



Co-Laborer

January—February—March 1975

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Co-Laborer

January—February—March 1975

Volume XV Number 1

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For Foreign Missions



1975 Theme LIGHTS IN DARK PLACES

Watchword

"... shine as lights
in the world"

Philippians 2:15

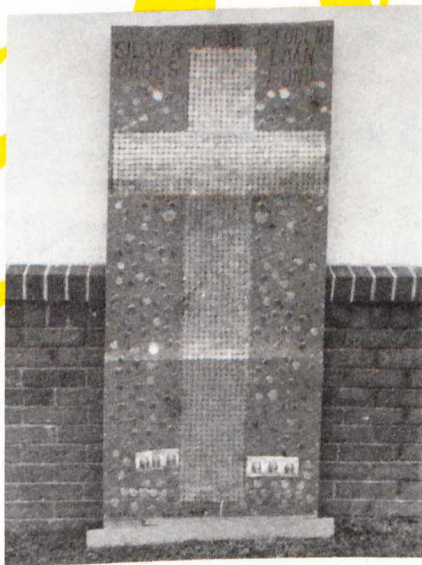
Song

"Send the Light"

Cleo W. Pursell, Editor

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Women In Action



DISTRICT MEETS

The Central District Woman's Auxiliary met in March at the Welch Avenue Free Will Baptist Church, Columbus, Ohio. June Marcum is president. Brenda Spruill, WNAC field worker spoke.



STUDENT LOAN FUND

The Woman's Auxiliary of the Community Free Will Baptist Church, West Jefferson, Ohio, contributed \$156 for the Student Loan Fund. They covered a cross with dimes and called the project "The Silver Cross for Student Loan Fund."

NORTH CAROLINA STATE

Mrs. Joanne King was elected president of the North Carolina State Auxiliary when the convention met June 10, in Swannonoa. Registration was 256.

Dan and Margaret Merkh were the speakers. Mission projects adopted were \$1500 each for the France Church Loan Fund and for the Free Will Baptist Bible College campus beautification program.

MISSIONARY PROVISION CLOSET SHOWERS



DISTRICT PROJECT

The Unity District Woman's Auxiliary raised over \$500 in only three months for the Arkadelphia Mission Land Fund. Shown are Mrs. Sallee, Mrs. Wilburn, and Mrs. Rickman, representing the First Free Will Baptist Church, Forth Smith, Arkansas. Their auxiliary was awarded a plaque for contributing the largest amount of money.

Woman's Auxiliary of Calvary Church, Georgetown, South Carolina estimated the value of gifts at one hundred dollars.

Woman's Auxiliary, Faith Free Will Baptist Church, Manchester, Tennessee.

SPECIAL PROGRAM

An exciting program on Japan was enjoyed by the Mansfield, Ohio, Woman's Auxiliary.





INSTALLATION SERVICE

Gertrude Cantrell is shown with president Louise Riddle as she installs officers at the Bell Gardens, California, Woman's Auxiliary.

ARKANSAS STATE

The Arkansas State Auxiliary observed their 20th anniversary August 13, at the camp grounds. President Genell Scott presided. Guest speakers included the first and second state presidents, Margaret Dixon, Oklahoma, and Betty Sawrie, Kentucky. The meeting concluded with a banquet at the Ramada Inn in Conway.

THE OLDEST AND THE YOUNGEST. *Mrs. Lyddie Waters, and Mrs. Daisy Latham (both in their eighties) are the oldest members of the Five Points Woman's Auxiliary, Pinetown, N.C. Little Miss Andrea Marie Poorman (future president?) has been attending since she was born one year ago.*



SUSIE THOMAS is 95 years young. *She was honored by the Fullondale Church, Birmingham, Alabama, because of her faithfulness. She has been a member of the Free Will Baptist Church since she was 15 years old and is a regular member and generous supporter of the Woman's Auxiliary.*



EAST TEXAS DISTRICT *Woman's Auxiliary sponsored a study course on the Auxiliary Manual in November. WNAC field worker, Brenda Spruill was the teacher.*



OHIO STATE

The Ohio State Woman's Auxiliary convened June 20, at Slocum Station Tabernacle. Speakers included Dale and Sandra Bishop, missionaries to Japan; Reverend Dana Booth home missionary to Newark, Ohio; Reverend and Mrs. E. B. Ledlow, Nancy Trimble, Dorothy Cox, Brenda Spruill, and Reverend Bill Jones.

Missionary project adopted was \$1000 each to the Dale Bishops and to Dana Booth. A quick project to raise \$1500 for the 1975 National expenses was also adopted.



OFFICERS of the Old Mount Zion Woman's Auxiliary District, organized last March near Springdale, Arkansas by Alene Coffman, state field worker.

PRE-EASTER OBSERVANCE

The Woman's Auxiliary of the First Free Will Baptist Church, Miami, Florida, had a very inspiring pre-Easter prayer service.

Prayer requests were written on white crosses and distributed along with paper lilies by Gloria Hendrix. A lily leaf was colored daily as each woman observed prayer time. These later were collected and placed on the bulletin board to form a lovely prayer bouquet.

On Wednesday evening Cindy Stephens vividly portrayed the crucifixion of Christ and a 30 pieces of silver offering for foreign missions was received.

On Sunday morning a sunrise service climaxed the weeks activities and Cindy told the resurrection story.

STEWARDSHIP OF THE HOME is particularly effective in introducing new women to auxiliary work in a fun and fellowship atmosphere. One meeting during the quarter is devoted to introducing new women to auxiliary work via an informal meeting complete with program, skits, scripture and prayer by the Woman's Auxiliary of the First Free Will Baptist Church, Springfield, Ohio. Shown left to right, Linda Howard, Mary Preston, Lois Helton, standing, Yvonne Wolfenbarger.





Co-Laborers Write

We enjoyed reviewing your Program Help Packet for the fourth quarter of this year. Your ideas are excellent!

Our Y program (for young women ages 16 to 24) needs promoting and we would like to use your poster announcing an auxiliary meeting . . . We would like to use it in one of the issues of *Advance*, our magazine for ministers.

*Agnes Rodli
Y Coordinator
Women's Missionary Council
The Assemblies of God*

Having just recently moved here to attend Missionary Internship, we have been in the process of unpacking and getting settled . . . We certainly appreciate being given access to the missionary provision closet . . . The tupperware, sheets and other items acquired have been a great help to us . . . We trust God will continue to use the women of our denomination for His glory.

*LaRue Crowson
Detroit, Michigan*

Thank you so much for the iron, blanket, sheets, towels, and bath clothes given me to use at college. I really do appreciate all that the

Woman's Auxiliary is doing to help me and my family.

*Lynn Gore
Jackson, Mississippi*

Our Auxiliary has been richly blessed in the three years we have been organized. We enjoy the *Co-Laborer* programs and especially enjoyed the prayer group studies by Lonnie and Anita Sparks. Mrs. Sparks visited our auxiliary meeting and told us some of the experiences they had while in Africa. She explained the difficulties of writing this language.

*Nell Lynch
Stonewall, Oklahoma*

Thank God we have Christian ladies who can write material such as found in *Co-Laborer*.

Our Auxiliary is growing . . . please increase our *Co-Laborer* order from 12 to 21.

*Ann Jones
Midland City, Alabama*

Thank you very much for the wonderful programs we are having now.

*Phyllis McCombs
Birmingham, Alabama*

We really enjoy the Auxiliary and are thankful for the many blessings we

have received through our meetings.

The blessings in *Co-Laborer* get better and better. The program helps sure stimulate the interest, too.

Our Auxiliary has increased and we need 10 extra books bringing our order to 22.

*Mrs. Leo Kellum
Monticello, Arkansas*

Our Woman's Auxiliary at the Wilson Chapel Church presented our pre-Easter program at Wednesday night prayer service . . . on Easter morning we placed our offerings on the cross at the front of the church. The offering was \$32.44, the largest missions offering we have ever given at one time . . .

*Mrs. L. S. Anthony
Thomaston, Georgia*

Increase our *Co-Laborer* subscriptions from 40 to 55 issues per quarter. Our Auxiliary is growing each month and we have really been blessed by the programs in the *Co-Laborer*. We have so many wonderful and dedicated women in our Auxiliary and the Lord has richly blessed each one of us.

*Yvonne C. Edwards
Washington, N.C.*

Thank you for the WNAC Emphasis Program Packet. It is very good. Our pastor lets us have this program each year on a Wednesday night instead of our regular prayer meeting. That way we reach more ladies with our Auxiliary work.

I had the privilege of visiting your office May, 1974. I was pleased to visit the provision closet and to see the New Testaments translated by Lonnie Sparks. We will do all we can to help reach the \$12,000 goal.

The lessons in *Co-Laborer* are very

interesting as well as the other information in the book.

*Irene Farmer
Kannapolis, N.C.
Mt. Zion Auxiliary*

We are having an international dinner . . . will have a tour to "taste and tell" from these tables: India, Spain, Africa, Brazil, Mexico, France and America. Pray for the speakers, also for the missions offering.

*Lura Gebhart
Tulsa, Oklahoma*

I would like to speak for all of our women. We enjoy the *Co-Laborers* very much. All the programs are a great blessing to us. We always look forward to receiving our new magazines each quarter.

*Frances Cravines
Tulsa, Oklahoma*

We of Bakers Crossroads Free Will Baptist Church have been getting *Co-Laborers* since February, 1974. We enjoy them very much. They are another link in living a fuller life for Christ.

We would like to have a missionary visit our church. How would I get in touch with someone to arrange this?

*Brenda Leach
Crossville, Tennessee*

The Woman's Auxiliary of Calvary Free Will Baptist Church held a special Easter service in April with 52 present. We used the program in the *Co-Laborer*. We took up a special offering for foreign missions.

Each member gives a dollar a month for missions. We decided to send the money to Sherwood Lee.

*Anne Davis
Georgetown, S.C.*



From the Field

Please give our thanks to the co-laborers who have been so faithful to help and support our ministry. A few have sent to the *snack fund* and we appreciate that. These boys have big appetites and with the extra we can provide some special things above the regular bread and jelly—like a papaya salad—which is cheap yet we have to get the ingredients apart from our staples.

*Joan Filkins
Bouake, Ivory Coast*

A big thanks to all the wonderful ladies who make the provision closet possible. When I use my pretty new dishes, or lie down on my lovely new sheets I breathe a prayer of thanks.

We had our first service at our church . . . God blessed with a good attendance . . . There are some things I will miss for a while; especially the auxiliary. I always looked forward to our meetings. Please pray that we may

soon have some ladies interested in starting an auxiliary.

Keep up the good work with the *Co-Laborer*. When I get a new one I can't lay it down until I look through the book completely.

Remember to pray for us that we may win souls in Memphis and will organize a church that our Lord will be pleased with.

*Mrs. Jerry Presley
Memphis, Tennessee*

Just a note to let you know that the beautiful towels and sheets you ladies so graciously make available for us not only are enjoyed by the missionary family and friends, but also adorn royal kings and humble shepherds!

Thank you for helping in more ways than you suspect.

*Nancy Hughes
Araras, Brazil*



We thank you for all the nice things we got from the provision closet. We look forward to having contacts with many auxiliaries these months ahead.

*Shirley Combs
Owasso, Oklahoma*

Thank you so much for the money to buy pillows for our family. We never fail to give thanks for our ladies who provide the provision closet.

*Billy McCoy
Puerto Rico*

Everytime I read the *Co-Laborer*—Yes, I read it, I want to say thanks to the ladies of our Free Will Baptist. They not only help us by monthly support, but we will forever be grateful for the gifts from the closet in Nashville.

*Sam Wilkinson
Jaboticabal,
Sao Paulo, Brazil*

I was thrilled to be able to help a neighbor lady cut out and make pajamas and a robe for herself. She has seven children and has to pay a seamstress to make most of their clothes. (Ready-made clothing is even more expensive.) She has a sewing machine but patterns are unavailable in Brazil, so one has to take a seamstress course and learn to draw patterns in order to sew. With the help of the USA patterns, I did the cutting and she did most of the sewing. With the money she saved, she bought one child a sweater. Insignificant? I think not. This woman has come regularly to our Sunday night services in our home almost since the beginning, and has studied John and Acts. Some of her children go to Sunday school, and we're expecting a harvest of souls in that family for God's glory.

*Jean Deeds
Minas Gerais, Brazil*

THE SAM WILKINSON FAMILY



I conducted my first Auxiliary meeting in French yesterday. The Lord really blessed me. It was our May meeting and I used the program from the *Co-Laborer* magazine. The women really liked it. I cut out a lot of flannelgraph pictures to illustrate the lesson.

I showed them the picture of Mrs. Gardner, the writer, and told them she was a pastor's wife and had three children. They seemed to realize anew their place as mothers to teach their children about Christ. The meeting was at Nantes

I can hardly wait each quarter to get my magazine. I sit down right then and read every word of it. Don does also.

*Billie Sexton
Nante, France*

One of the best ways to grow spiritually is to withdraw from the frustrations of everyday living and join with other women in a retreat.

CARIBBEAN

How Rich I Am was the theme of the first Caribbean Women's Retreat held February 15-16, at Tamarind Reef Hotel in St. Croix, Virgin Islands.

The St. Croix Woman's Auxiliary was host to the delegation from Puerto Rico who came by plane. Sixteen ladies were present for a delightful time of refreshing.

Following a delicious meal and enjoyable fellowship on Friday evening, the services opened with the singing of choruses. A trio consisting of Billy McCoy, Lorene Francen and Ruth Roediger sang. Elaine Anderson presented the program "Show and Tell the Good News" from *Co-Laborer*. After a very inspiring program and group discussion, fun time was enjoyed by all. Several skits were presented.

Services began Saturday morning with group singing. Frances Floyd led a responsive reading from Psalm 103 and a devotion was given by Sharon Welsh. A play written by Wanda Powell, *How Rich I Am*, was presented by the Puerto



CARIBBEAN RETREAT. Women from St. Croix, Virgin Islands and San Juan, Puerto Rico, who attended the first Woman's Auxiliary retreat in this area.

Rico ladies. A Bible study from the book of Ruth was given by Helen Rivers. Plans were made for the next retreat to be held in Puerto Rico.

REGIONAL RETREAT

Slightly over 300 women from Texas, Arkansas, Kansas, and Oklahoma gathered at Tiger Mountain, just outside Henryetta, Oklahoma, April 19-20 for A Woman's Auxiliary retreat.

The auxiliary from Hillsdale Bible College provided the entertainment for fun night. Saturday was a day of worship. Music was under the direction of Marion Kern and Starlett Shipp. Speakers included Genelle Scott, Edith Lane, Bonita Hill, and missionary wives Willie Gage, Norma Jean Caton, and Kathleen Sutton.

A special offering of \$466 was received for the Jim Combs family.

GEORGIA, FLORIDA, ALABAMA

This tri-state retreat met in April at Camp Mt. Bethel, Ashburn, Georgia.

The principal speaker was Brenda Spruill, WNAC field worker who spoke on the theme *Abounding* (2 Corinthians 9:8). Other speakers were Edith Shiver who spoke on *Abounding in Love through Mission Prayer*, Edra Sevarance, *Abounding in Love through Mission Study*, and Louise Lindsey on *Abounding In Love through Mission Action*.

Singing, good food, fun and fellowship made this retreat a time of abundant blessings!

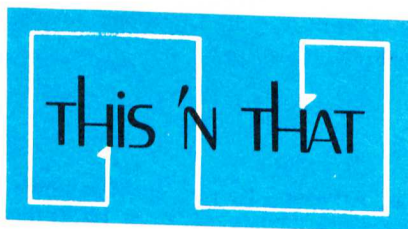
TENNESSEE

Sounds of Love, was the theme for the Tennessee Woman's Auxiliary retreat at Hillmont Camp, May 17-18. Approximately 70 women were present.

The theme was introduced on Friday evening with the film by that name. On Saturday morning Trula Cronk discussed the topic of *love* by contrasting love with hate. Patricia Woods spoke about *love for the unlovely*, and Genevieve Waddell talked about the expression of love among Christians. June Critcher ended the program on a note of praise speaking about our love for God expressed in praise to Him.

ILLINOIS

The Illinois State Woman's Auxiliary Retreat was held at the Free Will Baptist campgrounds near Benton, September 23-24. Eunice Edwards was the special speaker. Others on the program were Betty Hampleman, Flo Norris, Carol Teague, Vicki Hollis and Bette Adams.



Project for Virgin Islands

The Woman's Auxiliary of the St. Croix church is saving Betty Crocker coupon points to purchase a projector to be used in the Christian school and church. They need 80,000 points by November, 1975. If your auxiliary can help them with this project mail coupons to

Mrs. Sunny Wenning
Sunny Isle
P.O. Box 6265
Christiansted, St. Croix
Virgin Islands 00820

Deadline Near

The deadline for Creative Writing Contest entries is March 1, 1975. Write WNAC office for rules or see the 1974 4th Quarter *Co-Laborer*. Categories include, articles, skits, and programs.

Past Due Bills

Approximately 150 *past due* notices for 1974 *Co-Laborer* magazines were mailed to auxiliaries by the WNAC office after the fourth quarter magazines had been mailed.

These notices represent \$2,426 owed WNAC for last years magazines. Please check with your auxiliary treasurer to see if your bill has been paid. Thank you!

Provision Closet

We still have plenty of tupperware.

We do need the follow items: Both twin and full size bedspreads and mattress covers. Please do not send plastic covers. Missionaries prefer the quilted cotton or polyester. Kitchen terry cloth towels, heavy bath towels, stainless steel flatware (service for 8 or 12), full size colored sheets, and blenders.

Thank You

Words are inadequate to convey my deep appreciation to each of you for your prayers and many expressions of love and concern during my surgery and convalescence last July.

The Lord graciously heard and answered those prayers. (1 Corinthians 1:3-6.) I was able to resume work on a full time basis July 31.

Our Own Writers

Free Will Baptist women have talent. For delightful reading order the books listed below written by our own gifted women.

"The Jewel of Consistency,"
Elsie Staten 75¢

"Women's Footprints on the Pages of History"

Laura B. Barnard
Introduction, Cleo Pursell 50¢

"Scotch Love"
Heddy Chapman \$3.75

"Grins, Groans, and Amazing Grace"
Heddy Chapman \$1.00

SPECIAL DAYS such as Mother's Day, Graduation Day, Christmas Day and others are very meaningful to all of us as mothers. Words like "Happy Mother's Day" genuinely spoken from the heart live in our memory. We cherish the short note that arrives saying "You are grandmother again." It might be difficult for you to connect the above statements with someone else's children, but I would like to share with you a few of the pleasures and heartaches of loving and caring for "someone else's child."

Recently I began my eleventh year of working with someone else's children. There is a special spot in my heart for a host of children (all colors and nationalities) scattered throughout the U.S. and the world. Even though my own son is only nine, I know the thrill of watching my "children" graduate and the fears of sending them off to college or to be on their own. My "boys" have gone to Vietnam and all but one returned. I know the excitement of walking the aisle as "Mother" of the Bride and of the Groom. Living in the south, it is still amusing to watch the reaction of others when I am given a big, impulsive hug and kiss on the cheek by a little black boy who is emotionally disturbed. I have to struggle to keep from laughing when a Mexican child brings a letter written in Spanish and "axes" me to read it to him. (I speak very little Spanish.) I know the joy of leading children to Christ in my home and on my job, and then sitting and observing, through tear-dimmed eyes, as my husband baptizes the "babe in Christ." I know the heartache of standing by the casket of a teenage boy who had been a part of our life and family for five years. But I also rejoice at the comfort of knowing he was a Christian and because some of us cared, he, a deserted Indian boy, knew the love of our Saviour. These are some of the occurrences in the life of an institu-

tional worker, but there are many opportunities for you to work with someone else's child in your own home and your own church.

Perhaps you will find helpful the following suggestions of ways you can be of service to children in institutions in your denomination or in your community.

- (1) Take the children to church with you, not just on Rally Day, but regularly.
- (2) Remember them at Christmas and on other holidays. Invite them into your home for the occasion, but don't embarrass them by pointing out to everyone they meet that they are from an orphanage or a "home."
- (3) Treat them as a "normal" child in a "normal" family. Theirs just happens to be a little larger than yours. Never ask them how they like being in an institution. If they want to tell you, they will anyway.
- (4) In early fall when you are getting your children ready for school, or remembering when your children had to be outfitted, help purchase something new for a child at an institution. They want to start the school year dressed as nicely as any other child.
- (5) When you send used items to a "home," be sure that are *clean* and *usable*. Sorting items can take a lot of valuable staff time—time that

Someone Else's Child

by Norma June Teague



could be spent with a problem child, in prayer or in a million other useful ways.

- (6) Contact the director of a home near you or the superintendent of one of our Free Will Baptist Homes. They will be happy to furnish you with a list of specific needs and current projects. They will also supply you with prayer requests.
- (7) There are always openings for dedicated houseparents. Be sure you have *plenty* of love and you are willing to develop patience. Be ready to accept hurt as well as happiness. Your earthly treasures will probably be few, but eternity will reveal the rewards.

There are also ways you can be of service in your neighborhood.

- (1) Ask your child if there is a child in his room who appears to be in need, or discuss a needy child with the principal or a teacher. Do something for this child. Let him know you care.
- (2) Teach your children to respect those who don't come as clean and neat as they do and also those of other races. My nine year old son related at the first of school last year that one of his friends didn't want to sit by a black boy. Mike said, "Mama, I told the teacher I'd be happy to sit by him. That was lots better than sitting by a girl." (Remember one is not born with prejudices. They are learned.)
- (3) Send an extra gift to school at name drawing time, for a child who might not receive a gift. Your gift can be a small testament, and will convey a special message.
- (4) When you give your child a birthday party, invite everyone in his room, but stipulate no gifts so the children who would be unable to buy a gift will come, also. (This will also help your child learn that presents do not make parties.)
- (5) Visit in the home of the under-

privileged child. His parents might not be as "lazy" as you think, and remember they, too, have souls.

- (6) Make a new dress or buy a new shirt for the P.T.A. or school program for the child you are helping. This way he will look as nice as the other children.
- (7) Don't make an issue of loving the child. When you do things, even little ones, for the child, treat them with respect and let them know you care; in almost every instance, you will be rewarded by love and appreciation.
- (8) Don't spoil the child by showering them with all kinds of gifts. Help them get what they need and perhaps a few extras, but they, like your own children, need to learn the value of money and the self respect one gains by earning their "things." (This is not meant as a contradiction of earlier suggestions, but simply as a caution.)
- (9) Do not shower them with sympathy. Their situation may break your heart, but don't tell them how sorry you feel for them. They have suffered enough. Treat them normally and with respect. After all, they do have you, and *you* can offer them Jesus. This cannot be overemphasized.

Everywhere you go and to all children you meet you should give them the message that Jesus loves and cares for them. They can understand, especially if you give them the message from your heart of love and compassion. They can give so much more love than an adult, and they have a whole life to live for Him. Even young children, mentally slow or emotionally disturbed youngsters can grasp the message of God's wonderful love, extended to man through His Son.

Ladies, the whitest, most rewarding field in all the world is open to each of us. It is the field of children—not only our own, but also those belonging to someone else.

PRAYER GROUPS

by Earline Arthur



JANUARY

Looking Back— And Looking Ahead

January 1—a time of taking stock of past experiences and of making plans for the future. New Year's resolutions fill our minds as we determine to accomplish certain tasks that heretofore have escaped us. Or perhaps a change of habit or direction is our ultimate goal.

In order to establish our priorities and set realistic goals, we must evaluate our present conditions. This same principle applies to our missions departments.

The first day of 1975 marks the halfway point of the decade of the '70's. More missionaries represent Free Will Baptists around the world than in any other point in our history. Our National Offices require more personnel than ever before. And most of all, our local Free Will Baptists are supporting all phases of our denominational work as never before.

The Foreign Missions Board has projected a goal of 100 new missionaries by the end of the decade. Since 1970 ten new missionaries serve in three countries. Nine more are in language school studying French, Japanese and Spanish in preparation for service in France, Japan, Panama and Spain. Eight new appointees have successfully completed Missionary Intern-

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ship and are presently on deputation. Four single girls and three couples are due to complete Missionary Internship in May. These figures reflect a total of 37 new foreign missionary personnel already in active service or in preparation.

And statistics from the Home Missions office reflect similar growth. Several new cities have established missions as steps toward the department goal of a Free Will Baptist church in at least the capital city of every state in our great nation.

Joint projects have been established in several states. These missions are under the combined sponsorship of the National Home Missions Board and of the respective State Mission Board.

CELF—Church Extension Loan Fund—has been set up to provide funds for extension missions to obtain buildings. The ultimate goal is to eliminate any church group's not having a building due to inadequate funding.

Where do we go from here? All the way to the top—for the growth of our beloved denomination and the glory of God!

Earline Arthur, pastor's wife, Twin Mountain, N. H., formerly served as a secretary and editorial assistant in the Foreign Missions Department, Nashville. She is the mother of a 15 month old son, Jamie.



Prayer Requests

Pray for Joint Project workers Tom Hunt, Houston, Texas; Paul Reid, Greenwood, South Carolina; and Jim Summerson, Emporia, Kansas, as they work jointly with the National Home Missions Board and their State Mission Boards to establish new congregations.

The annual meetings of the Brazil Field Council and the Japan Field Council meet this month. Plans must be laid, and important decisions will be made.

Rev. and Mrs. Gary Watson are completing their internship in Norfolk, Va., and are preparing to depart for Hawaii.

Pray for the new and returning students as they begin this term at our Free Will Baptist colleges.

Foreign Missions General Director J. Reford Wilson will be ministering to our Brazil missionaries this month. Pray for his safe travel and an effective ministry.



FEBRUARY

The Aspects of Love

“... but the greatest of these is love” (1 Corinthians 13:13).

Ever since the Middle Ages when our custom of sending valentines originated, the month of February and love have been linked together. February 14 was the feast day of St. Valentine, a gallant Roman who suffered persecution and death in 269. This Christian martyr has become known as the patron of love. But what is love, and how does it affect us?

Take these examples:

A child (and some adults, too!) loves ice cream.

A teenager loves a funky outfit and platform shoes.

I love to sew and do needlework. My husband loves sports—and my meatloaf.

And then there's love between a husband and wife, love between a child and his parents, love between two friends.

Our vernacular seems quite limited by our constant use of one word to relay several emotions. The original Greek manuscripts of the holy scriptures show us several kinds of love, but *agape* is the supreme love, the God-given, Spirit-indwelt communication which enables us to function as Christians.

Without *agape* love, our bodies are shells of flesh and bone, incapable of any emotion except that which benefits ourselves. But by the grace of God we can selflessly love our neighbors and our enemies alike.

Our beloved missionaries often serve in areas that impose difficult physical or emotional conditions. Thousands of miles from America, deep in the African bush as the only white man in a village—or in the heart of Tokyo, Japan, amid millions of people—or Sao Paulo, Brazil, in the sin and immorality of Carnival—it's all the same. Our brethren are there because of their love of our Savior and His love for lost souls.

What kind of love shows in your everyday walk of life?

Prayer Requests

Jimmy and Janie Aldridge covet our prayers as they return to Ivory Coast after a six month's refresher language school in Switzerland.

Pray for the new work in Greeley, Colorado, started by Home Missionaries Bob and Rosa Lee Thomas.

Louis and Florine Coscia recently returned to the States for a much-needed furlough. Pray for their

physical refreshing and a safe and effective deputational ministry.

Albuquerque, New Mexico, is the destination of appointees Reverend and Mrs. Karel Smith, since completing their internship in Florence, Alabama.

Pray for the areas of our country where our Free Will Baptist witness is small or weak. These particular areas are the Northwest and Southwest and Northeastern sections of our country.



MARCH

Thoughts of Summer

When March rolls around, most of us turn to thoughts of springtime. Will this traditionally windy month come in like a lion and go out like a lamb, or vice versa? Will the groundhog see his shadow? The first green shoot of grass, the first glimpse of a bud peeking out, the first robin—all these turn our minds to spring and the passing of another season.

But except for the planned harvest from our freshly planted gardens, few of us look on to summer. But a select group of young people have had summer in mind for two or three months or longer. They are summer missionaries—young adults pursuing an interest in missions with the view in mind of determining whether God is leading them into regular missionary service.

Who are these special missionaries? How are they selected? Who pays for their travel, etc.?

Students who have completed some training at one of our Free Will Baptist colleges are eligible. For foreign service, three years of school must have been completed. For service in a home missions area, completion of at least

one year of school is necessary.

The students must make application and be approved. Then, here's where we in the local churches can have a part in these special assignments.

Each summer missionary is responsible for enlisting support to underwrite the expense of his summer's service. Travel to and from his destination plus a weekly personal allowance constitute the amount he must raise. Now is the time for us to begin supporting these ministries, as the money must be in hand by the time school is out.

Why summer missionaries? I'll let the facts tell the story. Begun several years ago, the home missions program has seen many participants become regular home or foreign missionaries. The foreign missions program started about five years ago, and six former summer missionaries are now on regular assignment. In addition, of the dozen appointees presently in Missionary Internship, *eight* have done summer or special missionary service.

I'm sure you will agree that this program deserves our support and prayers.

Prayer Requests

Larry and Priscilla Inscoc have completed language study and are now in Panama getting settled into a new work area.

Pray for the Frank Cousineau family as they work in the new church in Billings, Montana.

Pray for Dennis and Carol Teague as they begin French language study in Switzerland.

Pray for Rev. and Mrs. Jim McKown as they teach in our Christian Day School in San Juan, Puerto Rico.

After over six months in Spain the Catons and Sparks need our continued prayers for their work in this new field.

Franks



Burgess



Who's Who in This Issue

Laffoon



Teague



Susan Burgess is an active member of the Woman's Auxiliary of the Wesconnett Church, Jacksonville, Florida. She is the mother of a three year old daughter and won honorable mention in WNAC's creative writing contest.

Norma June Teague is a pastor's wife and a member of the Woman's Auxiliary of the First Free Will Baptist Church, Henderson, Texas. She serves as local mission study chairman and is field worker for the East Texas District. Her article placed first in the creative writing contest.

Carolyn Franks, Mantachie, Mississippi, teaches in the business department of the Itawamba Junior College, Fulton, Mississippi. This talented writer was a winner in both the '73 and '74 writing contest. Her programs were awarded first and third places respectively.

Rosemarie Cloud Laffoon, first place winner in the writing contest in the program category, and third in plays, is a member of the Seminole, Oklahoma Woman's Auxiliary. She is the mother of two boys and one daughter.

Lois Hoadley Dick, Newton, New Jersey, is a freelance writer of 15 years. Prior to her marriage she taught full time for three years for Child Evangelism Fellowship. Mrs. Dick operates a gemstones and rock business known as "Earth Crust Jewelry." Her article first appeared in Child Evangelism magazine and is adapted and used by permission.

Lights Are Not For Sunny Places

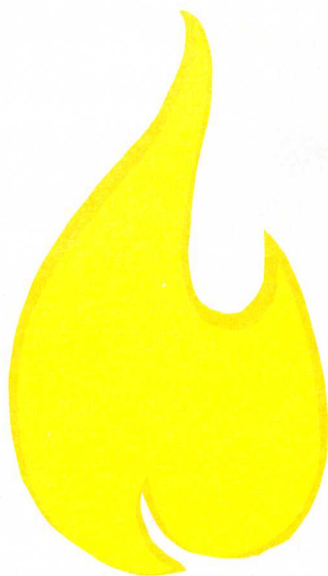
Lois Hoadley Dick

Purpose: *To emphasize the year's theme*

Song: "Send the Light"

Scripture: *Philippians 2: 12-15*

See Program Help Packet



YEARS AGO, when I worked at a fashionable resort in the mountains, I entered the gift shop in the middle of the day to admire the beautiful selections. I hardly noticed that all the dozens and dozens of lamps for sale were lit and burning brightly. They just didn't show up in that sunny room, or add anything to the light already present.

That night after dark I walked back to my cottage, alone. It was a moonless night, the kind that makes you grope with outstretched hands and shuffle your feet to find your way. I came upon a single lamp on a post only four feet high. It illuminated the path and shone clear across the dark velvet golf course. It was doing the job it was meant to do. And was it appreciated!

I thought of the lamps sitting all around the shelf in the sunny room, basking in reflected glow, cozy and companionable.

How like some Christians!



Lights in Dark Places

It is sadly true that Christians feel safest within the walls of the local church. The confines of the Christian home. The shelter of a Christian school.

Could it be we don't really believe in the message we preach? As far as some Christians are concerned, it is a first-century message. They are only half convinced it is as modern as nuclear weapons. As powerful as jet propulsion. As desperately needed as is a cure for cancer.

They have never lived out their message, because that would involve breaking away from the herd and standing alone, even associating with some "goats."

"We have heard the message. Can you show us the life?" intelligent Hindus and Moslems asked a missionary to India. How can a life—or light—be seen if it is hidden under a bushel? Christians have a tendency to bunch together like the Babel-builders of old who all spoke the same language and became very dependent upon each other.

A Christian worker was once invited to an evangelistic rally. "What is the purpose of the meeting?" he asked. "To win the unsaved," was the answer. "Then why don't you invite them, instead of Christians?" replied the worker. It was a revolutionary thought and hadn't occurred to the evangelist!

Sometimes it seems that Christians tie themselves down to meetings—meetings—meetings. Any sponge can

sit and soak up water, but we are supposed to be *lights*. A godly pastor once confided to me that he thought it a sin and displeasing to God the way a meeting was scheduled for every night and almost every afternoon of the week in his church. But he didn't know what to do about it. It is so much pleasanter to gather with those of like mind than to go into strange surroundings and face a little opposition.

The Christian warrior obediently dons all the armor of the warfare, meets with other warriors prepared for battle—then spends his time discussing the cold war. Wars are not cold unless the Christian spends his time sparring and negotiating with the enemy, instead of resisting, contending and fighting.

"Is a candle brought to be put under a bushel, or under a bed?" the Lord Jesus put it bluntly (Mark 4:21).

No, "lamps are not for sunny rooms, nor for the light of day. But for dark places of the earth, where shame and crime and wrong have been," the poet continued.



Rekindle the Flame

Mark 4:21 was the clinching argument to what went before—the parable of the sower. The sower obviously did not hoard the seed in his barn, nor distribute it among other farmers who had plenty, but went out to a variety of places and people.

How long has it been since you went seeking a Mr. Wayside, the type of unsaved person who is also down and out? Oh, I don't mean to thrust a

tract in his face, then hurry on, brushing the contamination from your clothes. But do you have a Mr. and Mrs. Wayside for a friend? Spend time with them? Even invite them into your home?

Have you been patient with Miss Stony Ground, who started out so gaily in her Christian life, then was a disappointment. Or the young Jack or Jill who may be in the church, but who are simply "impossible"? It isn't enjoyable to be around backsliders or worldly Christians, and of course you must have other friends who are a help to you spiritually. But have you left them completely in the dark, those who once had shining testimonies? Perhaps the company of your "lamp" would rekindle them.

Then there is Madame Thorny Ground—rich, talented, popular, busily enmeshed in her little circle of business. You find her shallow, tiresome—and busy. The cares of this world can mean any one of a thousand or more things. Martha was also too busy, the Lord dealt gently with her.

Mrs. Good Ground—what a pleasure to witness to her! She listens to the Word, receives it, brings forth fruit which contains even more seed to be sown, more than repaying you for all your labor. But someone had to go out into the darkness to reach her. And who knows, maybe one of the other three might have been a Mrs. Good Ground too.

An unnumbered multitude who followed Jesus heard this parable. Only twelve plus a few others asked for the deeper meaning. Only a handful of Christians today seem to see that the sower (the custodian of the seed) must "go forth" (Matthew 13:3). Seed won't thrive in flowerpots; wheat is not a hothouse plant.



Spiritual Darkness

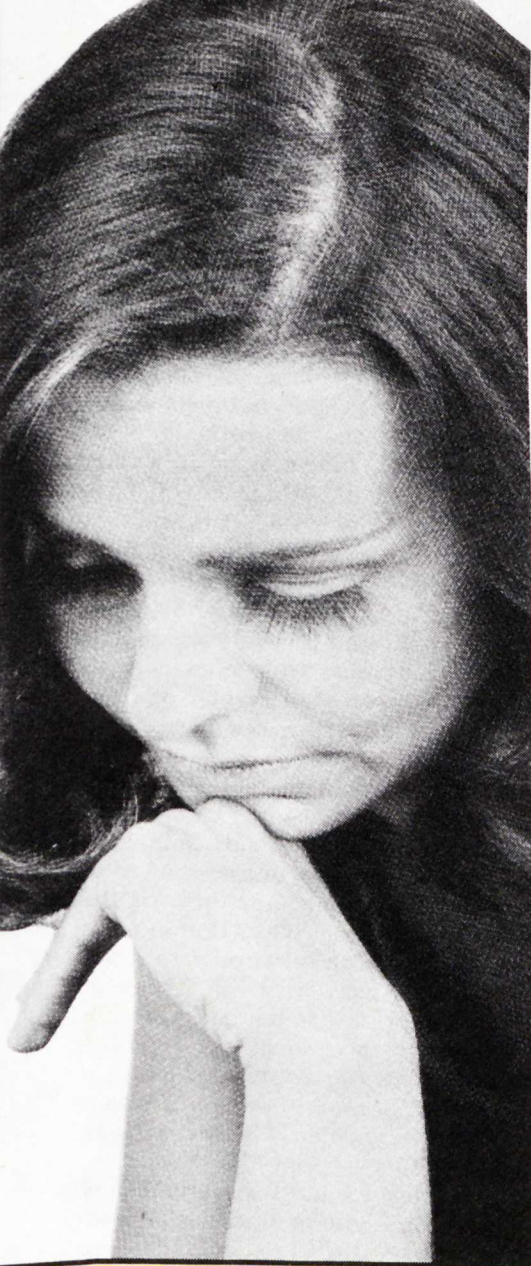
I think many of us will stand ashamed in that day when all lives are open to view . . . when our foreign brothers and sisters in Christ stand with us . . . and we see how they were really lights in dark places . . . and most of us were lights in bright, sunny places. To become a Christian in other lands means standing alone in a dark home, neighborhood, place of business, school—and in such darkness that the power of description simply fails. Mere children have shone in the midst of cruelty, depravity, suffering, have been sinned against—while we shelter our precious ones from contact with children who are "different," or from any situation outside our narrow experience.

It is a frightening fact that Communism, not Christianity, is the greatest missionary movement today! In one generation they have grown to control 800 million, one-third of the world's population. Why? Communists dedicate themselves wholly to their tasks, mix freely with all types of people, are willing to take inferior jobs and give up their social life to make converts. *They have taken over the method of winning souls that belongs to Christianity!* Can Christians claim such phenomenal success?

No, lamps are not for sunny rooms.

Next time you're tempted to associate only with Christians, dare to break out and include some of the unsaved crowd. Your light will shine brighter by contrast.

And those in great spiritual darkness will have the light of God's Word brought to them.



February Program
Susan K. Burgess

Purpose: *To help us evaluate our motives for helping others*

Song: "My Savior's Love"

Scripture: Mark 6:31-34

See Program Help Packet

THERE ARE many articles written today and numerous sermons given on the subject of taking time to aid and serve others.

Long lists of possible *good deeds* are included such as visiting the sick and shut-in, taking food to a bereaved family, sending cards to cheer, and even helping with a needy neighbor's housework. We all know *what* needs to be done, but do we know *why* we should do it?

The Preparation of Prayer

The disciples were busy men, trying to teach and work miracles and help others. In fact they were so busy that the Lord told them to rest awhile, "for there were many coming and going, and they had no leisure so much as to eat" (Mark 6:31b).

Day after day some women rush around trying to keep a clean home and clean children, trying to get all the church work done, and most of all trying to soothe their consciences by keeping busy. They frequently have to skip a meal to make sure everything is done on time.

Moved With Compassion

These women certainly can't find time for *coming apart into a quiet place* for rest and meditation with God, which are so essential to ministering to the needs of others.

It is through prayer that we become willing to be used as agents for meeting human need and obtain the attitude for meeting need in a Christlike way.

The Compassionate Lord

The basis of our benevolent work is the teaching and example of Jesus. He had a quality of spirit that caused Him to spend His time serving others. That quality was *compassion*. "And Jesus, when he came out, saw much people, and was moved with compassion toward them . . ." (Mark 6:34a). A combination of deep pity, mercy, and love, actually moved Him to physically and spiritually help this multitude. Compassion was the motivating force behind His miracles.

He performed so many miracles while on earth that John says if they were all written, the world would not be large enough to contain all the books.

Christ often healed in order to bring believers into His fold. In other cases He performed miracles because of the love He had for the saints. Lazarus was raised from the dead and given back to his sisters. Jesus shared their grief so deeply that He wept many tears. However, we can never forget that His greatest miracle is saving a soul from eternal hell.

His Sacrificial Love

The depth of Christ's sacrificial love

is indicated in the following illustration from the Vietnamese war.

Whenever a pilot went down in Vietnam, an alert was called for other pilots to assist in rescue operations. In a certain squadron there was no need to beg for volunteers because one pilot was always there and suited up before the request could go out.

On one particular occasion a fellow flyer was shot down where there was heavy antiaircraft fire. Several Viet Cong were in the area ready to capture the man as soon as his parachute landed. Immediately, he discarded his chute and began to look for signs of a rescue helicopter. But directly overhead at an altitude of 200 feet was the volunteer pilot in his light-attack aircraft. The landing gear was down with its landing lights glaring brightly. His anti-collision lights, his wing tip lights were flashing frantically. He was able to draw the antiaircraft fire and ground fire as he flew through the area. The downed pilot meanwhile jumped into a hovering helicopter and rode to safety as the enemies' attention was diverted. This naval pilot was willing to bravely sacrifice his life for others.

Jesus, too, was a volunteer. He volunteered to come down to this world to sacrifice His life for every person so that they might have eternal life. Christ has fought our enemies for us, overcoming death, hell, and the grave. When He looked on the doomed souls of humanity, His heart was so filled with compassion that He was willing to suffer everything for us. "God so loved . . . that he gave . . ." (John 3:16). Divine compassion became love in action, love which led to the event of Christ's birth, death and resurrection.

What Motivates Us?

Is Compassion our motivating force for church related work and the *good deeds* that we do? Or is it the mental stimulation that we get from an article or message? Are we visiting the sick and bereaved because we know it is what is expected of us? Perhaps some might even do these works for the praise and self-satisfaction they receive. Or, their consciences might bother them if they weren't doing as much as the other church members.

As followers of Jesus, we must follow His example. Our deeds must come from *compassion*. These can so reveal the Lord to sinners that they can see His love manifested to them personally and thus turn to Him as Savior.

We should have a sincere love for the saints of God. One family in the New Testament, the house of Stephanas, actually "*addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints*" (1 Corinthians 16:15). That word *addiction* which has gained such a connotation of evil is to become our goal for service. While the world is addicted to drugs, alcoholic beverages, sex, pornography, and satisfaction of self, we are to be addicted to serving other believers.

Let each one examine her heart in these matters. First, have you filled your days with so much busyness that there is no time for feeding your spiritual self? Or letting God speak to you?

Secondly, are you beginning these attempts because of your *compassion* for the object of your labors? Or is there a selfish motive behind your endeavors?

Thirdly, are you truly *addicted* to ministering to the saints? Do you care

for other Christians enough to devote or surrender yourself to them habitually or excessively? Or is your solicitude for the saints only spasmodic and irregular?

Our prayer to God should be, "Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me, and know my thoughts . . ." (Psalms 139:23). May we be *moved to action* by the *compassion* of our Lord Jesus Christ.

I'm comfortable . . . increased with goods . . . in need of nothing.

So lovely has been my neighborhood that I have come to believe everyone in the world lives as I do.

So efficient has been my medical care that I have forgotten those who live, grow ill and die without ever knowing a doctor's care . . .

So full has been my table that I find it hard to believe that millions die without every having had enough to eat . . .

So surrounded have I been by churches and schools that I cannot imagine a land without freedom to learn, a community without a library, a society where only on rare occasions does a citizen have an opportunity to learn to read . . .

So rich with friends have I been that I shudder to imagine what a lonely life many faithful Christians are called upon to bear for Him . . .

Is this "Life" according to you?

If so, we invite you to tread a new path and see a new scene.

We invite you to see the suffering of desperate people without means to get medical help. We ask you to see the lost without a Saviour, the homeless, the helpless, the discouraged . . . to see the need of prayer to hold up the hands of those who labour unrewarded in lonely fields of earth.

Purpose: *To show us our responsibility as "fishers" of men.*

Song: *"Throw Out the Lifeline"*

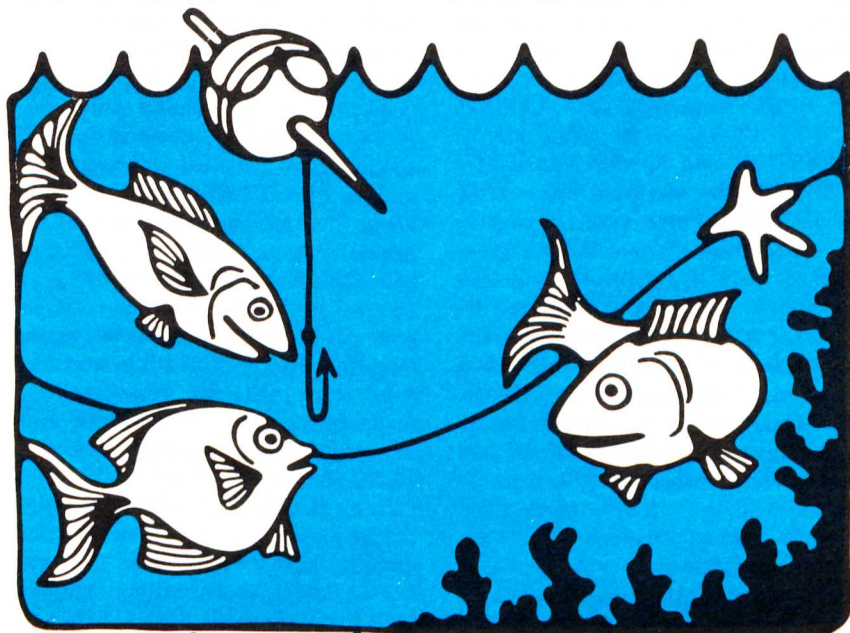
Scripture: *Luke 5:4-10*

See Program Help Packet

AS JESUS was walking by the Sea of Galilee, he saw Peter and Andrew casting their net into the sea, and he said unto them "follow me and I will make you fishers of men" (Matthew 4:18-19). On another occasion, Jesus said to Peter "Launch out into the deep...let down your nets...thou shalt catch men" (Luke 5:4-10). This command, which was given to Peter, is also given to you and me.

To launch, according to *Random House Dictionary*, means "to plunge boldly or directly into action or

speech." We have to move away from the shore before we can let down our nets in the depth of the sea of life where lost humanity is sinking in the darkness of sin. We are saved unto good works; not by good works. Paul makes this clear in writing to the Christians at Ephesus: "For by grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourself; it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them" (Ephesians 2:8-10). James says that we are to be "doers of the word and not hearers only" (James 1:22). "Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone" (James 2:17). Jesus said "ye are the light of the world" "the salt of the earth" (Matthew 5:13-14).



LET'S GO FISHING

He also said "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me" (Matthew 16:24). Are you willing to launch out into the deep and do some serious fishing?

A very important part of the fisherman's gear is the net. There are at least three special nets the fisher of men must have:

The Net of Faith

The first net is the net of FAITH—faith in the captain or commander of the ship. Jesus gave the command; he is the captain of our ship. As we leave the shore and begin to sail into deeper water (deeper Christian experiences), we often find that the sea of life is not always calm and peaceful, but sometimes very rough and turbulent. Regardless of how stormy and rough the waves become, the Master is always there. Jesus said "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee" (Hebrews 13:5). "All power is given me in heaven and in earth" (Matthew 28:18). On one occasion when Jesus and his disciples were crossing over to the other shore, "there arose a great storm of wind, and the waves beat into the ship so that it was full. And he (Jesus) was in the hinder part of the ship, asleep on a pillow; and they awoke him and said unto him, Master, carest thou not that we perish? And he arose, and rebuked the wind and said unto the sea; peace be still, and the wind ceased; and there was a great calm...even the wind and the sea obey him" (Mark 4:37-40). Paul says "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me" (Philippians 4:13). "For with God all things are possible" (Mark 10:27b). David expresses this very beautifully in Psalms

27:1 "The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?"

The Net of Love

The second net is the net of LOVE—a genuine love and concern for others is essential for any soul winner. Jesus said "love thy neighbor as thyself" (Mark 12:31). The good Samaritan had compassion on the man who had fallen among thieves. He stopped, possibly at the risk of his own safety, and gave assistance while the priest and Levite passed by on the other side of the road (Luke 10:30-35). Paul says "Love worketh no ill to his neighbor" (Romans 13:10). A hand grenade is thrown into the fox hole where four soldiers are seeking shelter. One of the soldiers throws himself on the grenade. When the grenade explodes, the soldier is blown to bits, but the other three soldiers are saved. "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends" (John 15:13). When the prodigal son returned, his father had compassion on him, forgave him and welcomed him home (Luke 15:11-32). Peter asked Jesus, "Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times? Jesus said unto him, I say not unto thee, until seven times; but, until seventy times seven" (Matthew 18:21-22). We can never reach the lost with an attitude such as that expressed by the Pharisee who "prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess" (Luke 18:11-12). There must be a genuine

love and concern. First we show; then we tell. Can the fruit of the spirit—love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance—be seen in your life?

The Net of the Gospel

The third net is the net of the GOSPEL—salvation for all people who will accept it. Almost 2000 years ago God sent his angels to earth to make three most important announcements or promises to man:

A Savior for all people . . . On the night of Christ's birth, an angel appeared to the shepherds "and 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 Savior, which is Christ the Lord" (Luke 2:10-11). The announcement—A Savior for all people! "He came unto his own, but his own received him not. But to as many as received him to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name" (John 1:11-12). Acts 10 tells us the story of Peter and Cornelius. God showed Peter through a vision that he was no respecter of persons. In Acts 10:34-35 Peter says "Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons; but in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness is accepted with him." Paul says in Romans 10:11-13 "For the scripture saith, whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed. For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek; for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him. For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." Listen to the words of the angel: "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 Savior, which is Christ the Lord." A Savior for all people!

He is risen . . . Approximately 33 years later, God's messenger had another important announcement to make to man. Luke 24:2-8 records this wonderful announcement: "And they found the stone rolled away from the sepulchre. And they entered in and found not the body of the Lord Jesus, and it came to pass, as they were much perplexed thereabout, behold, two men stood by them in shining garments, and as they were afraid and bowed down their faces to the earth, they said unto them, why seek ye the living among the dead? He is not here, but risen. Remember how he spoke unto you when he was in Galilee, saying, the Son of man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again. And they remembered his words." The announcement—He is risen! This was the certainty or final proof that Jesus was who he said he was—The Son of the Living God. Paul says in I Corinthians 15:19-22 "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable. But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." "Death is swallowed up in victory. O death where is thy sting? O grave where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ" (I Corinthians 15:54-57). Thank God for the empty tomb and

the blessed announcement: "He is not here; he is risen!"

Jesus is coming again . . . About 40 days later, God sent his messengers again with a blessed promise to man. When Jesus ascended into heaven, as the disciples watched the cloud take him from their sight, two men stood by in white apparel and said, "This same Jesus which is taken up from you, into heaven shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven" (Acts 1:9-11). Jesus made the same promise in John 14:2-3 "I go to prepare a place for you, and if I go and prepare a place for you I will come again, and receive you unto myself that where I am there ye may be also. In Matthew 24:42-44, Jesus admonishes us to "watch ye therefore; for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come. But know this, that if the goodman of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched and would not have suffered his house to be broken up. Therefore be ye ready; for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh." "But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no not even the angels in heaven, but my father only" (Matthew 24:36). The promise—Jesus is coming again! The admonition—Be ready!

Thou Shalt Catch Men

Not only are we admonished to be ready, but we are given a task to do. We as Christians are to send forth the good news of salvation. Jesus told his disciples "Ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1:8). "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father,

and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you and, lo, I am with you alway, even to the end of the world" (Matthew 28:19-20). Paul says "my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord" (I Corinthians 15:58). "For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater; so shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth; it shall not return to me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing thereto I sent it" said the Lord (Isaiah 55:10-11). Jeremiah said "the harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved" (Jeremiah 8:20). The saddest thought that we as Christians can have is "it might have been"—if I had done my part. Jesus said to his disciples "the harvest truly is plenteous, but the laborers are few; pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth laborers into his harvest" (Matthew 9:37-38).

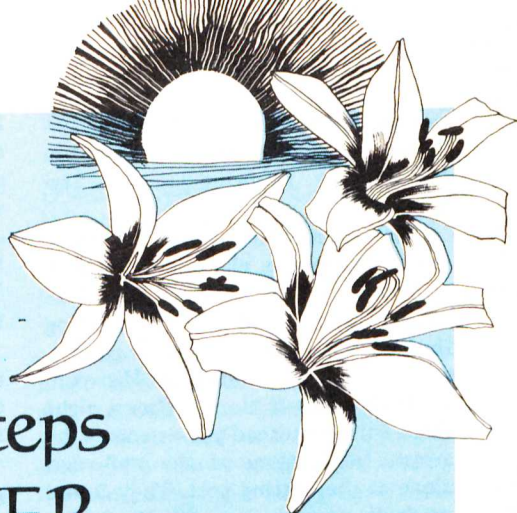
May each of us be challenged to mend our nets and launch out into the deep to fish for precious souls. May we say with Isaiah "Here am I, send me." The clock of life is wound but once, And no man has the power To tell just when the hands will stop At late or early hour.

To lose one's wealth is sad indeed;
To lose one's health is more.
To lose one's soul is such a loss
That no man can restore.

—Author Unknown

Pre-Easter
Season of Prayer Program
for Foreign Missions

March 24–28
by Rosemarie Cloud Laffoon



Five Steps Into EASTER

Scripture Theme: Luke 19:10

IN THE scriptures we find five steps into Easter. Each step begins and ends with a Christ centered theme, with each step serving as a topic in this week's lesson.

THE PROCLAIMED CHRIST

Opening Hymn: "Praise Him!
Praise Him!"

Hymn: "One Day"

Scripture: John 12:1-8; 12:19.

The world stage is being set for one of the greatest dramas of time. The scene opens around an oriental supper table. A woman enters with an alabaster box of ointment. She has come to anoint her Master's head and feet. The custom of anointing the head and feet of a guest was an ordinary act of hospitality and honor. However, it seems that only Mary of all of Jesus' followers comprehended His repeated announcements of His coming death; therefore this anointing held a much

deeper meaning for both Jesus and Mary.

The time was fast approaching that the King of Kings, the Lamb of God, was to be slaughtered for the sins of the world. It has been said that up until the time of Peter's confession (that Christ was the Son of the Living God) that Jesus had rather avoided the subject of his coming death. But after that time He began to tell them plainly. However, John 12:16 states that they could not accept his coming death.

With the supper over, the picture changes into the next day. Now we find our King entering the city, as had been prophesied concerning him, "Lowly and riding on an ass." Today He comes rightfully as the King with multitudes proclaiming His Hosannas. Yes, proclaiming *Hosanna to the Highest*. How ironic that He who knew no sin was sold for thirty pieces of silver into the hands of sinners.

Behind these scenes of glory, even while Mary was anointing His feet

and as the multitudes cried their hosannas, the evil force to destroy Him was at work. Knowing this, our Saviour came!

The triumphant entry has been made. The money changers have been cast out of the temple, His Last Supper ended, and the footwashing finished. Christ now enters the garden, and though surrounded by His own, He finds Himself alone. After a night filled with anguished prayer comes the arrest. He is alone at the trail, and alone at the beating post. They found no fault; none-the-less, they beat Him with a cat-of-nine tails. This was no ordinary whip, but one in which each tail had pieces of bone, metal, and glass fixed to it, to tear the skin of its victim. All alone Christ faced this and yet He came!

Close with a Circle of Prayer.

THE WOUNDED CHRIST

Opening Hymn: "Jesus Paid It All"

Solo: "A Crown of Thorns"

Scripture: Psalms 22:1-2; 7-8; 13-18.

Matthew 27:33-44.

In Psalms 22 we have a clear picture of the crucifixion even though it was written a thousand years before the ascension. It was written so vividly that one would think of the writer as being personally present at the cross. *Jesus' dying words, the sneers of His enemies, His hands and feet pierced, as well as His garments parted* are all statements that are not applicable to David nor to any known event in history. The statements all refer to the crucifixion of Jesus.

We find the Good Shepherd giving His life for His sheep just as we find a graphic picture of death by cruci-

fixion. The bones of the hands, arms, shoulders, and pelvis all out of joint; profuse perspiration caused by intense suffering; the action of the heart affected; the strength exhausted; then the extreme thirst; both hands and feet pierced; then nudity with the hurt to His modesty.

Luke records that one of the thieves saw Christ as his Savior. Picture a rugged, jagged, splintery cross, not at all like the ones that we see in pictures of Christ on the cross. Artists tend to paint out the true ugliness of this scene. Now, notice the crown of thorns He had pushed savagely down upon that blessed head, causing this mockery of a crown to pierce His skin to the skull. All this was done after a whole night spent in prayer; therefore, He was weak from the loss of sleep and the loss of blood in the garden. In addition to all this, He was beaten almost beyond recognition. (Isaiah 53:5).

On His bruised and bloody back they dropped that awful heavy cross and tried to make Him carry it up the hill to Golgotha. He was so weakened by all He had been through that He fell beneath the load. Simon of Cyrene carried the cross for Him. Up on the hill, they stripped and stretched his bruised and bleeding body on that rough cross. They spiked and tied His hands and feet to the tree. The little tilted board that they nailed His feet to was not tilted enough for the crucified to stand on. However, if it hadn't been there the feet, like the hands without the ropes, would have split and could not have held the weight of the human body. The Saviour of the world was bleeding, bruised, sweating, and generally weakened by the whole ordeal. They lifted Him and with a thud dropped His cross into a

three foot hole, thus pulling all His joints out of their sockets. Blood and sweat ran down, burning His eyes.

Halley states, "For three hours nature hid her face in shame at the unspeakable wickedness of men. Perhaps, too, she was trying to express her sympathy with the Son of God in His final death grapple with the powers of hell. God may have meant the darkness to be creation's symbolic mourning for Jesus while He was suffering the pains for the lost." This is not just a beautiful romantic love story conjured up by some long ago writer. It happened just as surely as you are here. Jesus expired at the very hour in which the Paschal lambs were being sacrificed in the Temple. Paschal lambs were the holy lambs used only for Temple sacrifice at the time of the Passover Feast.

AT THE FOOT OF THE CROSS

Looking back to the hill of Calvary,
These things at the foot of the cross I see:

A wreath of thorns, spattered with mud,
A broken spear, fresh tipped with blood;

Tears of a mother's age old grief,
Tears of joy, shed by a thief;
A piece of sponge, a broken reed,
Some worthless nails for which no need,

And tossed to one side is the sign they used:

"THIS IS JESUS KING OF THE JEWS."

A reed, a spear, a crown, and a tear,
To remind the world that Christ died here.

But one thing more—by faith I see,
At the foot of the cross there is room for me.

—Author Unknown

THE RISEN CHRIST

Opening Hymn: "*He Arose*"
Hymn: "*He Lives*"

Scripture: Matthew 28:1-10,
John 21:25

What a sad funeral our Saviour must have had. His disciples, mother, and followers with their dreams shattered, had lived with the greatest person the world would ever know, but now, alas, their leader had fallen into the hands of death. They were frightened, bewildered, and lived with the question, "What next?" With the sad weekend over, the first day of the week dawned and with it the rising of the Son. As these events transpired the little group of believers hid in Jerusalem.

But death could not keep its prey and our Lord was soon walking on the earth again. "He is not here but is risen" comes the voice of a heavenly sent messenger. Although our Lord told them repeatedly that He would rise on the third day, they were not expecting it.

Fear, mingled with great joy at the possibility of our Saviour's resurrection, filled their hearts. Confused and delighted they ran to tell the glorious news. Just as they could not accept his death, likewise their minds could not conceive his resurrection.

THE ASCENDED CHRIST

Opening Hymn: "*Did You think to Pray?*"

Hymn: "*Missions*"

Scriptures: Luke 24:45-47; Matthew 28:19-20; Mark 16:15-16, 19-20; Luke

24:49-53; Romans 10:14-15; Isaiah 6:8.

Suggestion: *You may want to assign scriptures in advance instead of trying to look them all up yourself.*

For 40 days the risen Christ mingled with His followers and gave them comfort with the knowledge that truly He was not dead but a living Saviour. Now the time had come for Him to return to the Father who sent Him. And yet as He made His departure, He gave us the command to tell the world, beginning with Jerusalem (Luke 24:45-47).

Missions has to start somewhere and it, like charity, should begin at home. But home is only the beginning. All nations must be taught (Matthew 28:19-20). We are to "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mark 16:15-16).

We are told just how our Lord left this earth in Mark 16:19-20 and Luke 24:49-53. We have heard these scriptures read and re-read. We have even read them ourselves. Christ's call is to "untold millions."

The Bible is a wonderful Book because it is our guide for living. Even though we aren't sent personally, we are instructed in God's Word how to teach others (Romans 10:14-15).

We must pray, give, and send to get the Word to the lost and dying world. And our first prayer should be as was Isaiah's, "Here am I; send me" (Isaiah 6:8).

Closing Prayer

THE COMING CHRIST

Opening Hymn: "*The King is Coming*"

Scripture: Luke 19:10

Solo: "*Remind Me*"

Scripture: Acts 1:10-11.

The same Saviour that ascended into heaven and gave us the great Commission is returning one day to claim His own. Some will be ready and some will not.

Perhaps we ourselves will not be called upon to tread on foreign soil in search of the lost, but we must be ready and willing to give our all. This means our husbands (should they be called to preached, serve as deacon, or in some other capacity), our children, and our financial help to missionaries.

Women, search your hearts and then look at the dying world around you. What do you see? In your heart you should find the peace that comes with the fact that truly *everything* you possess has been turned over to Christ. Everything you have is borrowed, you should have them ready for use whether or not He calls them into service. I've mentioned our families and financial aid, but where are our prayers and our time? Some people in our churches are overworked; shamefully, I might add. I know of one couple, where the husband is a deacon and the wife is a real deacon's wife. They both have Sunday School classes, both have C.T.S. classes, and the wife is also a working mother and is our assistant song director.

Can we as Christian women honestly say, "God you know you have our all, our time, our home, our food, our automobile, our money, and most important our family? If so, we can sum our lives up in two words, *selfless* *servant*. This is really what Christ will be looking for when He returns to claim his bride. May we be found worthy.

Song: "*Can He Depend On You?*"

Offering for Foreign Missions

Closing Prayer

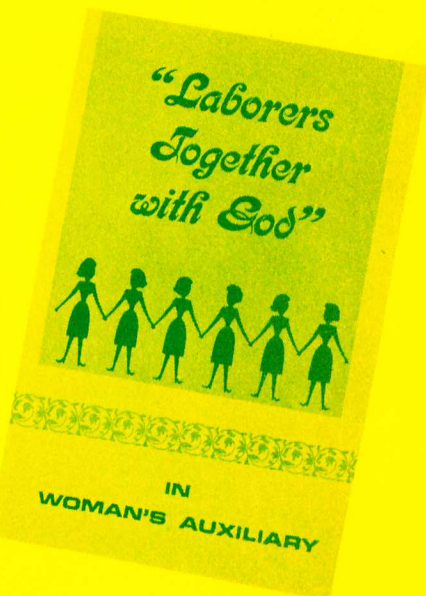
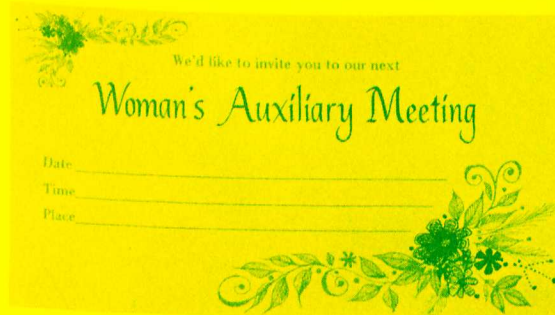
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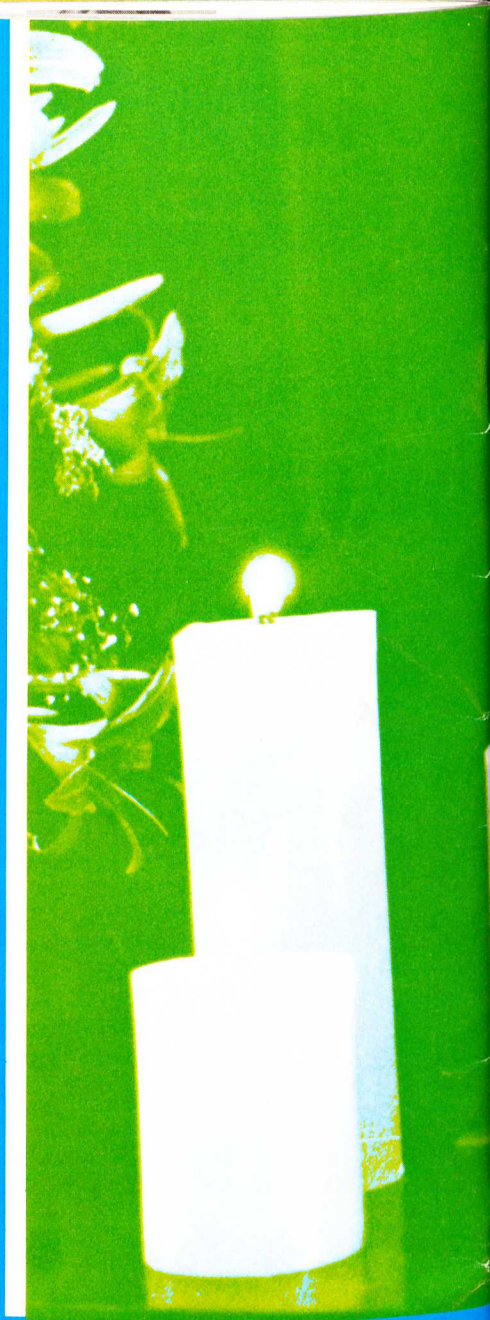
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