that is the happiest time in the world to accept Christ as your own Saviour. He is God's "unspeakable gift," given to a sinning, dying, world, given to you. It is not good manners to reject a Christmas gift. When a gift has cost love and care and great expense, it would be a callous heart indeed that would refuse it and break the loving heart of the giver. But God offers you His own son. God let Him die on the cross for your sin. Jesus Himself is God's Christmas gift, and He brings with Him forgiveness and peace of mind, and a new life within and the great and sure hope of eternal blessedness hereafter. Everlasting life is yours as a free gift if you will take it today.

Adapted from Immanuel "God with Us" by John R. Rice. Copyright 1950 by John R. Rice. Used by permission of Mrs. John R. Rice.
dull awareness in the back of her mind prodded Janice to awaken and drowsily wonder why she was sleeping on her mother's couch. The Christmas tree lights twinkled over the room, and suddenly the emotions of the past night swept over her in a flood. Soul-searing sorrow. Indescribable joy. Incredible aloneness. A quivering wonder that ached for an explanation of why her husband had been brutally murdered on Christmas Eve!

This Christmas season had been like many others they had spent together. The only misfortunes during what was shaping up to be a perfect holiday were a coworker's bout with the flu and the death of daughter Christie's pet rabbit on December 23rd. Glenn and Christie had buried the rabbit, and later that night, thinking about death, Glenn had asked his wife what she would do if he were to die. "I want you to go on living," he told her. "Yes, but honey, what would happen to you if you died?" his wife queried.

"Oh, I know I'm hell-bound," he answered. I'm going to bust the gates of hell wide open."

"You can change that, you know."

"Now, honey," he said, rising and changing the subject, "don't preach me no sermon."

Glenn West was as good a man as you could meet. Janice had been attracted to him in high school, but her strict daddy had forbidden her to date him. Five years after high school the two were reacquainted, became best friends, and fell in love.

Glenn West never met a stranger. Once he found a drunk on the highway and stayed with him for nearly an hour while Janice went for the sheriff. "I have to lock him up," the sheriff said flatly.

"Don't lock him up," said Glenn. "I'll take him home." Glenn got the man's address from the sheriff, wrapped his own coat around the drunk, put him in his car, and gave the man a ride home.

"Please don't die on me," she begged, as tears sprung to her eyes. "I can't live without you."

by Angela Elwell Hunt
On December 24, 1987, Glenn West had filled in for a coworker with the flu and worked a double shift at the gas station with only a one-hour break for some last-minute Christmas shopping. His quick trip to the mall had included a special present—a large-print Bible for the coworker who had agreed to fill in for an hour. The coworker’s wife had recently remarked to Glenn that her eyes were getting so bad she could not even manage reading her Bible. She would never expect a large-print Bible from Glenn West.

After giving the Bible to his friend and cheerfully wishing him and his wife a “Merry Christmas,” Glenn settled back in his favorite chair in the office and hummed a Christmas carol. Soon he would be home with his family, but for now he loved being at the gas station. There was something about a gas station—friendly visitors, regular customers, being able to help. Glenn often joked that if he were ever to divorce his wife he would marry the gas station. He loved the business and dreamed of owning his own place.

Shortly before 8 p.m. Glenn decided to close up. He called his wife and daughter at a friend’s house. “Sure, we’ll pick you up after I stop at my mother’s for some wrapping paper,” Janice told him.

“See you in a few minutes.”

As Glenn West hung up the phone he noticed a yellow van once again circling the station, as it had several times in the past few hours. He could see several men inside. An eerie feeling came over him when the van stopped outside in the darkness.

A teenager got out of the van and came into the office. The others waited outside. The boy had a gun.

“Give me all the money and open the safe,” he commanded.

Glenn reached into the cash drawer and removed the $45 inside. “I can’t open the safe,” he said simply. “This is a company station. I don’t even know how to open the safe.”

“You’d better open it or I’m going to kill you,” the young man countered.

Glenn raised his eyebrows. “Please don’t shoot me. You have to believe me. I don’t even know how to open the safe.”

The boy paused a moment and fired the gun. Glenn went down. A man hollered from the waiting van, “Get outa there!” The boy jumped into the van with the others, and they sped off into the cold Virginia night.

A Christmas carol played on the radio. Janice West was entering the main highway when the police car pulled by with its siren blaring. “Isn’t that terrible,” whispered her daughter. “On Christmas Eve.”

They pulled onto the highway and stared in disbelief as the police car pulled into the gas station where Glenn West waited for them. A rescue truck had already arrived, and the paramedics blocked the door when a hysterical Janice tried to enter. She left the door and went to the side window and saw her husband on the floor, his shirt off, and the paramedics working over him. “Oh, dear God, please don’t let this be happening,” she prayed. “My husband has been shot.”

A policeman came over and tried to comfort her. “He looks pretty good. He’s talking. He was able to call us himself.”

The paramedics would not let her ride in the ambulance, but a fire chief took Janice and Christie to the hospital. Other family members were already there when they arrived. The doctor told them, “He’s awake, alert, and talking. Janice, you can see him if you want to.”

She walked into the emergency room and saw Glenn lying on the stretcher with his head turned away. “Hey, tough guy,” she whispered, “how’s it going?”

He looked at her. “Honey, please say a little prayer for me.”

“Honey, I’ve been on my knees since I first saw you,” she answered. “Maybe
and Him only shalt thou serve.”
Matthew 4:10

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the Lord’s trying to tell you something.”
“He has already told me. You go on the best you can.”
“Please don’t die on me,” she begged, as tears sprang to her eyes. “I can’t live without you.”

His eyes searched her face. “You’ve got to do the best you can.”
“I’m in pain.” A sympathetic nurse promised he would be in surgery shortly. At the foot of his bed, Janice reached out and touched his foot. It was cold.

Glenn West looked at the wife who had been praying for his salvation for 10 years, and quietly asked, “Why did this happen to me? I’ve never done anything to hurt anybody.”

She swallowed her tears and replied firmly, “God has His reasons, I’m sure.”

Glenn asked for a minister, and within five minutes David Rowland, a friend of the family, was by his bedside. “At a time like this,” he began, “I get right to the point. This is not a time for conversation. Glenn, are you saved?”

“No,” Glenn answered through his pain, “but I want to be.” Rowland took Janice’s hand and said, “Whatever happens, Glenn will now go to heaven. He knows this, too. Don’t you Glenn?”

Glenn nodded from his bed. “I know.” He looked at his wife. “I love you so much,” he said.

A police investigator came in and spoke briefly to Glenn about the crime and the men involved. After he left, Glenn turned again to his wife and told her what her Christmas presents were and where she could find them. “Merry Christmas, honey,” he whispered.

“Honey,” she interrupted, abrupt and matter-of-fact, “we’re not going to have Christmas or open presents until you’re well and out of here. We’ll just postpone everything.”

She paused to control her thoughts and he, an undemonstrative man, said simply, “I love you.” He turned to Rowland and said, “I love you.”

Rowland took Janice’s hand and said, “Don’t talk like that.”

“I love you.”

The operating team arrived to take him to surgery. Janice leaned against the wall for support. As the stretcher rounded the corner out of sight, she called, “I love you, T-bear.”

“I love you too, honey.” They were the last words she heard from her husband.

Glenn West entered surgery at 8:50 p.m. and came out at 1:30 Christmas morning. The doctors reported that their patient was in critical condition, but doing fairly well. The family, pacing nervously in the waiting room, relaxed a bit. Ten minutes later they heard a “code blue” sound from the post surgical unit. The doctor who came out of the ward would not look at Janice.

Another surgeon approached her. “His blood pressure has dropped. He has lost 16 pints of blood. We’re waiting to see if his body will accept frozen plasma. You can go back to see him.”

Janice went back and saw her husband stretched out and strapped to machines that clicked, beeped, and recorded elusive traces of life. “Lord,” she prayed, “I have to know Glenn hears what I say.”

She bent down over his still form and clutched his upturned hand. “I love you. I can’t live without you. We love you. God loves you. You’re saved now and you can live a different life.”

She paused to control her thoughts

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roll out of bed at 5:30 on Christmas morning, letting Pearl
snatch a few extra minutes of sleep for a change. The gray
sky will soon surrender to the pinks and yellows of the dawn.
Family tradition calls for me to prepare breakfast on Christ-
mas Day. In robe and slippers I trudge into the kitchen to
begin mixing the batter for the whole wheat pecan waffles we'll
have.

Soon freshly ground coffee is perking; a pitcher of chilled
orange juice made with spring water rests on the counter; pork
sausages sizzle in the frying pan on the stove; waffles are cris-
ping in the waffle iron. The aromas waft through the house, stir-
ing the six sleepyheads to activity. The back door opens and
in walk our oldest daughter and her husband who live nearby.
Our 2-year-old grandson bounds out of the bedroom to begin
toing with the unwrapped train set under the tree. Our 1-year-
old grandbaby still sleeps.

"Time for breakfast!" I call from the kitchen. Then Pearl,
who by this time has joined me, begins serving platters of
waffles covered with blueberries and piled high with sausages.
We eat in shifts, and stack the dirty dishes in the sink. There
will be time for such mundane things as dish-washing later.
Besides, the kids can't wait to get to the presents!

Our other daughter and her husband arrive, and it is finally
time to gather 'round the twinkling tree. Grandson Ian fidgets
in his Aunt Julea's lap, while his baby brother, Andrew, now
awake, scoots around in his walker, oblivious to the reasons
behind the excitement. Grandpa (that's me) sits in his rocker
with his Bible open to Luke chapter 2, and begins to speak.
"We need to remember, in the midst of these packages, why
we are here. Let me read you the story of the first Christmas."
I open the Bible and read the familiar account.

And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree
from Caesar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed. (And
this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.)

by Don Anderson
And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, unto Judaea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; (because he was of the house and lineage of David:) to be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child.

And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.

And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them; and they were sore afraid.

And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you: Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.

And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace, good will toward men.

As the Andersons continue through their Christmas morning activities I would like to share a few thoughts with you. I sincerely hope you fully comprehend the significance of that first Christmas. The humble birth in the simple stable was absolutely vital to our eternal well-being.

God had no choice but to intervene in human history to retrieve the relationship with man, His creature, which had been lost in the Garden of Eden. The mission of reconciliation begun in Bethlehem was accomplished at the Cross of Calvary. God is now free to offer you the gift of Christ.

Under the Jewish legal and religious system, animals were slain, their blood shed, their carcasses offered upon the altar in acts of atonement for man's sin. Yet after the Resurrection of Christ, such forms of sacrifice became invalid, because a far greater sacrifice had been put to death at Calvary. Hebrews 10:4 tells us, "For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins."

Instead, Jesus Christ carried the weight of our sins to the Cross. He was slain, His blood shed, so that He might pay the penalty of our disobedience, our rebellion, our selfishness, our sin. Christ functioned as the Lamb of sacrifice on our behalf. As John the Baptist proclaimed when Jesus approached, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world" (John 1:29).

Isaiah 53:5, speaking prophetically of the Messiah, Jesus Christ, says, "But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed."

Romans 5:8 states, "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." Hebrews 10:10 says Christians have been "sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all."

And 1 Peter 1:18-19 reminds believers that they "were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold . . . but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot."

The Result of Christmas: Salvation. The ultimate result of Christmas is that salvation is made available through this sacrifice of Christ, necessitated because of man's sin. Reconciliation with God is now possible! Salvation is offered as a gift through faith in the Lord Jesus. John 3:16 says, "For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

Ephesians 2:8-9 puts it this way, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God."

God is waiting for your response. He longs for you to turn to Him in faith and receive the gift of Christ.

The Reason for Christmas: Sin. The reason for Christmas is the sin of man. Man's sinful nature separates him from a relationship with a righteous and completely holy God. Try and try as we may, we cannot, under our own human power, become totally free of sin in our thoughts and actions. It is impossible.

According to the Bible, sin infects every man and woman (except the Godman, Jesus Christ). In the words of Romans 3:23, "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God."

Sin infiltrates our lives and carries with it an awesome penalty: death—eternal separation from a perfect, holy, just God. Paul writes in Romans 5:12, "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned."

Yet because God loves us, there is hope for escaping the penalty of our disobedience. This hope is found in Jesus Christ. Romans 6:23 puts it this way, "For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."

The Remedy of Christmas: The Sacrifice. The remedy for man's problem of sin is found in a sacrifice, specifically the sacrifice of Jesus Christ on the Cross of Calvary.

It is the sole means by which we can experience fellowship with God now and forevermore.

Revelation 22:17 says, "And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."

Have you done that? Have you made that decision for Christ? It is an open invitation. Remember that Jesus Himself says in Revelation 3:20, "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me."

He is ready and waiting. It is your move.

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Family heirlooms come in many shapes and sizes. One man may cherish a handsome gold pocket watch and chain from his grandfather; a woman may lovingly guard an antique quilt, preserved—free from frolicking children—on grandmother’s brass bed in the guest room.

But my family heirloom is preserved within my memory. The priceless treasure passed down to me and my siblings reminds me of who I am, why I exist, and how rich my heritage. Because my family heirloom was a Christmas gift, for me, Christmas will never be the same.

One warm and breezy Florida Christmas, my family gathered at a park because no one house could hold the entire assortment of relatives. After our Christmas dinner and the children’s games, my grandfather cleared his throat and motioned for the family to gather around him. The children stopped their play, the women stopped talking, and the men let their conversations about their favorite athletic teams rest.

My grandfather stood and addressed our picnic gathering solemnly. The time had come, he said, to tell us a story that had been a part of him for years. Now it was time to pass it on to those who would follow in his footsteps. The story was true, he nodded gravely. Its events took place over a hundred years ago.

He told us of an orphanage, like many in those days, where an abused and mute 10-year-old girl shared a special friendship

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BY STERLING O’NEILL
The Sweet Singer's Last Song

by Bernard R. DeRemer

The Lake Shore and Michigan Southern Railway's Pacific Express plowed bravely on through snow-drifts into the darkness, but kept losing time in spite of its doubleheader. A howling gale off Lake Erie, driving a blinding blizzard before it, had raged fiercely all day. Now the train was running three hours late.

At 7:28 p.m., December 29, 1876, the Chicago-bound train was nearing Ashtabula, Ohio, but eternity was the immediate destination for nearly a hundred passengers.

The train crawled across the Ashtabula River bridge. Suddenly came an ominous cracking, when the engineer felt the bridge beginning to sink under him. Instinctively, he opened the throttle wide, and the lead engine leapt forward to safety. But the coupling broke, and the entire locomotive and all 11 cars into the 70-foot chasm.

A moment of stunned silence preceded screams and pandemonium. Cars were piled in a V-shaped tumble from one bank to the other—dead, dying, and injured sprawled everywhere. The engineer clanged his bell and blew his whistle furiously to sound the alarm, then scrambled down the slope and began pulling victims from the debris of the wreck and the ice of the river.

Almost immediately fire broke out from overturned stoves and lamps. Vicious flames, fed by dry varnished wood and fanned by the icy gale, licked up the ruins like tinder.

By now volunteer Ashtabula firemen and others were arriving on the scene. Their frantic efforts to put out the raging inferno were terribly handicapped by the difficulty of getting down the slope, the deep snow and fierce wind, and probably an overwhelming sense of futility at the fearful calamity.

But above the roar of wind and flames, screams of the victims, and shouts of rescuers, a powerful bass voice rang out. Jesus, Lover of my soul, Let me to Thy bosom fly, While the nearer waters roll, While the tempest still is high; Hide me, O my Saviour, hide, Till the storm of life is past; Safe into the haven guide, O receive my soul at last.

Hardened hearers were transfixed by such a message at that awful scene, and flickering lights caught many a tear-dimmed eye. P.P. Bliss, the "Sweet Singer," was giving his final testimony in song. Through the first stanza, then the second, and halfway through the third his voice clearly rang. Then, with a choking gasp, it was silenced.

Bliss and his wife were among the 83 people who lost their lives in the famous Ashtabula disaster. Their remains, along with those of 17 unidentified passengers, were buried in the Chestnut Grove Cemetery of Ashtabula. Of 159 passengers and crew members, only 8 escaped injury.

Just the night before, Bliss and his wife had said good-bye to relatives and friends in Rome, Pennsylvania, leaving their two little boys in the custody of the boys' grandparents. Bliss was on his way to assist D.L. Moody in his first large Chicago campaign, and he was to have sung that Sunday.

Music was the life of P.P. Bliss, who used to say, "My heart is so drawn that I take little interest in anything else than in writing or singing." At 38, he had composed "The Light of the World Is Jesus," "Wonderful Words of Life," "Let the Lower Lights Be Burning," "It Is Well with My Soul," and many others widely used today.
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At the time of the Bliss centennial in 1938, The Christian declared, "It is to him more than to any more, except perhaps Pappy J. Crosby, that we owe the type of gospel song which came into vogue in the Moody and Sankey missions and other evangelistic campaigns of the latter half of the nineteenth century, and which still holds its own so widely."

What a far cry from the time when an overgrown, barefoot 10-year-old boy first heard a piano. Passing by a house, young P.P. Bliss was so entranced by the sweetest music he had ever heard that he barged inside, and found a young woman playing a piano in the parlor. When she stopped he exclaimed eagerly, "Oh, lady, please play some more!" Surprised and startled, she promptly ordered him out.

Philip Paul Bliss was born July 9, 1838, in Clearfield County, Pennsylvania. Earliest memories of his log-cabin home included his father's singing, praying, and Bible-reading. Saved at a very early age, he could never recall the exact date of his conversion; his first public profession was at 12, in a revival meeting.

Early schooling was limited by pioneer conditions. At 11 he went to work on a farm away from home. Later he cooked in a lumber camp, worked in a sawmill, and taught school. One of his first students was D.B. Towner, later a famous composer and teacher, and an early director of music at Moody Bible Institute in Chicago.

From Towner's father Bliss received his earliest systematic musical instruction. His first musical convention, at Rome, Pennsylvania, greatly stimulated his growing passion in this field.

Following his marriage in 1859 to Lucy Young, Bliss worked on his father-in-law's farm for $3 a month. That winter he began teaching singing in schools at $2 a night. But the more he learned of music, the more he realized—and sought to overcome—his lack of training. A $30 gift from his wife's grandmother made possible six weeks in a normal academy of music at Geneseo, New York.

Bliss's next big break was an invitation to join the Chicago firm of Root and Cady. For several years he held musical conventions and gave concerts and private instruction, as well as composing more and more songs. His success story reads almost like Horatio Alger. At one time his diary reveals that he had "plenty of convention engagements at $100 for four days." Indeed, the barefoot boy entranced at the sound of a piano had come a long, long way.

Meanwhile, he was also serving as Sunday school superintendent and choir leader of the First Congregational Church in Chicago, where he would often stop in the middle of a song and tearfully urge every heart to immediate decision on the Lord's side.” E.P. Goodwin, pastor, recalled, "As Mr. Bliss stood in the choir gallery, partly facing the singers, right in front of him in the center of the eastern window was a large crimson cross. Many times during rehearsals he would point to it, saying, 'I am glad we have the Cross always before us. Let us forget everything else when we sing. Let us seek to have the people lose sight of us, our efforts, our skill, and think only of Him who died thereon, and of the peace, comfort, strength, and joy He gives them that trust Him.'"

Bliss's most important contact in Chicago was a dynamic young lay evangelist and former shoe salesman, D.L. Moody. They met for the first time during Moody's services in Wood's Museum. Bliss's singing in the audience attracted the evangelist's attention, and after the service he sought out Bliss. From then on they were frequently together in meetings.

In 1873 and 1874 Moody bombarded Bliss with letters from the British Isles (where Moody and Sankey were engaged in their historic first great campaign), urging him to give up business. "If you haven't got faith of your own in this matter, start out on my faith. Launch out into the deep," Moody implored. Meanwhile he was similarly plying Major D.W. Whittle, a Civil War veteran and business manager of the Elgin Watch Company. An "experimental" series of meetings in Waukegan brought such response and blessing that both surrendered their business careers for a new partnership. Whittle as preacher and Bliss as singer and children's worker, fulfilling his desire to give "all my time, voice, and heart to the cause of Christ direct."

What a wealth of fruitful activity Bliss packed into less than three years of full-time Christian work! He composed many more numbers, compiled hymnbooks, held meetings from Wisconsin to Alabama, wrote letters, dealt with individuals, witnessed powerfully for the Lord.

On one occasion Bliss heard a preacher named Brundage close a sermon with, "He who is almost persuaded..."
is almost saved, but to be almost saved is
to be entirely lost." The thought impelled
Bliss to pen "Almost Persuaded," one of
the most effective of all invitation hymns.

In 1870 at a Rockford, Illinois, Sun-
day school convention, Major Whittle told
the thrilling story of the besieged brigade
of 1,500 Union soldiers, surrounded by
6,000 Confederates, just before Sher-
man's famous march to the sea. The
defenders were driven into a small fort
on a hill near Atlanta, when suddenly an
officer caught sight of a flag signaling
from a mountaintop 20 miles away—
"Hold the fort; I am coming. W.T.
Sherman."

Cheers went up, and the outnum-
bered garrison held on for three hours
under murderous fire, until Sherman's
arriving advance guard forced a Con-
 federate retreat.

Realizing that the Christian's great
Commander is likewise coming to his aid,
Bliss was inspired to write one of his
most famous songs.

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Howard A. Kelly
Beloved Physician of Baltimore

A pink rose always adorned the lapel of Dr. Howard A. Kelly. He kept it fresh by inserting its stem into a small water-filled vial pinned out of sight. To remarks on its beauty, he would respond, "This is a Christian rose" (turning over the lapel) "with hidden sources of grace and life."

But his most powerful testimony was the small blue button on his other lapel, containing only a question mark. People he encountered would almost always ask what it meant. "That," Kelly would reply, "asks, 'What is the most important thing in life?'"

The questioner would then guess. "Wealth? Health? Happiness?"

"Oh, no," Kelly would answer. "None of these. The most important question is, 'What think ye of Christ?'"

In this way he witnessed effectively to doctors, cabdrivers, and innumerable others, leading many of them to accept Christ as Saviour.

Kelly was born in Camden, New Jersey, in 1858. After obtaining his degree at the University of Pennsylvania Medical School, and interning at Episcopal Hospital in Philadelphia, he founded Kensington Hospital in that city.

William H. Chisholm recalled that Kelly's "private hospital was run like a public institution where the poor as well as the rich were welcomed. Poor patients were frequently received, given treatment, board, sometimes a ticket home, and occasionally money in addition. His fees were never excessive. At times patients felt the bill was not large enough, and they doubled, tripled, and even quadrupled the size of the check. The additional amount simply went into his charity work."

At the incredibly young age of 31, Kelly had attracted so much attention that William Osler invited him to become one of the founders of Johns Hopkins Medical School in Baltimore. There he was catapulted to world fame.

C. Jeff Miller declared, "A large amount of modern urology bears upon work that he did many years ago. His work in kidney surgery alone would stamp him as one of the greatest authorities in modern urology. . . . His work in physics and radium makes him unquestionably the one to receive credit for introducing radium to the medical profession."

Kelly wrote some 20 textbooks and 600 articles. The Library of Congress Card Catalog contains 35 entries under his name (including various editions), mostly in gynecology, his specialty, but including treatises on appendicitis, Prohibition, snakes of Maryland (a hobby of his), and Walter Reed and yellow fever. Kelly was a member or fellow of numerous medical and scientific societies in the United States and abroad.

Miss Audrey Davis, who worked closely with the distinguished physician in his library for 20 years, testified that "not once did he ever speak an irritable word to me," but instead he "filled every minute with the joy of living."

Yet his prodigious professional work could not command all his time. Kelly crusaded against vice and alcohol, attempted to awaken a dormant public, was branded a fanatic, and had his life threatened by the underworld. But he kept
right on and eventually saw a number of political reforms accomplished.

Kelly heard the great evangelists D.L. Moody and Ira D. Sankey in some of their earliest U.S. campaigns. He was deeply stirred at “Moody’s simple, effective biblical exhortations and Sankey’s earnest singing to the accompaniment of his organ. Here too I first saw men moved to seek salvation in the inquiry room.”

Kelly’s life was indeed saturated with the Word of God. He would rise at 4:30 or earlier, study the Bible for an hour or two, then have morning prayers with his nurses. He often prayed with patients before operating.

He actively supported Billy Sunday’s evangelistic efforts, and for many years taught a Bible class in Mount Vernon Methodist Episcopal Church. He was appointed a lay reader in the Episcopal church, delivering sermons whenever he was invited to substitute for his rector or others. Sometimes he would lead YMCA services at the local branch, close to the waterfront, where sailors lived while ashore. He was a member of the Home Council of the China Inland Mission (now Overseas Missionary Fellowship).

His articles in Our Hope and other publications blessed thousands everywhere. Sunday School Times announced a series by Kelly—and gained more than 30,000 new subscribers.

In witnessing to cab drivers and others, he would give an inquirer a “portion of Scripture marked with blue pencil to aid the man in study.” On occasion he recorded names and addresses for follow-up and additional ministry.

Kelly was fond of saying, “The only way you can keep your Christian faith is to give it away. . . . The only excuse I have for insisting on breaking through the reserves of every man I meet is that Jesus Christ died for him as well as for me, and I want him to know it.” Some, of course, did not respond affirmatively to his consecrated personal witness, such as George Bernard Shaw, and H.L. Mencken, two of the most famous, powerful unbelievers of their era. But the seed was sown and the witness delivered (Ezek. 3:18-19).

The late C. Stacy Woods recalled once riding with Kelly in downtown Baltimore. When the cab came to a red light, Kelly asked the driver, “Sam, when you get to the gate of heaven, will there be a red light or a green light?”

“Well, sir, I hope it’ll be green.”

“Wouldn’t you like to be certain?”

“I sure would.”

With that the world-renowned gynecologist and surgeon directed the driver to “pull over to the curb, keep the meter running, and we’ll have a talk.”

“The only excuse I have for insisting on breaking through the reserves of every man I meet is that Jesus Christ died for him as well as for me, and I want him to know it.”

Quietly the scientist explained God’s wonderful way of salvation. After a time of prayer, the cabbie professed to receive Christ as his Saviour.

Woods concluded, “We resumed our journey, which ended with Dr. Kelly not hesitating to pay the increased fare and to give a very generous tip in addition. It was this man who became one of our first great spiritual and financial supporters of InterVarsity [Christian Fellowship] in the United States.”

Howard Kelly went to be with the Lord in 1943, just six hours before his wife’s homegoing. Multitudes of tributes poured in. William Chisholm spoke for all when he declared that Dr. Howard Kelly through faith had “obtained a good report” and by his testimony “he being dead yet speaketh.”

— Bernard R. DeRemer is a freelance writer in West Liberty, Ohio.

Why I Believe in the Virgin Birth
by Howard A. Kelly

Do I believe in the Virgin Birth of our Lord Jesus Christ as proclaimed in the Scriptures? Yes, most emphatically! To deny this teaching would be equivalent to rejecting other vital parts of the Scriptures, bringing into question the whole Bible as the Word of God. Yet there are those who say, “I cannot believe in a Virgin Birth because it is biologically impossible.” To such I reply in Gabriel’s words to Mary, “With God nothing shall be impossible” (Luke 1:37).

I agree with Bishop Handley Moule, that it is not necessary to hold everyone who comes seeking salvation to a full knowledge of all the deeper truths of the Word of God as immediately a necessary part of salvation. There are, however, some truths so vital that they must speedily be accepted as an integral part of it. Whether I affirm in a creed that Christ is the Son of God or whether I deny it, is also of but little moment if my belief remains a mere assertion, a matter of words, which fails profoundly to affect my whole life.

I do not expect an inquirer to accept any evidence unless he believes that the Bible is in some real sense the Word of God, offering to man salvation for time and eternity. On the other hand, if the Bible does not offer salvation and eternal life, then the Old Testament is but a temporal history and the New Testament becomes a dead, man-made letter, recounting the well-intentioned imaginings of perhaps honest but misguided men. To deny the Virgin Birth because of its miraculous nature is to deny the validity of all Scripture, which is a continuous series of revelations of the mind and acts of God, and as such is miraculous throughout.

To reject the Virgin Birth of Christ is to reject His deity, since they are synonymous. Many admit the divinity of Christ but do not acknowledge His deity. To contend that Christ was not born of a virgin by the agency of the Holy Spirit is to reject Him as our Mediator at the right hand of God, and reject all prayer to Him and prayer directed by the Holy Spirit, since we can then have no assurance that there is a Holy Spirit. Moreover, denial of the Virgin Birth robs Christ of the glory He shares with the Father. “For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily” (Col. 2:9).

“When he had by himself purified our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high” (Heb. 1:3). It furthermore rejects the testimony of Mark that there came “a voice from heaven, saying, Thou art my beloved son, in whom I am well pleased” (Mark 1:11).

The Virgin Birth is taught throughout the whole Bible, by implication and repetition in the Old Testament, and by declaration and repeated restatements in the New. Since a larger familiarity with the Word of God will bring its own convictions, let us search the Scriptures.

Believing and knowing the facts as we do, how precious is the undertake of the Old Testament Scriptures as to the deity

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of the expected Messiah! How ideal the merited retribution to the serpent when God pronounced the way of his destruction by the seed of the woman whom he had misled: "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel" (Gen. 3:15).

What pictures, too, foreshadow the event! There are Abraham and Isaac, representative of God giving His own son; Joseph rejected by his brethren; and Moses anticipating our Lord's coming. "The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken" (Deut. 18:15). Throughout the Psalms, too, there is a great undercurrent of God Himself as the forthcoming Deliverer.

"The Lord himself shall give unto you a sign; Behold a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel" (Isa. 7:14). "And the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace" (Isa. 9:5). The Hebrew word for virgin is almah, translated by Matthew in citing this passage by the Greek word parthenos, meaning distinctively a virgin.

Let us leave the Old Testament and examine the New for evidences of the Virgin Birth of Jesus. In Matthew's first chapter we find the step from the Old Testament in the very first words, "The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham." Then follows the genealogy down to Joseph, Mary's husband at the time of Christ's birth, from whom by Roman and Jewish law Jesus inherited His right to the throne. Joseph was warned by an angel in a dream that Mary's condition with child was of the Holy Ghost. "Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us" (Matt. 1:22-23). In the very first verse, Mark states, "The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God," so proclaimed also by God at His baptism.

Note in Luke that the angel Gabriel was sent by God to Mary, saying, "Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name Jesus. He...shall be called the Son of the Highest...and he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever...The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God...And Mary said, Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word."

Here in Luke's first chapter we find life's two vital factors. On the one hand, lack of faith in Zacharias concerning Elisabeth, who in her old age was to bear John the Baptist, whereupon his lips were sealed until the birth of John; and on the other hand, the perfect faith of Mary to whom Elisabeth cried out, "Blessed is she that believed: for there shall be a performance of those things which were told her from the Lord" (Luke 1:45).

John is peculiarly the gospel of our Lord's deity. Here we have the clear declaration in the first chapter, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God" (v. 1). "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth" (v. 14). John the Baptist's testimony, "And I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God" (v. 34); and Nathanael's, "Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel" (v. 49). In the fifth chapter are six testimonies to His sonship: Christ's own claim, the witness of John the Baptist, the witness of the Father, His works, the testimony of the Scriptures, and Moses' testimony. John assures us, "These are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name" (John 20:31).

Of His Son, the Father has said, "Let all the angels of God worship him" (Heb. 1:6), for "God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow...and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Phil. 2:9-11).

Christ's claim to sonship is definite throughout the Gospels. Indeed, it was because of this claim at His trial that He died. When the high priest asked, "I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God," He answered, "Thou hast
said' (Matt. 26:63-64). "I that speak unto thee am he' (John 4:26). "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am' (John 8:58). He announced His omnipotence (Matt. 28:18; John 5:21-23), His omniscience (John 11:11-14), His omnipresence, (Matt. 18:20)—all outstanding attributes of His deity.

Christ's deity is further attested by His teachings, "Never man spake like this man' (John 7:46), and by His many miracles. He caused the lame to walk and the blind to see. He healed the sick, and cast out demons. He raised the dead, among others, the daughter of Jairus (Luke 8:55), the son of the widow of Nain (Luke 7:15), and, lastly, Lazarus (John 11), dead four days, which brought him to His own death on the Cross. And John comments, "But though he had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on him' (John 12:37).

In the Epistles the Holy Spirit, poured out upon believers when Christ took His seat at the right hand of God, guides us into all truth, speaking not of Himself, but glorifying Christ with the Father as promised (John 16:13-14). Paul writes, "No man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Spirit" (1 Cor. 12:3). Throughout the Acts and Epistles, the apostles again and again emphasize Christ's relationship to God. Peter preached, "Let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ' (Acts 2:36). Paul, fresh from his great vision, emphasizes Christ's deity, "Straightway he preached Christ... that he is the Son of God' (Acts 9:20). Twenty-four times in Acts and in the Epistles he designates Jesus as the Son and the Son of God. John in his first epistle reveals to us "that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us" (1 John 1:2). His last message in his epistle is a cry of warning against denial of the relationship of Christ to God as His own Father, "He is antichrist that denieth the Father and the Son." And he states with absolute confidence that "whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God' (1 John 4:15).

If Christ be not the Son of God, there remains no way to deal with the question of sin. Sin separates men infinitely from God, for "all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3:23). Any atonement to be effective must be infinite in character. 

"Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus" (Rom. 3:24). "In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him," who was "sent... to be the propitiation for our sins" (1 John 4:9-10).

Let us look at the Scriptures in another way. If Christ, the Son of God, was born of a woman of our flesh, the outcome is that God is for the first time brought into an immediate vital relationship with created intelligent beings in the place of Adam and Eve, of whom He had said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness" (Gen. 1:26). The relation is intimate as never before, and through the Second Adam (Christ) we become partakers of the divine nature (2 Peter 1:4), all previous relations having been external, objective. Note that Christ's name, Jesus, signified Je (Jehovah)—sus (Himself—Saviour), "Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world" (1 Peter 1:20). And recall His final great prayer to the Father, "And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was" (John 17:5). What, then, were the vital steps taken?

2. Deity manifested in His life, teachings, and works.
3. The deliberate walk toward the Cross and Crucifixion, that His life might be poured out, a sacrifice of infinite cost for the sins of the world.
4. Resurrection on the third day, conquering death for all who put their trust in Him.
5. Ascent into heaven, to sit on the right hand of God our Father.
6. The Holy Ghost shed forth to be our Comforter, Teacher, Guide.

To break any link in this chain destroys the whole and makes our Lord Jesus Christ merely man, however great, and leaves Him in His grave, no longer Saviour and Redeemer.

Rob Christ of His deity, and every true Christian will at once cry out with a breaking heart, 'They have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid Him;' and never again will one be moved by God's Spirit to exclaim, "My Lord, and my God!"
Angels continued from page 21

as tears streamed down her face. What do you say when a lifetime is passing in a matter of moments? "Honey, I have all these Christmas presents for you, and I don't know what I'll do with them."

She wiped her face with her free hand and looked at her husband's face. A tear rolled down his cheek from under his closed eyelid and his cold hand gently closed around hers. "You'll have to leave now," said the doctor. "I don't think he's going to make it."

"Just keep telling him I love him," Janice begged.

A few moments later the doctor called to Janice in the waiting room. "Come quickly."

In an instant she was at his bedside. She kissed him and whispered, "I love you. When you get to heaven, please tell my daddy that I miss him. I love you. I love you."

Ten minutes later he was gone.

In the hysteria that followed, Janice found herself praying, "Lord, I don't understand why this is happening. You could have taken my house, my possessions, or anything I have—why did you take my husband? He was such a good person."

As the family sat in a private room, Janice finally realized the joy of the moment. "I realized that Glenn had gotten saved. He had an opportunity to be saved and he accepted it."

As she and her family walked out of the hospital into the cold night, Janice looked up at the sky. "Suddenly I saw this big old star twinkling in the sky and I thought, Oh, my goodness, Glenn is in heaven and nothing can ever harm him again."

I recalled that the week before, we had been riding down the highway and had seen one of those advertising message signs that said, 'Happy Birthday, Jesus.' Glenn had turned to me and asked cynically, 'I wonder what God is going to give Jesus for His birthday.' I said, 'I don't know, honey, but I know it's going to be something awfully special.'

"Then I realized that God had given Jesus Glenn's soul for His birthday. God had given Glenn a chance to be saved and he had taken it."

"As I watched that star twinkle I realized that what we have lived in our past is God's gift to us. We are not promised a second of the future. If we have the opportunity to accept Christ, now is the time for us to do it."

What will future Christmases mean to Janice West?

"Christmas will never be the same for me. I understand now how hard it was for God to sacrifice His only Son. Both Jesus and Glenn were 33 when they died."

"When you get to heaven, please tell my daddy that I miss him. I love you. I love you."

Both were murdered. Christ gave His life so freely. I don't know how I'm going to handle the Christmases to come, but they will be happy times because I know Glenn is in heaven.

"I've heard there is rejoicing by the angels when a sinner repents. I imagine there was great rejoicing that night—not only was it Jesus' birthday, but it was also the night Glenn repented and went home. That was quite a night for the angels to rejoice."

■ Five men were tried and found guilty of the 1987 robbery and murder of Glenn West.

Grandpa's continued from page 27

with a hardened and bitter 16-year-old boy who worked as a janitor. Jennifer was shy and gentle. She spent most of her hours involved in a fantasy world where life's pains and hurts did not exist. James, who scowled at every friendly gesture extended to him, kept a watchful eye on the younger kids as he swept. He was too old to be adopted, too wise in the ways of the world to be hopeful, too poor to be independent, and too proud to be content.

One Christmas Day all the children were invited to eat the holiday feast in the homes of the townspeople. Grandpa raised an eyebrow. "Well, all but James and Jennifer. No one wanted to invite a girl who could not talk or a boy who seemed rough and coarse."

That Christmas those two misfits found each other. In Jennifer's gentle eyes James found a friend, and in James's ruggedness Jennifer found courage. They began to spend time together. James taught Jennifer how to work in a garden. Through her books Jennifer taught James about make-believe and hope and daydreams. With James's love and protection around her, Jennifer began to talk. Their friendship grew and ripened. Finally, years later, they were married.

Eventually, James and Jennifer would manage the orphanage where they had grown up, adopt several children, and bear two others. When they were surprised by an inheritance from a distant relative they invested their money in helping other orphans.

One chilly fall, however, Jennifer was diagnosed as having cancer. She was 30 years old, young enough to be in the prime of life, but old enough to have seen much of the world's joy and sorrow. As she faced the end of her time on earth, she felt an aching emptiness in her heart. As God would have it, a friend knocked on her door and shared with her the gospel message of Christ. Jennifer and James accepted Jesus Christ as their Lord. One week later, on Christmas Day, Jennifer went peacefully home to heaven to meet her Saviour face-to-face.

James continued as Jennifer would have wanted him to, leading the orphanages and raising their children in the knowledge and service of his Saviour, Jesus Christ. From his lineage sprung a family whose members were devoted to the service of the gospel: missionaries, pastors, teachers, and godly laypeople.

As my grandfather finished the story, he paused and looked carefully at each of us. "Jennifer and James were your great-great-grandparents," he said. "They left a great heritage and I share it with you."

The knowledge of our family history challenged all of us.

We left the park after our Christmas festivities and said good-bye to cousins, aunts, uncles, and other relatives. We were relaxed and happy, but Grandpa's gift had made a remarkable impression. Nothing in that sunny park had signaled that a life-changing hour would occur that day, but Grandfather's presentation of this legacy was such an experience. As does everyone in my family, I have a heritage and an example to maintain. James and Jennifer, from the outposts of heaven, are watching to see what we do with their gift.

■ Sterling O'Neill and husband, Jim, are missionaries in the Philippines.
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Outline

I. Doctrine of Grace
   Illustrated (chapter 4)
   A. The example of adoption (vv. 1-7)
   B. The bondage of legalism (vv. 8-11)
   C. The standard of Paul's ministry (vv. 12-20)
   D. The illustration of the bondmaid and free-woman (vv. 21-31)

Word Study

Hyiothesia, "Adoption." While the concept of sonship occurs frequently in both the Old Testament and the New Testament to denote the relationship of God to His children, hyiothesia seldom occurs. It is actually a technical legal term signifying the accepting of a child as one's own—adoption. Paul is the New Testament writer to make the most of this idea. There is much evidence to suggest that hyiothesia was a fairly common motif in the early church. The idea preeminently speaks of the privileged position given to believers (Gal. 3:16ff.; 4:5).

Yet in the New Testament hyiothesia represents not only what the believer is and has now, but anticipates his goal and hope (Rom. 8:23; cf. James 1:18; 1 Peter 1:23). Adoption is a present reality attested by our privilege to cry "Abba, Father" (Rom. 8:15; Gal. 4:6). It is also our longed-for goal (Rom. 8:23), which looks ahead to the resurrection body.

Paul knows that adoption was a privilege given originally to Israel (Rom. 9:4). Such was hers because of her relation to the promise to Abraham. This is of special significance to the believers in Galatia who were seduced by Judaizers with the idea that faith in Christ was not enough. They were being told that they must also return back under the law. Paul shows that if one belongs to Christ, by faith, he is also a son of Abraham (Gal. 3:29). As sons of Abraham they are heirs of Christ and of God (Gal. 4:4ff.; Rom. 8:17) and have entered into the inheritance. To return back under the law is to "fall from grace" (Gal. 5:1-4).

Daniel R. Mitchell

LIVING Missions in the Church

The Great Commission makes no distinction between home and foreign missions; it is all world evangelization. What we do in our churches is not separate from the mission overseas, but only a local expression of the global task. In practical terms, I suspect commitment to Christ's mandate to disciple all nations, more than anything else, opens the way for the sanctifying Spirit to fill a church with the love of God. And as people feel the tug of the missionary call, a new dynamic of power is experienced on the home front.

The pulpit should keep the challenges of missionary involvement ever before the people, in praying as well as in preaching. Those who cannot go personally can bear their responsibility in giving. This will be reflected in the missionary budget of the church.

The most meaningful impact of missions will come through in the day-by-day activities of the church.

Here are some suggestions.

Keep in personal contact with the missionaries supported by the church. Encourage people to correspond with those on the field. Read bits of news from missionary letters to the congregation from time to time.

Display a special missionary bulletin board in some permanent part of the church. Place news items and pictures of your missionaries on this board, along with a map of the world showing their place of service.

Maintain a constant flow of information about missions through the various church media.

Regularly have special missionary programs in the church services and Sunday school. Use recordings from the field, letters, and
At Christmas time two missionary families, away from their childhood homes and loved ones, write to share their greatest gifts—one to God; the other from Him.

Gentle snow fell quietly, slowing traffic on the busy streets. Last-minute shoppers hurried through the cold, contrasting with strolling families. Fathers pulled bundled, laughing children on sleighs. Lights glinted icy reflections through the falling snow. Imagination inscribed “Merry Christmas” on the pages of our minds.

A real live “Home for Christmas” scene lay before us, but we were not home for Christmas. It was Christmas Eve 1986 in West Berlin, 110 miles inside Communist East Germany, and our home was thousands of miles away in sunny, palm-treed Hawaii. Our loved ones were basking in the sun, drinking tall icy fruit...
worth the effort for such a drama?” Our answer is, “Yes!”

Last year over 30 people decided to follow Christ. They received the greatest Christmas gift of all, God’s Son.

Remember that the real meaning of Christmas is this: “For God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through Him might be saved” (John 3:17).

Tom, Diana, and Joshua Turley
Missionaries to Amazonas, Brazil

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**Praising the Lord with the Harp**

Imagine a harp’s music—long, cascading, tripling sounds, like ripples of a mountain stream. Now imagine music with blues, jazz, rhythm, classical style, and a couple of swooshing special effects thrown in. That is the music of Greg Buchanan, harpist virtuoso.

He sat on his mother’s knee at 3 and began to tinker with the piano. By 5 he was taking formal lessons. At 9, after watching his sister play her harp, he asked for harp lessons and began his formal training. “I was an overweight, hyperactive kid who played the harp,” he tells a laughing concert audience. “As you can imagine, I didn’t quite fit in with other kids.”

At 13 he began to drink alcohol. “My parents drank socially,” he says, “and at school I was around people who were drinking. From my first exposure I drank ‘alcoholically.’ It is amazing how many young people play with that stuff, when statistics show that one out of ten will be ensnared by it.”
Despite his drinking and drug use, his success as a harpist grew. By the time he was 27 he had enjoyed many opportunities as a successful professional harpist, but his personal life was, as he describes it, “self-destructive.” He searched for meaning and purpose in life through occult practices. As a result of a musical concert, Greg Buchanan saw his need for Jesus for the first time. “I asked Jesus to forgive my sins, to come into my life as Lord, and to make some sense out of my life. From that day, my life has had real purpose and hope. With the supernatural power of Jesus Christ, I have been delivered completely from that old self-destructive lifestyle.”

After his salvation, Buchanan took 18 months to heal from his former addictive lifestyle and to grow as a Christian. He has now been serving the Lord as a gospel harpist for nearly six years. “There is a harp ministry, believe it or not,” he laughs. “It is a special call. Psalm 33:2 says, ‘Praise the Lord with the harp.’ There were many harpists four thousand years ago, but there aren’t so many today.”

Greg says his occupation is “a big challenge and it can be exhausting. I’m away from my sweet wife and two baby boys 20 days of each month, but in that service there is great joy and satisfaction.”

The listener who settles in for a Greg Buchanan concert may not know what to expect. Before the service, the massive harp, an impressive and beautiful instrument, is alone on the platform. Then Greg appears—no wimpy harpist he. His strong fingers persuade the harp to produce remarkable music.

The concert is moving, entertaining, and memorable. Between selections Buchanan gives his personal testimony and encourages his audience to rejoice in what the Lord has done for them. “I am called to be a ‘praise leader,’” he says. “Everywhere I go, whether in a church, a convention, or a prison, I cannot help but tell about the saving grace of the Lord.”

For more information about Greg Buchanan’s ministry, call Adoration, Inc., at (800) 384-1050.

Angela E. Hunt
Christianity is a farce! I raged. Silently. In my soul. Bending over my little girl's crib, I watched my exhausted baby sleep. My precious, little baby, Kim, whose hair glinted gold in the sunlight and whose eyes rivaled the blue of the sky. Tears streaming down my face, I was encompassed with the fear and terror only a mother knows when her child is in danger. An overwhelming surge of protectiveness permeated my being. Then anger hit me in unrelenting waves as I recognized my helplessness. Kim and I were trapped. There was no escape.

Restlessly, I walked into the living room. Picking up the bill from that morning's visit to Kim's pediatrician, Dr. Rubinstein, I thought: Endless visits. And for what?

Earlier that morning I had faced Dr. Rubinstein and asked for the truth, little as I wanted to hear it. "Is Kim going to die? I need to know!"

"I can't answer that question," Dr. Rubinstein said. "She has a good chance, if her body would start responding to treatment."

I looked at Kim's sweet face, now distorted with pain. Her anguish rung my heart. Holding my crying baby, I turned and faced the doctor. "If, if! That's all I've been hearing for 16 months. Kim has had those painful shots every two weeks since she was born. You can see how she screams and cries. And all you can tell me is, if?"

I had been trying to manipulate God, doing all the "right things" so He would be required to answer my pleadings.

Understanding the stress and tension behind my outburst, the doctor had not taken offense. "Her white blood cell count is the lowest it has ever been," he said gently, holding the lab report in his hand. "The gamma globulin shots have helped her to survive her bouts of illness, but her own body is not producing white blood cells in large enough quantities. I can't give you a miracle. Kim will either start producing enough white cells or she won't."

The reality of what the doctor told me paralyzed me with fear. Feeling exhausted and defeated, I said, "Kim is always so sick, and she gets such high fevers. I'm up every night for weeks. Then, just as she seems to be getting better, the whole cycle starts all over again. And now you tell me that there is no end in sight!"

"You must face this situation. There are no guarantees in life. God has placed you in this position. Face it. Do the best you can."

"Well, if God has placed me here, He can also get me out. I'm beginning to believe He likes to see people suffer. Keeps them humble and dependent. I think I've about had enough of such a God!"

Tired and numb, I had returned home.

Hearing Kim stir in her crib, I tiptoed in to check on her. Sleeping deeply, she sobbed softly as she moved her painful legs. The shots would bother her for several days.

Returning to the living room, I huddled on the couch. I drew my legs up and hid..."
my face in my arms. I wanted to hide, to be safe. But, again, at the thought of my baby’s problem, anger and resentment stirred in my heart.

I could not stand to be still any longer. I began pacing the living room. Raising my fists to heaven, I shook them in frustration.

Where are you, God? Why are You so cold and silent? Lord, why are You giving me a stone and not the bread that a loving father would give? Have You deserted me? Where is Your promised peace and comfort?

Silence was my answer. I felt mocked by God.

Limp as a rag doll, I sat down on the couch and I thought about my unhappy childhood, with my cold, autocratic father and my erratic mother. Too many siblings. Too little money.

Though I had gone to church most of my life, God had seemed inapproachable. I thought of Him as the Big Policeman in the Sky. He was ready to punish, but never warm and caring, much like my own father, as a matter of fact.

Fathers. Whenever I thought of fathers, my 13th birthday stood out in my mind. It had been thrilling to finally be a teenager. Many of the friends that I had grown up with had come to my party. But this day of joy had soon turned to one of horror.

My father had come stumbling into my party. Drunk and disheveled, he always resented when money was spent on anything but absolute necessities.

“You’re stupid and ugly,” my father had sneered at me, standing in the midst of my friends. “Nobody could ever love you.”

As a result of that trauma I became a loner, unable to feel that I belonged anywhere.

Drifting back to the present, I thought: But, that all changed when I found You, Lord. You accepted me just as I am, warts and all. I felt that I had come home. You won’t betray me, too?

My husband, Don, was warm, wonderful, and wise, the antithesis of what I had come to expect in all men. Loving and cherishing were as natural to him as breathing. How funny it was to see him and Kimmie together. Don always had her in his lap or in his arms. As soon as she could toddle about, she never let her dad out of her sight. Don would have done anything to relieve her suffering.

Wasn’t this how fathers should be? Wasn’t God as loving a Father as Don?

Stirring out of my reverie, I went to continued on page 63
THE UNFAILING PROMISE
by Richard Lee

Richard Lee is a recognized leader in the Christian community at large. His relevant, practical, and people-centered ministry—targeted at the needs of today's audiences—includes television, radio, print, and a large pastorate in Atlanta.

Do you ever feel that God has forsaken you, that life's troubles are more than you can bear? Do you wonder where God is when you need Him most? Lee offers the practical answers most readers are looking for—answers that reflect an awareness and understanding of modern temptations, struggles, and questions, and a deep commitment to biblical truth.

In a world where broken promises are the rule, the author points his readers to the One whose word is un-failing—the eternal God. For those struggling to live the Christian life, Lee gives specific steps for overcoming the difficulties that get in the way. The keys that unlock the viselike grip of anger, fear, bitterness, immorality, or any other problem, says Lee, are understanding the full extent of God's marvelous promises and trusting Him to keep His word.

Lee shows his readers how to trust God to that degree, all along reminding them that God is not a "heavenly vending machine." Those who want to claim God's promises must do so on His terms. They must believe that He truly knows what is best for their lives.

Using experiences from everyday life, and examples from the lives of Bible personalities, Lee reminds readers that God will restore and redeem those who cry to Him "out of the depths," whether their suffering has been unjustly inflicted by others, or has resulted from their own immoral behavior, rebellion, or bitterness.

No matter how foolish, weak, despised, or insignificant you may feel, God can use you, too. There is no problem He cannot solve. Lee shows clearly how to claim the promises of God in your Christian life—how to trust in His un-failing promise. (Word Books, 203 pp., $10.95)

Donald R. Rickards

An excerpt from THE UNFAILING PROMISE

Some troubles are easy to identify. If your car won't start in the morning, or your refrigerator stops running, you automatically know that you have trouble. But other troubles are not so easy to identify. Many times people know that there is something wrong in their lives, but they simply don't know what it is. Have you ever been angry and couldn't figure out why? Have you ever been filled with worry, and could not pinpoint what it was you were worried about? If so, you know what I'm referring to. Those feelings indicate unidentified trouble.

There is another kind of trouble that is more common to us. That is the kind that comes along and slaps you in the face, unexpectedly, unannounced, unprepared for, and unwelcomed. Nevertheless, it's there!

If you are struggling with either kind of trouble in your life, let me encourage you by reminding you that you are not alone in your struggle. The Bible tells us that Christ has promised us that He will never leave nor forsake us (Hebrews 13:5). You can depend on His promise. Then do not forget to realize that no matter how insurmountable your difficulties may seem, God is greater than all of them put together. I am convinced that God has a specific solution for every problem we face in life. He created us, understands us, and knows best how to meet our deepest needs. Whatever your troubles may be, they are not beyond the reach of God's love and the grasp of His grace.

Booknotes

A HEART SET FREE
by Arnold A. Dallimore

Arnold A Dallimore's A Heart Set Free is an excellent popular biography of Charles Wesley. Dallimore discusses Wesley's life, his relationship with his more famous brother, John, and their achievement in founding the Methodist Church. He spends considerable time examining Charles Wesley's hymns, their background, and importance. Wesley is one of the supreme songwriters of Protestantism. He composed over 300 hymns including classics such as "Love Divine," "O for a Thousand Tongues to Sing," and "Jesus, Lover of My Soul."

This biography is impressive and interesting for two reasons. First, Dallimore paints Wesley and his colleagues "warts and all." Like the heroes of the Bible, Wesley's greatness is seen as a product of God's grace and transforming power. In fact, one series of misadventures of John and Charles could serve as a case study for the questions young church leaders should consider before choosing a wife. Second, Dallimore's study includes one of the best concise summaries of the movement that includes the American First Great Awakening as well as Methodism. Since George Whitefield was close enough to the two Wesley brothers to be considered almost family, American Fundamentalists will be fascinated with learning more of the background and inspiration of our first great national revival. (Crossway Books, 272 pp., $13.95) Homer H. Blass

BEHIND THE LODGE DOOR
by Paul A. Fisher

Behind the Lodge Door traces the evidence of the personal bias of Supreme Court justices in favor of agnosticism.
For 156 years judicial decisions upheld government cooperation with and support of Christianity, but all that changed with the Everson decision in 1947. For the next 25 years the Mason-dominated Court consistently outlawed religion in the schools and opposed public funds for parochial schools. Can we blame one organization for all the secularization of American society since 1947? Perhaps other factors are just as important.

We are indebted to Fisher for revealing the “religion” of Freemasonry, which consists of Gnosticism and a belief in Ancient Mysteries derived from Oriental religion. Masonic philosophy supports a knowledge of God that is different from that revealed in the Bible. It demands absolute obedience to the beliefs of the group, and punishment for those who reveal the “secrets” of the organization. The Christian should be cautious about these precepts.

This is a well-researched book. The author is widely read in Mason literature. In fact, most of his evidence comes from Mason literature. A valuable chart in the Appendix lists the Supreme Court justices who were Freemasons. (Shield Publishing, 362 pp., $18.95)

Cline E. Hall

WHY A CHRISTIAN LEADER MAY FALL
by Clyde M. Narramore

Clyde Narramore’s newest book, Why a Christian Leader May Fall, is excellent. The emphasis of Narramore’s thoughts is the heart of a well-known pastor, evangelist, or Christian television personality that sexual sin, pride, success-orientation, legalistic attitudes, and an unwillingness to admit that sometimes deep-seated psychological problems need Christian psychologists and psychiatrists.

Why A Christian Leader May Fail is written to Christian leaders. If read and understood, it should help Evangelical Christianity recover from sexual sin and the leadership crisis in the 1980s. (Crossway Books, 127 pp., $5.95) David R. Miller

HOW TO TALK SO YOUR TEENAGER WILL LISTEN
by Paul W. Swets

Children come from God, but parenting skills come from experience. Paul Swets writes on How to Talk So Your Teenager Will Listen as one who has raised children with much attention paid to the principles found in God’s Word and the words spoken between parent and teen.

Unlike many authors on family relationships, Swets practices what he preaches with obvious success. Parents of teenagers should read this book, but before the kids enter adolescence.

How to Talk So Your Teenager Will Listen sets a high standard for Christian parents, a standard needed more and more in today’s degenerating world. (Word Books, 213 pp., $8.95) DRM

GOD’S WAITING ROOM
by Rick Yohn

Can waiting be therapeutic for a Christian? Can waiting be spiritually reinforcing? Job, Joseph, David, and a host of God’s servants throughout the centuries have found the benefits of waiting on God.

Pastor Rick Yohn passes on to the reader the valuable lessons he and his family have learned from a “Wilderness Time.”

God’s Waiting Room is subtitled “Hope in the Midst of Uncertainty,” and hope is the message of this book. If you or someone you know is “on the shelf” waiting for God’s direction, this book will help. Easy reading and to the point, God’s Waiting Room meets the need. (NavPress, 207 pp., $7.95) DRM

Bookworm’s Bulletin


Speakers Sourcebook, four thousand illustrations and quotations for preachers and other public speakers, compiled by Eleanor Doan. Zondervan, 304 pp., $11.95.

The American Bible Society is proud to offer this full-size, extra-low-cost edition, which features verse-style text, section headings and a list of words that have changed in meaning.

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Straw in the Crib

Hi by doing good deeds. Anyone who does a kind deed for someone else in the family will be given the privilege of putting a piece of straw in Jesus' crib," I told the children. The idea of putting straw in Jesus' crib brought lots of goodwill to our household. The children began to understand that their kindness to one another was an expression of their love for Jesus. On Christmas Eve we placed the figure of infant Jesus in a well-prepared manger. Though the creche now lays concealed in its box on a shelf until next Christmas, the children are still serving one another. A few days ago Justin told me proudly that he put his sister's skooter in the shed for her. "I put straw in the crib, didn't I Mom?"

Indeed, what we do for one another we are doing for the Lord.

Blessings in Disguise

Look Mom, a little lamb," exclaimed my son after unpacking the small figure from our Nativity set. "I hope I find baby Jesus next."

"Mom, I found Joseph," announced my daughter as she unfolded the crumpled tissue encasing the figure of humble Joseph.

Last Christmas I began a tradition, using the creche to teach the children the meaning of serving Christ through serving one another. "Let's wait until Christmas Eve to put Jesus in the manger," I suggested. "We will pretend we are waiting for Jesus to be born."

"That's a good idea, Mom. Let's put Him in the manger right before we open the presents," said my daughter.

Next we took a handful of straw from the Nativity crib and placed it outside the creche. "While we're waiting for Jesus' birth, we'll prepare the manger for the gift I received from my elderly neighbor last Christmas taught me about faith in an unexpected way. 'Auntie Laurie,' as everyone in the neighborhood calls her, is a 78-year-old woman with the vibrancy of a 21-year-old. The day we moved in seven years ago, she welcomed us with a jam cake still warm from the oven. That same afternoon she was up on a stepladder trimming her trees. The next day she brought home 10 bushels of peaches ready for canning. I was exhausted just watching her!

But last winter her body was not keeping pace with her spirit. She had been having back problems off and on for months. Trips to various doctors helped only temporarily. On good days she walked with a cane. On bad ones she would lie flat on her back in bed, her practiced hands moving above her as she crocheted an afghan or muffler for one of her many friends.

One day early that December, I found myself overwhelmed with problems of my own. The strain of the Christmas crush was taking its toll. Working full-time meant I had only evenings and weekends to shop, bake cookies, address cards, host a cookie exchange, and a million other things associated with the holiday. To make matters worse, I had volunteered to restore an old battered doll for a needy child.

As I struggled with my temperamental sewing machine, a lump of self-pity rose in my throat. I looked over at the naked doll lying on my sewing table. She was about 18 inches long and smelled of rubber. Her yellowed, brillo-pad hair stuck out in a quasi-punk style. I picked her up. Her blue eyes blinked a hello...
just as the phone rang.

"Eloise?" Laurie's shrill voice asked. "I just made some buckeye candies, and if you don't come take some Roy will eat them all. Believe me, he can't afford to!" she giggled. Her husband fought a losing battle between his waistline and Laurie's good country cooking.

Doll still in hand, I headed across the yard for Laurie's house. Sleigh bells on her door jingled a greeting. A rich, cinnamon smell grabbed me like a vise and drew me into her kitchen.

"What's the matter, dear?" she asked, catching my troubled expression. My frustrations poured out. She listened attentively while kneading dough. When my tirade ceased, she patted my hand with her floured one.

"I wondered what you were doing with that doll," she said. "Why don't you leave it here and let me see what I can do." Knowing her skill with a needle, I was too relieved to protest.

In the rush of the days ahead, I completely forgot about my little goodwill project. The Saturday before Christmas, we awoke to an icy snowstorm. I was midway through my second batch of cookies when the doorbell rang. Laurie stood on the porch, a bright red woolen scarf wrapped tightly about her head. She held a large box in front of her.

"Laurie, what in the world are you doing out there in the snow?" I bustled her inside. Her face was flushed with more than the cold.

"I can't wait to show you," she said, her eyes dancing with childish excitement. She pulled the doll from the box.

I gasped. Fluffy blonde curls peeked out from a starched white bonnet, forming a buttery halo of hair. A lacy pinafore fit snugly over a dress of blue-and-white gingham. Tiny ivory buttons ran down the back. Bright blue piping lined the ruffled collar and cuffs. Laurie had even crocheted a miniature purse of the same dark blue yarn used for the doll's booties.

As tears filled my eyes, Laurie said, "But that's not all." A cornucopia of clothing followed—a calico nightgown, a polka-dot sundress, denim overalls; all wrapped in a hand-knitted baby blanket. How I wished I could be there on Christmas morning when some lucky little girl discovered layer upon layer of her "new" doll's wardrobe.

Throwing my arms around my friend, I felt a surge of gratitude for the precious gift she had given me: the gift of time. As she turned to leave, she chastised, "Now stop running yourself ragged!"

I watched her amble up the driveway like a soldier with an old war wound. It had stopped snowing, giving the world an innocent look. Little did I know there was something sinister beneath that pristine sheet of snow.

I was about to turn away, when I saw Laurie slip and fall at her doorstep. I dashed outside, a clammy fear gripping my chest. Thankfully, Roy appeared and we carried her to bed. I rubbed her feet while Roy hurried off to make tea. "Don't worry about me," she said. "I will be fine after I rest a spell."

But I did worry. It seemed so unfair that she should get hurt while delivering a Christmas gift. I blamed God for not watching over her. I also blamed myself. If you hadn't pushed the work off on Laurie, my conscience whispered, this wouldn't have happened. Remembering they had planned to leave early in the morning for her daughter's home in another state, I prayed she would be well enough to travel.

I did not see Laurie again until New Year's Day when their blue van pulled into the drive. I will never forget what happened next. Laurie hopped out of the van and walked toward me with a schoolgirl's bounce in her step. "Where's your cane?" I asked.

"I woke up the morning we left with a brand new back," she said. "When I fell, something must have snapped back into place. That fall was a kind of gift, in disguise, I guess."

Suddenly I thought of the Virgin Mary. How unfair it must have seemed to her to suffer the shame of being impregnated before marriage. And yet, the birth of her son was a gift that brought not only her salvation, but the world's as well.

Since that day, Laurie has never used a cane again. And I have started thanking God for all His many gifts in disguise.

—Eloise K. Shick
Whenever I read about the state of today's economy I remember the depression of the thirties. It is not a pleasant memory and no one wants to go through such bleak and unhappy years again. Still most of us came through those years to become stronger and better people. We faced harsh reality and learned valuable lessons in coping with it.

I was a spoiled and immature 12-year-old when the depression was at its worst. I knew we were poor, but I didn't realize how poor. I knew that Father had been ill for a long time and unable to work. I was also aware that Mother sat at the old treadle sewing machine way into the night sewing for anyone able to pay. I did not know that the few dollars she earned kept the wolf just outside the door.

December came and I began to look forward to Christmas and what I wanted as a gift. "I know," I said to Mother. "I want a radio of my own." I noticed the troubled expression on her face and I hastened to add, "A small one will do." "Times are hard, dear," Mother tried to explain. "We will have a tree and a few homemade gifts, but don't count on getting a radio."

But I could not forget my dream of a radio of my own. Every chance I got I repeated my wish to get the money to pay for it.

One month later Father died. Then I learned a heartbreaking truth. Mother and I were sorting through Father's personal effects when I noticed his gold watch was missing. "Where is it, Mother?" I asked. "I hope it isn't lost. Father treasured that watch. It belonged to his father and his grandfather before that."

Mother's expression was sad. "There is something I did not intend to tell you," she said, "but perhaps I should." She paused to wipe the moisture from her eyes. "The watch is gone. Your father sold it to get the money for your radio."

I stared at Mother for a long time. I was so moved I couldn't speak. Then the scalding tears came. "Why did you let him do it?" I cried. "Why?"

Mother reached for my trembling hand. "He wanted to do it, dear," she said. "It was important to him that you have a happy Christmas. Enjoy the radio and treasure it. It was the last love gift your father could give you."

I think I grew up that day. Although many years have passed since that Christmas, I still get a lump in my throat and tears in my eyes when I think of my father's last gift. I try to live up to my legacy by passing love on to others. Yet I am the one who benefits the most. My life has been enriched many times over.

I like to think that Father is aware of my efforts and is pleased that his daughter has learned the importance of loving and giving. 

Mildred Sallee
Miss Tee’s Christmas

On a cold, gray Sunday, five teenagers and their youth sponsor from First Christian Church knocked on the door of a neat frame cottage on Hawthorne Street in Jackson, Tennessee. Their mission was to make an ordinary pre-Christmas visit to one of the church’s senior citizens—or so it seemed!

Miss Tee (short for Otelia), a widow of 82, hobbed to church regularly despite severe arthritis in her feet and ankles. Farley, her husband of 50 years, had died in 1984 after a 15-year illness that kept Tee at home much of the time because of the constant care he required.

The first Sunday after Farley’s funeral, Tee drove herself to Sunday school and proceeded to take up church life where she had left it. Within a month she was teaching Sunday school.

An avid talker, Miss Tee attracted a whole generation of new friends among the children, who were fascinated by this gray-haired bundle of energy, less than five feet tall, who walked with a cane.

On this December day, Tee was pleased to see her young friends. They were polite and attentive as she launched into one of her stories (which they had all heard before) about something that happened in the church when she was a teenager.

An unusual noise outside the house brought them all to their feet. When Tee opened the front door, she was staring straight into a television reporter’s camera. There in the yard was a big red fire truck, the TV station’s van, and 25 teenagers milling around the big cedar tree near the sidewalk.

Atop the fire truck’s ladder was the church’s youth minister—stringing lights from the top of the 30-foot tree. The young people were busy assembling and placing more than 100 strings of colored lights on what had now become a giant Christmas tree. The five visitors inside had been the decoy team, part of a carefully laid plan to brighten the Christmas of a very special lady.

It had all begun in August when two high-schoolers, Brian and Clint, were cutting Miss Tee’s grass. As usual, she was talking a mile a minute. “I just love my cedar tree,” she remarked. “Wouldn’t it be wonderful if sometime I could decorate it for an outdoor Christmas tree?”

The next minute she was talking about something else, but Brian did not forget. He stored the idea in his mind, and as Christmas approached, he shared it with other members of his youth group.

The plan began to develop. The young people soon discovered that outdoor lights are costly. They began a whispering campaign, collecting unused lights from church members and pooling their own resources to purchase more. On the designated Sunday, the minister announced from the pulpit that the young people could use a few extra dollars for a special project they were planning. After church, Miss Tee slipped some bills into Brian’s pocket.

When the day arrived to complete this project, the senior minister alerted the local TV station about the event. The station’s weekend staff was on the scene within minutes. Help from the fire department was evident among the group trying to light the tall tree needed assistance.

When Miss Tee recovered from the initial shock, she was in the middle of the activity. The youngsters wrapped her in a blanket, gave her a warm cap, and brought her rocking chair to the front porch for her TV interview. “I thought Christmas was already over for me,” she told them, “after the children’s program at church.” She handled the interview like a pro—telling the reporter that her tree was taller than the Christmas tree at the White House.

Tee was swamped with phone calls from friends and well-wishers. After the TV feature aired, cars came by in a steady stream at night to see the tree. The local ABC affiliate used the story three times before ABC News purchased the story for syndication.

A deeper spirit of Christian friendship is evident among the 25 teenagers involved in the project. A sometimes complacent congregation has a new sensitivity to the needs of its older members. Weary youth sponsors have renewed faith in sometimes exasperating teenagers. A young, part-time TV reporter basks in her first national media exposure. A lonely widow will never again look out her front window and see just a cedar tree.

“In my mind, it is forever lighted,” said Miss Tee, “and every day as long as I live, I will remember that people in Los Angeles and Evansville, in Albany and Atlanta have heard about my hometown, about my church, about my young Christian friends, and about an old lady who had the best of her 82 Christmases.”

Martha McNatt. This article first appeared in The Lookout.

FAMILY LIVING

December 1988  53
**Family Bookshelf**

**Jesus is Born**, a brightly colored Nativity book, shows and tells of the angels, shepherds, and wise men; then opens up to the stable where the shepherds find the Saviour. Press-out characters of Mary, Joseph, Jesus, the shepherds, and some animals are included to arrange in front of the stable.

Made of glossy-coated cardboard, this Nativity set is fun for children to play with, or can be used as a Christmas decoration. (Distributed by Broadman Press, $3.50)

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**GAMES FOR GIFTS**

Tyndale House Publishers has added two more educational family games that reinforce Bible stories as well as teach Bible facts.

**The Superbook Game** is for children ages 6 and up. (Its artwork is taken from CBN's Superbook videos.) Available for $7.95. **People & Places in The Book** is for ages 8 through adult and is available for $15.95.

Play Right Toys, a Joplin-based toy producer, has been granted the exclusive right to manufacture **Precious Moments finger puppets**. The soft vinyl "collectibles for kids" are packaged with an entertaining music and story cassette that will develop the characters of the puppets while teaching positive values, such as sharing and honesty.

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**VIDEOS FEATURING PEOPLE AND PUPPETS**

Sunshine Factory videos, 27 minutes each, with titles such as "Leading and Following," "Sharing," "Responsibility," and "Honesty." Ages 4-10. $14.99 each. Manufactured and distributed by Word.

Color Me a Rainbow videos, 25 minutes each, 13 different videos on who Jesus is—excellent series. Music cassettes, songbooks, coloring books, and teacher masters also available. Ages 4-10. $19.99 each. Distributed by Word, produced by Shepherd and Associates.

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**CARTOON BIBLE STORIES**

Superbook videos, as seen on Christian Broadcasting Network, 40 minutes each, two Bible stories per tape. Ages 3-12. $14.97 each. Distributed by Tyndale House Publishers.

The Parables, 30 minutes each, a collection of short parables, two volumes available. Ages 4 and up. $14.95 each. Distributed by Tyndale Christian Videos.

---

**MUSICALS**

Nathaniel the Grublet, 30 minutes, teaches honesty. Ages 3 and up. $14.95. Produced by Agapeland Home Videos, distributed by Sparrow-Star Song.

---

**A Prayer**

A

h, dearest Jesus, holy Child, Make Thee a bed, soft, undefiled, Within my heart, that it may be A quiet chamber kept for Thee.

—Martin Luther
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New Addition to Liberty Mountain

Construction of a new and exciting addition to Liberty Mountain will begin early next spring. “Liberty Village” will eventually be home to approximately 1,100 people 65 years of age and older.

The first phase of the village includes a six-story residence. Living units will range from one- and two-room apartments to penthouses. Plans call for a shopping mall, restaurant, beauty salon, and a television station where “The Pastor’s Study” will be filmed live—all inside the village.

Over 130 people responded to the first mention of the project.

Dorcas—Doers of the Word

Senior ladies of TRBC known as the “Dorcas” group will once again share their joy of giving through the Salvation Army, donating over 30 filled Christmas stockings for the needy. The Dorcas ladies have also crocheted or knitted 50 lap robes and 30 pairs of slippers for gifts in a local nursing home.

Dorcas originally started as a social group for single women. Now both single and married ladies provide service to others under the auspices of the TRBC Senior Saints Ministry. And they give the year around, learning of new needs through their project chairman, Mary Foster. This fall they gave each man at Elim Home for Alcoholics a pair of socks. Around Valentine’s Day they hosted a luncheon and presented gifts to the Liberty Godparent Home. These industrious ladies also sponsored a birthday party for residents of a local nursing home.

“Most of our project money comes from the Senior Saints who purchase greeting cards from our group,” said Bernadine Brunner, chairman of Dorcas. “We use the money to buy small gifts or yarn to make projects.”

With each lady doing her part, they have brightened a lot of corners.

Tamara Pugh
LU Spotlight: Kim Westover

Kim Westover is in a wheelchair as a result of spina bifida, a congenital defect of the spine. But that is not a handicap for Kim. “I don’t consider myself handicapped,” she says simply. “There are a few things I can’t do, but there are a few things everybody can’t do.”

Though she detests cold weather, Kim enrolled at Liberty University during a bitter winter. Her first day at college was quite a challenge. “It was my first time away from home, my first time to deal with roommates—I am an only child—and the temperature was 10 below zero, with a windchill of 40 below.”

School officials were very helpful to Kim. They assisted her in the dorm by installing a bathtub in the shower room, lowering her clothes rack, equipping her room with a sink for the handicapped, and updating the handicapped stalls in rest rooms.

Physical limitations were not a major problem for Kim, but the educational process itself was difficult. “It had been 10 years since I had been in school, and I had gone through elementary and secondary school through the home-bound program. At the university I sat in a classroom with other students for the first time. I had to take notes from professors who spoke quickly, and I wasn’t used to having a time limit on tests. School itself was my greatest challenge.”

But it is a challenge she is enjoying. Kim plans to take her education as a broadcast journalist straight to the anchor desk of a television station. Has anyone tried to talk her out of her dream because she is in a wheelchair?

“Anyone who knows me well knows it’s hard to talk me out of something once I get my mind set on it. One professor did point out the difficulties of reporting and chasing down stories outside the studio in a wheelchair. In the real world it’s hard to go here and there.”

But she’ll manage. Kim has managed everything she has ever undertaken.

Angela E. Hunt

Kids Sing Christmas—on Video!

Seven fourth- through eighth-graders from Thomas Road Baptist Church recently enjoyed the opportunity of a lifetime. They celebrated Christmas for four months with a big cuddly bear and had their fun recorded for a new music video. Hand-picked members of The Branches children’s choir spent December through April taping the songs from their Kids Sing Christmas album (released previously) for a video produced by the Liberty Broadcasting Network and published by Brentwood Music.

The video contains seasonal favorites including “Silent Night,” “We Three Kings,” and “Joy to the World.” The new Kids Sing Christmas video will be in your local Christian bookstore in time for Christmas shopping.

Laurie M. McCauley

CALENDAR

December
3-4, 9-11—The Living Christmas Tree, Thomas Road Baptist Church
10—Phil Driscoll Concert at LU
15—End of first semester at LU
28-January 14—LU Student Campaign to Dominican Republic

January
16—Students return for second semester at LU
LU Marching Band Performs for the New York Giants

The LU Marching Band, "The Spirit of the Mountain," performed during the New York Giants vs. the Dallas Cowboys game on November 6 at Meadowlands Stadium in East Rutherford, New Jersey. Invited by the New York Giants, the band played a three-minute patriotic theme pregame and nine-minute Latin-style halftime show before the sold-out 75,000-seat auditorium. The invitation to play came in April after a letter of request and video was sent to the Giants' promotional manager. Professional teams receive thousands of requests annually.

The 150-member band, directed by Raymond S. Locy and assisted by Linda Cooper, Keith Currie, and David Legg, had only 30 minutes to practice formation on the field before the game. They had been working on their routine since the middle of August, arriving on campus for band camp one and a half weeks before the beginning of the semester.


President of Southern Baptist Convention Visits Liberty

Jerry Vines, co-pastor of First Baptist Church, Jacksonville, Florida, and current president of the Southern Baptist Convention, visited Lynchburg in early October. On Monday, October 10, he was the featured speaker in a series of Leadership Exposure Lectures for the Liberty Baptist Theological Seminary. His lectures on "How to Prepare Messages for Twentieth-Century Audiences" were open to the public. The seminary also sponsored a luncheon where seminary students, faculty members, and area pastors took part in an informal question and answer time with Vines.

Vines arrived in Lynchburg earlier in the weekend, so he could visit with his son Jonathan, a freshman at Liberty University. On Sunday he preached for the televised worship service at Thomas Road Baptist Church, and he preached before a packed chapel at Liberty on Monday morning. His goal as president of the SBC was evidenced by his challenging sermons, "Come to the Supper," and "The Love of God within John 3:16."

"I'd like to call the SBC to a recommitment to personal evangelism," he told the Fundamentalist Journal. "The Convention became great because of personal witnessing out in homes—one on one—leading people to Christ." His message to Southern Baptists: "Let's get busy!"

After his visit to Lynchburg, Vines was to attend the inauguration of Lewis Drummond to the presidency of Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Wake Forest, North Carolina.

Next June the leaders of the SBC will meet in Las Vegas to elect their president for the 1989-1990 term. Vines will be eligible to run for a second term.
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Operation Rescue Returns to Atlanta

Operation Rescue dubbed it "The Siege of Atlanta."

Atlanta police said these pro-life protesters "would meet a different police force" when they arrived.

The battle lines were drawn.

When it was over, police would be accused of stomping protesters with horses, stripping a cleric of his collar and stuffing it in his mouth, kicking nonresistant demonstrators on the ground, and using "pressure holds" to bring screaming—even crying—rescuers to their feet and to an awaiting police bus.

The protest began on a Tuesday morning. By the following Saturday more than 400 demonstrators had been arrested. Most are still in jail at the time of this writing.

Operation Rescue is a year-old movement that uses "nonviolent civil disobedience" to close down abortion clinic operations. The pro-lifers trespass abortion clinic property and block entrances through sit-ins, locking arms, or standing in front of incoming vehicles.

While rescuers face arrest, they believe their illegal operation brings local and national attention to their cause and prevents some women from obtaining abortions.

The rescuers first arrived in Atlanta during the July Democratic National Convention. After several weeks of sit-ins—and more than 700 arrests—the New York-based group temporarily pulled its operation out of Atlanta.

The rescuers returned October 4, promising to "siege Atlanta."

The police were ready.

Said Major Kenneth Burnette of the Atlanta police, "When Operation Rescue or anybody else tries to impose their will by physical force they're going to run headlong into the police officers because we're on the cutting edge. That's what the citizens pay us for."

To counter the strength of the demonstrators, the police department brought in its Red Dog Unit, a special force of police officers trained to combat the drug market.

"We have no choice," Major Burnette defended. "They need to be out taking care of narcotics problems. But when we're inundated with the numbers they brought to this city, we have to call up the reserves, call up assistance. And I very much appreciate the assistance they provided this week."

On the first day of the siege police arrested 360 people. But unlike the restrained arrests that characterized earlier sit-ins, police resorted to rougher tactics to bring the demonstrators to jail. Rescuers complained of being beaten, dragged, even kicked as arrests were made. Major Burnette was accused of brutality for kicking a protester who was simply trying to get up on his knees.

Film footage of the incident was broadcast nationwide when the protesters provided the media with video tape of the kicking. After the footage was broadcast Major Burnette said the police would resume its previous policy of restraint when making the arrests. "I believe the public would rather see us take more time and be more gentle," he said.

The number of arrests dropped dramatically during the rest of the week. On Wednesday 10 were arrested, 15 on Thursday, 43 on Friday, and 40 on Saturday. A major reason for the drop in arrests was because most demonstrators were still in jail. The majority remained in jail because they refused to identify themselves, giving only Baby Jane or Baby John Doe as their names. About 50 remained in jail against their wishes, even though they posted bond.

J.D. Hudson, city corrections director, said it takes from one to three days to process the protesters' paperwork. Hudson did not take kindly to criticism from Operation Rescue spokespeople over the slowness of the process. "They've lived up to their purpose—to overwhelm the criminal justice system. They tore up the tracks, and now they're..."
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Hudson said in an Allantn Consti-
complaining because the train won't
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take a human life, other people ought to
ple act consistent with their beliefs to
liefs, which is to save a human life. If peo-

of committing people who have a seri-
ous conscience to be able to sit down and
id what was seen on television.

"Two, we're now back to the issue of
committing people who have a seri-
ous conscience to be able to sit down and
attempt to act consistent with their be-
iefs, which is to save a human life. If peo-

Foreman felt the delay in processing
demonstrators out of jail who have post-
ed their bonds was intentional. "The
only conclusion we can draw from it, is
that the prison system has the intention
of furthering their intimidation tactics.
They said, 'We are going to treat you like
criminals.' Right now we're saying, 'Please, treat us like criminals.' By that
mean process us out like they would
treat any other kind of criminal in the sys-
tem. They don't hold criminals who have
posted bond for two and three days.'

Foreman believes that the national at-
tention given the rescuers in Atlanta has
helped recruit many people to become
pro-life activists. "Overall, the city has
done the pro-life movement the greatest
service that any group has ever done.
They have demonstrated to the country
there are strong forces that want to de-
 fend unborn children and will go to great
lengths to do so. That has done more to
wake people up to the issue who will
never come out and get arrested, but will
begin to write congressmen, senators,
will begin to picket, will begin to get in-
volved politically in a number of other
ways."

The group planned to return in
November, after the elections, for a Na-
tional Day of Rescue—a rescue operation
that will occur in scores of cities across
the nation on the same day.

Sacrifice continued from page 46

the kitchen and began washing the break-
fast dishes. The warm water felt won-
terful on my cold hands as I twirled soap
suds, my mind wandering away again.

I wasn't afraid, at first, I thought, as I
spoke quietly in my mind to God. I knew
You could heal. There is nothing that You
can't do. If my baby was ill, You would
heal her. Nothing more simple, right?
Nothing more simple.

I reached for the pan on the stove and
started fiercely scrubbing it.

"OK, God, so what's the deal? I know I
believe and have faith in You. Don and
I have both prayed. Our church has prayed.
The elders have laid hands on Kim. We've
studied Your Word, appropriated Your
promises and waited Your timing. What
do You want? Why won't You heal my baby?
No answer came.

The dishes done, I dried my hands. In
utter despondency, I went back to the liv-
ing room. If my silent God had deserted
me, where else was I to turn?

My eyes fell on my Bible on the coffee
table. A verse from Genesis 22 slipped into
my mind, stunning me with its impact. I
quickly opened my Bible to make sure that
I had remembered it correctly. I had. The
verse read, "And he said, Take now thy
son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou
lovest, and get thee into the land of
Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt
offering upon one of the mountains which
I will tell thee of."

I knew. With absolute certainty I knew
that God was asking for Kim. A clarity I
had never before experienced flooded my
mind as I realized that I had been plac-
ing my love for my little girl above my love for
God. I had been asking for my will. My
will. Not God's. Not His sovereign choice.
A clay pot had been raping at its Maker,
not falling in submission at His holy feet.

Realizing that I had been trying to
manipulate God, I saw that I had been
doing all the "right things" so He would
be required to answer my pleadings. I had
never really considered the possibility that
He might ask for Kimmie. Totally unex-
pected was the command from the verse
in Genesis. Could I still love God and call
Him "Master," if he took my tiny daugh-
ter? Would hatred and bitterness fill my
heart, consuming all desire to serve Him?

As surely as Jacob wrestled with the
Angel of the Lord, I strove for my baby's
life. In torment I fell on the floor, pleading
again with my God.

"Surely, sweet Jesus, You are not asking
this. Not my baby's life. How easy for You
to heal her. Just a touch. Oh, my Lord and
my God, not this!"

Even as I spoke, though, I knew the
answer. Only total submission to God's
sovereign will would do. In my breaking
heart I built an altar. Upon this altar I
placed my only, beloved child as truly and
sacrificially as Abraham had ever placed
Isaac on the altar in Moriah.

"Oh, my Lord, I place my trust in Thee.
If You are going to kill my baby, kill her.
I can't fight You any longer. Forgive me,
Lord, for my lack of trust and obedience.
I don't understand why You are asking for
my little girl, and I do love and trust
You. Help me in the times ahead.

A profound peace filled me. The bat-
tle was over. The victory won. I let go
of all the anger and fear that I had been
living with for so many months. I would
rest in the perfect will of God for my life.
Six weeks later, Kim and I were at Dr.
Rubinstein's office again. Kim had not been
ill during all that time. She sat up bright
and alert in my arms, radiant with health.

"I've never seen anything like this,"
said Dr. Rubinstein with a puzzled look on
his face. "Kim's white blood cell count is
absolutely normal. It couldn't have changed so quickly."

In my heart, though, I knew. As
Isaac had been returned to Abraham, so
had my little girl been given back to me.
My Lord was the Great Physician, and a
Father to be trusted.

Maybe the time had come for another
healing.

When I get home, I thought, I think I'll
call my dad.

McKenna Dunross is a free-lance
writer in Pagosa Springs, Colorado.

"I see more and
more that the one
thing needed is to
die to our own will
and to enter and
live in God's will."

—Andrew Murray

December 1988 63
A CLU Defends Offensive T-Shirts

The American Civil Liberties Union says students have a right to wear obscene T-shirts, and has threatened a lawsuit to protect their rights.

Claiming students have a First Amendment right to wear “obscene and vulgar” T-shirts, the ACLU notified a Rockville, Maryland, high school that it is currently considering a lawsuit against its principal, James Coles.

Coles, principal of Thomas S. Wootton High School, recently instituted a ban against shirts that advertise condoms and threaten a lawsuit.

In a letter to Coles the ACLU states, "It is our belief that the Constitution forbids school officials to censor this type of student expression." The letter asked for a meeting with Coles to discuss the issue. Coles declined to meet with the Liberal legal group, saying he is under no obligation to meet with a non-school organization.

Coles defended his ban, saying the county's "Student Rights and Responsibilities" code allows school officials to disallow certain student clothing when it "disrupts school proceedings." The code also allows the principal to censor material that is obscene or violates community standards.

The ACLU countered that the T-shirts were not disruptive and that, even if they were, the Constitution's freedom of expression guarantees outweigh school regulations and codes.

Louisville and DeGarmo & Key Say No to Teen Suicide

LOUISVILLE, Ky.—Award-winning Christian rock band DeGarmo & Key was the featured group at "Jesus in Theater Square," a recent major outdoor event in downtown Louisville.

Louisville has the unfortunate distinction of being the number-one city, per capita, for teen suicide and drug abuse. "Jesus in Theater Square" was planned to offer hope and an alternative to suicide. Local sponsors, in cooperation with the mayor's office, were using the event as one step toward addressing the teen suicide issue.

A local ministry, Hearts of Fire, saw the event as the fulfillment of their three-year dream—a high visibility evangelistic event in downtown Louisville. The mayor's office cooperated with the event in an effort to utilize every possible resource in dealing with the teen crisis. Hearts of Fire gained the mayor's attention because of its extensive outreach to the homeless and needy in Louisville.

Also joining in the special event was Tyndale Bible Company. Tyndale provided a free copy of the NIV One-Year Bible for each youth who came forward. Hearts of Fire Ministries provided on-site counseling and follow-up for each person.

Judge Halts Parental Notification Law

A federal judge has halted a Florida law requiring minors to obtain parental consent or a court order before obtaining an abortion. U.S. District Judge John H. Moore II issued the temporary restraining order just six days after enactment.

Several abortion clinics and physicians challenged the law. Opponents charged the law provides no guarantees of confidentiality, does not ensure court action will be handled speedily, and makes no provisions for a court-appointed attorney or waiver of costs for a destitute teenager.

An attorney for the opposition, William Sheppard, told the Associated Press that the judge's order "means that the young women of Florida can do what they want with their bodies and exercise their constitutional right to have an abortion."

Assistant Attorney General George Waas argued that the law is constitutional, it guarantees confidentiality, and orders a circuit court to consider the petition within 48 hours. But pro-abortionists insist such an expedited hearing would be impossible because an estimated 3,700 teenagers would seek court permission for abortions in Florida this year.

Two Denominations Join NAE

WHEATON, Ill.—The National Association of Evangelicals accepted the Christian Reformed Church in North America and the General Association of General Baptists into membership at their Board Administration meeting, held near here October 4 and 5. The vote swells NAE's constituency by more than 300,000.
Both denominations voted last summer to apply for membership in NAE.

The CRC in NA has some 650 churches and a membership exceeding 220,000. Its denominational offices are maintained in Grand Rapids, Michigan. The GAGB has approximately 800 churches with a total membership exceeding 80,000. It is headquartered in Poplar Bluff, Missouri.

NAE President John White said he was thrilled that both denominations had chosen to be a part of NAE. “NAE will be enriched by the CRC’s heritage, theological tradition, and careful development of a workable Christian world and life view,” he said. “And GAGB’s stand for the truth and purity of the gospel will enhance the integrity of NAE. The Baptist heritage is a rich and vital part of our evangelical family of churches.”

NAE is a voluntary association of individuals, denominations, churches, schools, and organizations dedicated to united action without theological compromise. NAE represents more than 50,000 local churches from 77 Protestant denominations and serves more than 15 million people through its subsidiary, affiliates, and commissions.

NIH Panel Approves Fetal Research

Pro-life groups had already charged a National Institutes for Health panel with being stacked with pro-abortionists. This was long before the advisory committee made its recommendation of whether federal funds should be used to perform medical experiments on aborted babies. When the recommendations were released, the pro-life groups were not surprised.

The NIH panel voted 19-0 to “recommend that research proceed” and receive federal financial backing.

At issue is the ethics of using taxpayer dollars to allow scientists to use aborted babies in experiments that could lead to cures of such genetic diseases as Parkinson’s.

Pro-life groups opposed the experimentation, saying women would feel more comfortable about ending pregnancy if they believed their abortions could lead to the cure of diseases.

A Roman Catholic church leader from Cincinnati testified at the NIH committee hearing. “One might say that the American public becomes accomplices-after-the-fact for these induced abortions,” if its institutions embrace policies that could tend to assign a medical value to having an abortion.

Several witnesses also complained that a woman might become pregnant in order to produce a baby for financial gain or in hopes of helping a sick relative.

Health and Human Services Secretary Otis Bowen, who remains personally opposed to abortion, said he will wait until the advisory committee issues its final report this month before taking a position. He did tell reporters, however, “If I had Parkinson’s I think I would want some of those cells.” He added, “Inasmuch as abortions are legal, being unable to utilize the tissue... would result in the waste of a resource that is lifesaving and curing for several diseases.”
Is the Rapture on Schedule?

There is an old saying preachers sometimes (nervously) tell on each other about how preachers are made. When a neophyte arrives at the seminary, he is immediately given a bag of marbles and instructed to pour the entire bag into his mouth. With each class he attends, the professors remove one marble at a time. When all the marbles are gone, the young preacher is brought before the committee and ordained to the ministry.

The story may be apocryphal, but when I hear the things some preachers have said, I wonder. The earth is flat. Man will never reach the moon. Blacks are inferior to whites. The Rapture will occur in September 1988. Who could have imagined that these claims, and more, would pour from the lips of preachers? To make matters worse, instead of recognizing such foolishness for what it is, we are duped by it. Today most of us laugh at those who condemned Columbus because they thought “the Bible said” the earth was flat. We cringe that some preachers justify racial prejudice by quoting Scripture. So why, when Jesus clearly said no one knows the day and the hour of His return, were so many Christians fooled recently by a man who said he had 88 proofs that Jesus was wrong?

Now I know that is not how he put it, but let’s face it, that is what it all came down to. If it were possible to calculate the date of the Rapture as this man did, then Jesus should have been able to figure it out just as well. Apparently, Jesus was not as good a Bible scholar and typologist and numerologist as this twentieth-century preacher. What can we say about all this?

Do not be deceived. One woman who heard that someone was predicting Christ’s return on September 12, 1988, quipped, “How hard can it be? You know if someone is naming a date for Christ’s return, that’s not it! Jesus said no one knows. So this prediction can’t be right. It’s that simple.”

When people prostitute this promise to satisfy a wanton interest in the future, they commit a terrible travesty. Speculating on the time of Christ’s return not only breeds bad theology, it is sinful. In effect, such speculations are merely the original sin all over again—trying to know as much as God. I’m sure the Lord Himself is grieved by what they have done to the promise of His coming.

Feed the sheep. Some congregations were so deeply involved with and consumed by this prediction that a few people even sold their homes and congregated on hillsides to await Jesus’ return.

Jesus instructed Peter, as one of the first who would exercise a pastoral ministry, “Feed my sheep.” If the shepherd does not lead the sheep in green pastures, they will wander to strange and dangerous places to graze on their own. This recent episode of eschatological frenzy would never have occurred if our pastors were preaching the Word. Jesus told the Sadducees, “We do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God.” But, of course, pastors must know the Word before they can preach it, and they must study the Word before they can know it.

Watch and work. “But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only” (Matt. 24:36). For years I have been telling my students to beware of 1988. While the date of Christ’s return is not predictable, this craziness was. I cannot tell you how many cults have used these same arguments to point to one date or another in order to coerce their followers to submit to their fraudulent teachings.

The truth is, the expectation of Jesus’ return at any moment has been a source of hope and comfort to God’s people since the days of the apostles. This is not due to God’s indecision, but to the fact that He has not let us in on the secret! This wondrous promise has been a treasure cherished in the hearts of God’s saints since the angels gave it to the disciples nearly 2,000 years ago. As such it was to induce watchfulness and faithfulness. Against that hope we purify our hearts and redouble our efforts to serve the living and true God (1 Thess. 1:9-10; 1 John 3:3).

I worry about the people who have been faithful in their service to Christ only because they were expecting Him to come in September. With that expectation removed and inevitable skepticism moving in, what will they do now? In fact, the Lord never intended that we should remain faithful only to avoid shame at His coming. Rather we serve Him because we love Him, and we love Him all the more because He promised to return and receive us to Himself, not because we fear His judgment (as important as that is). The faithful servant should not be discouraged because Jesus has not come in 1988—yet! What was true a year ago is still true today. Jesus is coming again, and in the “fulness of time,” He will. Isn’t it wonderful to know that Jesus is not late for His return?

He could come today after all.

by Daniel R. Mitchell
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