

FROM WHERE WE STAND -

No Place Like Home For Holidays

As the words of the popular song say, "There's no place like home for the holidays."

Home may be many different things to many different people. To some it is just a place to go to eat the meals. To others it is a place to go to sleep, and to someone, "Any old place I hang my hat is 'Home Sweet Home' to me."

To many it will mean Grandma's kitchen with its sights and sounds and delicious aromas. To others it will be the kitchen on the home farm with its equally familiar surroundings.

Wherever home is, at this time of year it seems to mean a little more in memories and anticipation of good cheer to come. Now is the time when the hearthside glows brightest. Now is the time of brotherhood—for all the world in kin as the days grow shorter and the weeks quicken toward the Yuletide.

All around the holiday spirit seems to join the family circle. Neighbors and loved ones drop in and greet each other just a little more warmly than at any other time of year.

People everywhere seem to absorb a little more of the spirit of the child born so many years ago in that rude manger, but we in the rural areas should be particularly aware of the meaning of this day.

The Babe of Bethlehem and the Man of Galilee knew and loved rural people. He spoke the language of the rural people. He taught the people of His day in the language of the farmers. Who could appreciate more than farmers the parable of the sowers, or the prodigal son who went out to feed the pigs and would fain have eaten as well as they. Who could understand

better than farmers what Jesus meant when He likened Himself to a shepherd caring for his flock.

To us, who would be like Him, is renewed at this time of year the responsibility of being our brothers' keeper. It is our responsibility and we should accept it with gladness and thanksgiving.

It is a sad commentary on the times that we will have to read of the hundreds of lives snuffed out in accidents during this day of gladness for those of us not personally affected. Traffic accidents will claim their toll, but many more men, women, and little children will meet death because of the very celebration we cherish so highly.

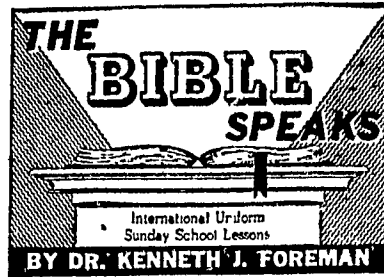
It is saddening to read of the many fires each Christmas day caused by faulty wiring or over dry trees. Burns and falls will cause heartache in many families because people become overtired or overanxious in the preparation of the big day.

This is a plea for caution in the homes across the land. A hope that none of us will feel the reproach in the days of the new year that might come from the knowledge that we could have prevented tragedy with just a little bit more prudence or patience.

This is a plea that we, each one, would become our Brothers' keeper during this joyous season.

May this season be truly merry for you and yours, and may home for you mean all the good things you think it should mean. May the Babe visit your home, and may you hear Him say, "Peace, Good Will To Men."

This is the most lavish gift we can give to you. At least that's how it looks from where we stand.



Bible Material: Luke 2 8-14, Acts 11 19-30
Devotional Reading: Isaiah 9 2-7.

Christmas Grace

Lesson for December 20, 1959

CHRISTMAS TIME is giving time; but not all "giving" is Christian. When a man at a race track drops a quarter into the Salvation Army lassie's tambourine, that isn't giving, it's only a tip to Lady Luck. When you give something to your Aunt Ginny although you hate to do it, but you know your cousin is going to send her something, and you hate to offend the old lady, that isn't giving, it's just protecting your interests. When you have a "secret pal" and you put a present for her (or him) under a tree, knowing that your s.p. will have one there for you, that isn't giving, it's a game of swapping. When you give away an old garment that you don't want to be seen in any more, that isn't giving, it's just cleaning out your closet.



Dr. Foreman

True Giving

The grace of Christmas is Christian giving. When is giving Christian? When it costs the giver something, when it is worth giving, and when the one who is to receive it really needs it. I might save up my money and spend a lot of it on a set of plumber's tools for Aunt Ginny, that present would cost me something but Aunt Ginny would have no earthly use for it. While it's fresh in our minds it would hurt none of us to go over our Christmas shopping list for 1959 and see how much of it was Christian.

All the same, giving is the grace, the special grace, of Christmas. It is a fitting way to celebrate God's greatest gift to us. It was about three centuries after the birth of Christ that the Christian church set a definite date for his birthday. Once begun, the church never gave up this custom. But the essence of

Christmas is not Santa Claus, not the tree nor the yule log, nor the mistletoe, nor the lights in the windows, charming as all these may be. The essence of Christmas is the grace of Christmas, and the grace of Christmas is Giving.

Not Always Things

Most of us think of gifts as things, things that weigh something on the scales, things that can be put into a pretty box and be wrapped up. Sometimes the best present may not be a thing of that kind at all. Our Bible story from Acts is as much a Christmas story as the one from Luke; for both have to do with Giving. The story in Luke tells of God's gift to us. First we see the Christians at Antioch giving the good news to that city. Since Christians had then no prestige whatever and were few in number, their "speaking to the Greeks" must have been personal conversations, not public sermons. They shared their faith, and that was the best gift of all. Faith cannot be wrapped in a package and it weighs nothing on the parcel post scales. But it is more valuable than any parcel that was insured this or any Christmas.

At Our Doors

Our Christmas-grace story from Acts also tells of a different kind of giving, which was Christian too. There are times and occasions when the "spiritual" gift is not the thing. Saint James saw this clearly. He raises the question with some one who has just sent a needy case away, with a blessing but with an empty basket. "Go in peace," this person had said, "be warmed and fed." If any one should ask him whether he gave that poor widow anything, he would have said, "Of course. I gave her my blessing, didn't I? I expressed my earnest prayer that she would find warmth and a square meal." "But you didn't give her any firewood or groceries?" "No—I gave something much better because it was spiritual: a benediction." O nonsense! James says such a man's "faith" is dead. John, a spiritual man if ever one lived, wonders if such a man has the love of God in him at all. Spiritual gifts are the best gifts—but if they go along with material selfishness, they are not gifts at all. A benediction may be an expression of the grace of Christmas; but so may a sack of potatoes. A Christmas gift is only that Christ would give.

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Davidson

THIS WEEK —In Washington With Clinton Davidson Farming In 1980

Not long ago some seventy farm editors from various parts of the country sat down together to make a forecast of what farming in the United States will be like in 20 years from now.

These were men who have watched the tremendous changes of the past twenty years and, because of their experience, they are among the best qualified to project those and other changes an equal number of years into the future.

I am sure that each of them, however, would be the first to admit that had a similar meeting taken place in 1939 none of them could have made a very accurate forecast of what farming is like today. Nevertheless, their opinions about the future are interesting and logical.

There have been more changes in farming during the past twenty years than

most of us would realize without stopping to think back. There are one-third fewer people living on farms, production per worker has more than doubled and mechanization has revolutionized farming.

Push Button Farming
Automation is the next great step in farming, the editors agreed. "Human muscles will be replaced by labor-saving, push button farm equipment over the course of the next twenty years," the editors agreed.

Machines run by electricity will do more of the farm chores including livestock and poultry feeding, watering and manure handling. Farm wives will have more labor-saving "gadgets" to help them with their household work.

The editors expect machines that will prepare the soil, plant, fertilize and treat for weeds in one operation. Six, eight and ten row equipment will become common.

Dwarf corn for combine harvest that will grow in narrow rows and set six to ten ears per stalk will more than double corn yield per acre. Shorter, stiffer strawed varieties of small game will permit heavy fertilization and produce yields of 100 bushels per acre.

Farm incomes to double
Farm surpluses will gradually be eliminated while farm size and individual farm income will double between now and 1980, the editors predicted.

They predicted that farmer controlled marketing organizations will take over the government's role in agriculture and gradually bring

production into line with demand. The growing population, increased foreign trade, and new uses for agricultural products will also help eliminate farm surpluses.

There was unanimous agreement that fewer farms, each of larger acreage but still family operated, will emerge over the next twenty years. Marginal, unprofitable units will be absorbed by the profitable ones that remain.

Farming in the future will require more capital investment, but fewer workers. The moderate size farm in 1980 may represent an investment of \$200,000 or more, in land, equipment and buildings.

Successful farmers will be skilled businessmen, usually college-trained in all phases of production and marketing. The average city dweller's impression of a farmer as a hayseed, already disappearing, will be completely gone by 1980.

Farm homes, say the editors, in the 1980s will be indistinguishable from those in the city and will offer the added advantages of fresh air, peace and quiet.

IMPROVED AERIAL APPLICATION OF HERBICIDES

Research at the Oklahoma Experiment Station shows that one of the problems of making aerial applications of herbicides for control of scrub oak and brush may be solved or at least lessened by a new type of spray and spray applicator. The new spray used in the Oklahoma tests is a thick viscous material applied through a centrifugal spinning disk applicator attached to the airplane. In tests using 2, 3, 5-T as the herbicide, the spray material did not drift or evaporate as much by the new method as by conventional methods. The Oklahoma researchers say the new spray and applicator have a particular advantage when winds are a problem.

Now Is The Time . . .

BY MAX SMITH



MAX SMITH

TO GUARD AGAINST HOG CHOLERA—A number of cases of hog cholera have been reported in this part of the country. The hog population is rather heavy in this area and all producers are urged to vaccinate against the outbreak of the disease. We do not know of any cure for the disease; prevention is the practice to follow. Your local veterinarian can give you full information.

TO USE SUPERPHOSPHATE IN BARN—The use of two pounds per cow per day in the manure gutter or 8 to 10 pounds per week in the steer barn per head is a good practice. Manure is low in phosphorus and so are the soils of this area. This is one way to build up the soil fertility as well as add to the sanitation of the dairy barn. Super-phosphate will do little or no damage to manure spreaders or to barn cleaners.

TO MAKE THE FARM POND SAFE—Many farm ponds are a very popular place in the winter for ice skating and contribute greatly to rural recreation. However, pond owners should be sure they are covered by insurance in the case of any injury or drownings. Also, it is recommended that some equipment be handy in case the ice breaks; inflated inner tubes, an old ladder, or several long boards, and a rope might help save a life.

TO BE CAREFUL — DAIRYMEN—Our government is getting very strict regarding the presence of drugs and antibiotics in food and feeds. The use of penicillin to treat cow udders for mastitis warrants your very careful attention. BE SURE that the milk from a treated cow is discarded for at least 72 hours after treatment. Be prepared for inspection sampling at any time. Many prevention practices should be followed.

Lancaster Farming
Lancaster County's Own Farm Weekly
P. O. Box 1524
Lancaster, Penna.
Offices:
53 North Duke St.
Lancaster, Penna.
Phone - Lancaster
EXpress 4-3047
Jack Owen, Editor
Robert G. Campbell Advertising
Director & Business Manager
Established November 4, 1955
Published every Saturday by
Lancaster Farming, Lancaster, Pa.
Entered as 2nd class matter at
Lancaster, Pa. under Act of Mar.
3, 1879, additional entry at Mount
Joy, Pa.
Subscription Rates: \$2 per year;
three years \$5. Single copy Price
5 cents.
Members: Pa. Newspaper Publishers' Association, National Editorial Association.