

For Those Seeking The Truth & Dynamic Living

Christ is Victor

NOV/DEC 2006

“Just in Time”

I was spending the afternoon of the Lord's Day distributing tracts among a number of miners. The men were enjoying the pure air and sunlight after working all the week in the dark, unwholesome atmosphere of the mine.

I was crossing the last field that separated me from my own garden gate, when I met two young miners coming slowly towards me. I stopped as we were about to pass each other, and selecting two little books from the few that remained in my hand, I held out one to each. Each took the book and thanked me; and one, a fine, strong, healthy, and handsome young man of about twenty-five, stood still and read out the title of his, 'Just in Time.'

A deep feeling of solemnity crept over my soul, and looking up into his frank, open countenance, I said: "Yes, my friend, and God grant you may be just in time for heaven."

Going home I prayed, "Lord, save him."

Tuesday night, I had retired to my room, when a loud knocking at the door made me throw open my window.

"Who is there?" I asked.

"Sir; are you the gentleman who gave a young man a booklet on Sunday afternoon called 'Just in Time?'"

"Yes, I am."

"Please come at once," he said.

Hastily I dressed and went out into the summer's night, guided by my companion. On our way he told me that his mate

... "STRAIGHTEN" CON'T ON PAGE 4

“THE TIDINGS OF CHRISTMAS”



“And Mary said, Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word.” (Luke 1:38)

The first tidings of Christmas which came to Mary, the mother of Jesus left her stunned and breathless with wonder. She

surely knew the promise that the great Redeemer, whose coming was foretold in the Scriptures, was to be born of a virgin. Being devoid of all self-consciousness and beautiful in her purity, Mary found it impossible to believe that she was to be God's choice of the ages, to be the mother of His son.

Simple in her sincerity, she asked the angel who brought the tidings to her, "You know that I am a virgin, how can these things be?" Not that she disbelieved God, but for one stunning moment, she lost sight of God's promise that Jesus was to be virgin-born, and gave way to natural reasoning.

The beauty which is invested in purity becomes an enduring beauty. Despite all the cosmetics and face-lifts of today, most beauty queens have a very short beauty-span. How quickly their charm vanishes! But the beauty of a clean woman and a praying mother grows with her increasing years. Even her grey hair is so pleasing to behold.

But the torment of an unclean conscience, can shatter nerves of steel, etch lines and wrinkles on your face and make your beauty disgusting and hateful. That is why many young people today appear

to be many years older than what they are.

While the revelation of the angel came to Mary as a bolt from the blue, completely unsettling the even tenor of her life, yet she received the tidings with joyful anticipation and submission with those timeless words, "Behold the handmaid of the Lord!"

Christmas—the beautiful story of God's love for rebellious sinners, comes to us as a

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breath from heaven. It is not at all the annual spree of buying and the uninhibited binge of beer, alcohol and gorging of prodigious piles of food.

Christmas is a forceful reminder to all mankind that we are not merely cut adrift to float aimlessly in the sea of life. *"Unto you is born this day a Saviour!"* Who needs a Saviour? Those who are lost. Who is more lost than us, who live on this planet today. We hold in our hands weapons of self-destruction, which promise a carnage so uniform that there will be no victor or vanquished.

At the heart of the Christmas story is the Saviour. Without Him Christmas has no meaning. Like Mary of old it could be that we are slightly puzzled as to what this should mean. Is God going to do such a wonderful thing for me? It seems incredible, but let us say, *"I do believe it, God will not deceive me, He will do the impossible for me."*

Yes, Christmas makes a lot of impossibilities, actual realities. God's promise to send the Saviour has come to pass; everyone who trusts in Him is going to see a glorious deliverance from sin.

Christmas brings to us God in very flesh. How many are the sages, who almost despaired that their earnest seeking of God was all in vain—they felt they could never meet the Eternal One! Oh what a thrill to see Jesus, God in very flesh, God's holiness, God's love, God's tender compassion for the suffering, all put in flesh and blood before us! Not in marble, not in gold, but in Flesh and Blood.

There He comes and stands before us—Immaculately beautiful, Peerless, Perfect—all that God should be! Can you turn your gaze away from Him? No, He grips you, He fills you and He thrills you until you cry—*"Jesus is all to me. I cannot live without Him."* Yes, that is true Christmas—the coming of Jesus into your life.

— Joshua Daniel

"Don't Pick up the Broken Pieces"

Corrie ten Boom used to tell of a little girl who broke one of her mother's treasured demitasse cups. The little girl came to her mother sobbing, *"Oh, mama, I'm so sorry I broke your beautiful cup."*

The mother replied, *"I know you're sorry, and I forgive you. Now don't cry any more."*

The mother then swept up the pieces of the broken cup and placed them in the trash can.

But the little girl was smitten with the guilty feeling. She went to the trash can, picked out the pieces of the cup, brought them to her mother and sobbed, *"Mother, I'm so sorry I broke your pretty cup."*

This time her mother spoke firmly to her. *"Take those pieces and put them back in the trash can and don't be silly enough to take them out again. I told you I forgave you; so don't cry any more, and don't pick up the broken pieces any more."*

—Selected

"A Harmonious Home"

"And Mary arose in those days, and went into the hill country with haste, into a city of Juda; And entered into the house of Zacharias, and saluted Elisabeth." (Luke 1:39,40)

Mary began to realize how fortunate she was. Her entrance into Elisabeth's home caused Elisabeth to be filled with the Holy Spirit. Those who live in the Spirit react to spiritual things in an unmistakable way. Mary was a woman who was following the truth that she knew, and she never expected to become great in this world. Mary grew in

the ways of the Lord and the Lord noticed it.

God looks out for those that obey the Word of God because He can only make use of such. When finally it came down to the hard fact of obeying the Word of God, Mary pleased God absolutely. We must never obey the Word just to become famous in this world. We must obey the Word because it is a blessing in itself.

Christmas is the story of young people who lived and walked in the will of God. Young people who walk in the will of God make history. Elisabeth and Zacharias were old people who walked in all the commandments of God blamelessly. They were perfect in their old age. Mary and Elisabeth were relatives and there seemed to be a high standard of faith among these relatives. John was to baptize Jesus. John had to come from such parentage. The perfection that Elisabeth and Zacharias achieved in their old age, Mary and Joseph attained in their youth. God looks for young people who obey Him at all cost. God can rely only on such people.

Manasseh was born at the time of King Hezekiah's backsliding. Manasseh ruined the nation to such an extent that no one could restore it to its original state. But the above-mentioned families did reach a very high level of faith. How prophetic were Joseph's dreams and Mary's words!

In Christian history, it is only when faith reached a high level that great things took place. Faith in youth is always rewarded. By gathering together for prayer we are helping one another to rise in faith. But if we are careless in our individual prayer life, we cannot be a true blessing in a prayer group. So we must learn to examine our hearts in the light of God's word before we gather for group prayer.

CHRIST IS VICTOR

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Sin and death came through the first woman. Through another woman came the Son of God, bringing in life and peace. Jesus grew under Mary's care. She taught Him the Word of God. Elisabeth also taught her son the Word of God to which she was perfectly obedient. Joseph and Zacharias supported the faith of these women. There was great harmony in these homes. When we read of these families we enter into a new realm. They showed extraordinary faith and obedience as a family. So God could choose them and bless them as a family. We must build our families for God and teach our children obedience to the Word of God.

Mary remained in Elisabeth's home for three months. A woman filled with the Holy Spirit cannot stay in a home unless the spiritual atmosphere in it is perfectly conducive. Such was Elisabeth's home. Mary and Elisabeth did their duty to their sons. John was a martyr for truth and righteousness. He grew in the wilderness. God so arranged that John's parents did not live to see his death. Mary lived to see the death and resurrection of her Son. She was one of those that received the Holy Spirit afresh on the Day of Pentecost to shake the world.

Christmas comes to us year after year to remind us of the faithfulness of God and purposefulness of God in fulfilling His high plans through weak men. May God help us to know that even we, weak people, can live for His glory!

—N. Daniel

“Christmas: The Holiday Season?”

“Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.” (Matt. 20:28)

Let us stand before these words of our Lord again this Christmas, and marvel at the divine wonder which they express. I sometimes fear that the capability of wondering is becoming sadly perverted in mod-

ern man. We are so occupied with wondering at little things which are only seemingly big, that we do not marvel any more at the things which are really big.

We are so in the way of marvelling at clever new gadgets in the latest automaticity of automobiles that we are losing our marvel at the sunrise and the procession of the seasons. We are so kept marvelling at aeroplanes whizzing through skies at supersonic speeds, guided missiles prophetically screaming from continent to continent, outer-atmosphere rockets, projected space-ships, and other inventions of these days, that we are losing both the appetite and the aptitude to marvel at the really big things, the things which are spiritual and divine.

This very minute I have picked up a pretty Christmas card in which the brief, ornate message is, *“Greetings and best wishes for the holiday season.”* That card represents the big tragedy: Christmas for millions is just *“the holiday season”*. Are we losing the sense of marvel at the Christmas miracle?

Why, this is the most stupendous and astonishing wonder which could ever engross the human mind—that the eternal, infinite Creator of the universe should enter our human life, and assume our human nature, by being born as a baby of a human mother!

So far as we know, time, in the sense of days, weeks, months, years, decades, centuries, millenniums, began only some six thousand years ago. To our human review, what mighty developments have occurred in that long unrolling of time! To our little, day-at-a-time existence, what a vast sweep six thousand years seem! Yet what is “time” but a very temporary concept? It is a purely temporary way of making continuity intelligible to tiny, finite man. The earth itself is much older than time, the modern consensus of scientific opinion dating it as some three thousand million years old. Yet what are three million million years compared with eternity?

Oh, that word *“eternity”*—without

beginning, without ending. Yet, at that first Christmas, it was the Eternal who became born of a human mother, to become our Kinsman-Representative and vicarious Sin-bearer!

—Sidlow Baxter

“The Shoemaker's Dream”

One of the most beautiful of all Christmas stories was told by the American poet, Edwin Markham, about a cobbler, a godly man who made shoes in the old days. One night the cobbler dreamed that the next day Jesus was coming to visit him. The dream seemed so real that he got up very early the next morning and hurried to the woods, where he gathered green boughs to decorate his shop for the arrival of so great a Guest.

He waited all morning, but to his disappointment, his shop remained quiet, except for an old man who limped up to the door asking to come in for a few minutes of warmth. While the man was resting, the cobbler noticed that the old fellow's shoes were worn through. Touched, the cobbler took a new pair from his shelves and saw to it that the stranger was wearing them as he went on his way.

Throughout the afternoon the cobbler waited, but his only visitor was an elderly woman. He had seen her struggling under a heavy load of firewood, and he invited her, too, into his shop to rest. Then he dis-

... “DREAM” CON'T ON PAGE 4

**REALITY
CHECK!**

“FOR UNTO US A CHILD IS BORN, UNTO US A SON IS GIVEN: AND THE GOVERNMENT SHALL BE UPON HIS SHOULDER: AND HIS NAME SHALL BE CALLED WONDERFUL, COUNSELLOR, THE MIGHTY GOD, THE EVERLASTING FATHER, THE PRINCE OF PEACE.”

ISAIAH 9:6

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had gone down the shaft that afternoon as usual, and had jumped out of the bucket ere it reached the bottom and was caught and crushed. His breast-bones were broken in, and he was lying there, his friend said, in terrible agony, unable to speak, and just gasping for breath, while his life seemed ebbing fast away.

By the time the young man had finished his story we reached the cottage. There lay the fine strong man, whom I had seen only two days before in the full vigour of health and youth, now absolutely helpless. He looked fixedly at me as I entered, and tried to speak; it was useless.

"*Shall I read with you and pray for you?*" He made a low hissing sound, the only approach to "Yes" he could make.

I read to him "*God so loved the world, that He gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life*"; and I spoke to him of the love of God in desiring his salvation; of the efficacy of the blood of Christ to save him. I told him he was lost and ruined by nature, but that Jesus came to seek and to save the lost; that Jesus had been seeking him, wanted him; that having done the work by which sin could be put away out of God's sight, He could now give the knowledge of the forgiveness of all his sins through His precious blood.

I read to him the story of the father and the prodigal (Luke 15) and also the brief prayers of the Pharisee and the publican in Luke 18 and repeated this verse, "*Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out*" (John 6:37).

His face changed; hope lighted it up, despair had fled. He signed for a drink and his wife held the glass of water to his lips. He drank a little, and then to the amazement of all, he who had been unable to utter a sound beyond the low hissing, said in a clear voice, and with eyes lifted up as though he saw the one to whom he was speaking;— "*Just in time! God be merciful to me a sinner, for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen!*"

He had scarcely uttered the last word when his head fell back on the pillow, a little shivering sigh escaped him, and we were in the presence of the dead.

Never shall I forget the scene. To many a one present, it was a warning word from the brink of eternity, and God used it for blessing.

—Selected

U. S. Thanksgiving Weekend Retreat Announcement

ALL ARE WELCOME

**Friday, November 24th Through Sunday November 26th
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For more information or directions to the retreat, please contact us at any of the numbers listed to the right, or e-mail us at: **post@lefi.org**

covered that for two days she had had nothing to eat; he saw to it that she had a nourishing meal before she went on her way.

As night began to fall, the cobbler heard a child crying outside his door. The child was lost and afraid. The cobbler went out, soothed the youngster's tears and, with the little hand in his, took the child home.

When he returned, the cobbler was sad. He was convinced that while he had been away he had missed the visit of his Lord. Now he lived through the moments as he had imagined them: the knock, the latch lifted, the radiant face, the offered cup. He would have kissed the hands where the nails had been, washed the feet where the spikes had entered. Then the Lord would have sat and talked to him.

In his anguish, the cobbler cried out, "*Why is it, Lord, that Your feet delay? Have you forgotten that this was the day?*" Then, soft in the silence a voice he heard:

*"Lift up your heart for I kept My word.
Three times I came to your friendly door;
Three times My shadow was on your floor.
I was the man with the bruised feet.
I was the woman you gave food to eat,
I was the child on the homeless street."*

"The nicest things we can do for our Heavenly Father is to be kind to one of his children."

Weekly Meetings —Welcome to All—

Sunday Morning Worship at 10:00 am at:
Community Christ Church, in Novi MI
46200 West Ten Mile Rd.
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University of Michigan Mondays 7:00 pm
Angell Hall, Room G-144
Call (248) 446-3009
University of Windsor Sundays 5:00 pm
Iona College 208 Sunset Ave.
Call (519) 966-4603
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For info on other meetings, Call:
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WHRI 19 Metre band 15.355 MHz
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Sat. 7:30 am, Sun. 11:00 pm
Fort Wayne, IN: 1090 AM (WFCV) Sat. 4:00 pm
Council Bluffs, IA: 1560 AM (KLNG) Sun. 8:00 am
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