

FROM WHERE WE STAND

Peace On Earth - Good Will Toward Men

And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed.

And this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.

And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city.

And Joseph also went up from Galilee out of the city of Nazareth, into Judea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem: (because he was of the house and lineage of David.)

To be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child.

And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered.

And she brought forth her firstborn son and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.

And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night.

And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shown round about them; and they were sore afraid.

And the angel said unto them, fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.

For unto you is born this day in the city of David a savior, which is Christ the Lord.

And this shall be a sign unto you: ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.

And suddenly there was the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying

Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.

And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, let us go now even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord has made known unto us.

And they came with haste, and

found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger.

The beauty and simplicity with which the Christmas story is recorded in the Gospel of Saint Luke are in keeping with the beauty and simplicity of the life of the Man as he lived among men.

It is significant that the ones chosen by God to be informed of the birth of His son were the humble shepherds.

The wise men found out for themselves because they sought the truth, and the king found out because it was a threat to his selfish desires, but the simple farmers were the ones who received God's personal messengers.

Christmas is for the humble, the simple, the seekers for the truth and the right.

Christmas is for the children who accept without reservation the wonderful story, and the adults with child-like faith who can accept those things they have not seen.

Christmas is for farmers, who must rely on a beneficent maker for the life and strength to take the elements of nature and bend them toward good for all men.

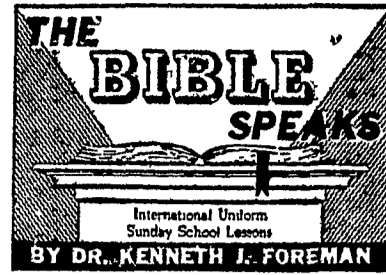
Farmers by their natures are humble folks who could hear the voices of the heavenly hosts if they came again tonight.

We should be thankful for the humbleness of the poor hill folks who lived above Bethlehem almost 2,000 years ago. If they had not been humble, who knows how the message of the birth of the Christ child would have been announced.

If the announcement had been made to the king, he probably would not have heard, or having heard would not have understood and believed.

Farmers and other humble folks will hear again this year the multitude proclaiming, behold I bring you good tidings of great joy, and perhaps the humble of the earth will bring the world a little bit closer to the peace and good will of which the angels sang.

At least that's how it looks from where we stand.



Bible Material: Luke 2.
Devotional Reading: Luke 1:46-55.

God's Gift

Lesson for December 25, 1960

ON THE last Sunday of the Old Year, it is fitting that our thoughts should go back along memory's lane through the shadows and sunshine of these past 12 months. But since the last Sunday is also Christmas, our minds go far, far back on the road of time, to a story we all heard as children. It is a story that ordinary prose can scarcely tell. The story of the first Christmas is told in poetry. The light of beauty shone on the child at Bethlehem. Not only in the gospel of Luke, but all through the New Testament, whenever a writer speaks of Christ's coming to earth, joy and wonder break all bounds. A baby was born on that first Christmas, a baby who was a statistic in the Emperors census. Some people live and die, no more than numbers in a census-book. But with Jesus it was altogether different.



Dr. Foreman

"A Great Joy Which Will Come"

Looking only at Luke, we select three expressions out of the first words about Jesus after he was born. The reader can do no better, if a little open time comes on this Christmas afternoon or evening—no better than to sit down with this second chapter of Luke and mull over the other things that were said about the baby and the child Jesus. The three thoughts where we center attention all come from the angel who spoke to the shepherds.

The first thing he said was "Be not afraid." It would have been a good thing if all the creeds, and all the thinking about Jesus that learned and unlearned men have done for the 20 centuries now nearly gone, had started at this point. A scholarly theologian had just finished preaching a sermon

about Jesus, one morning after the service an old man in the congregation, a missionary, remarked: "If what Jesus was like, the is how he managed to have friends." The theologian preached a book-Christ, the no joy about him, a Christ was correct but not complete. Another professor wrote Jesus and calls him "God on man." If that had been the angel should have said scowl, "Crawl in the dirt worms! God has invaded you about to attack, you have to hide." Not at all. This was news of a great joy which come to all the people Christ which is not a great joy does not begin with joy, is than a sad imitation.

"A Savior Who is Christ"

Christ is given many names in the New Testament. Three most important are here angel's words to the shepherds, Christ, Lord. What had, and has, to do with givenness of sins, was left providence for other men. God did not send his angels to construct the Shepherds in of the Atonement, they told a word about a Virgin. They were shepherds, theologians. They would not have understood such matters. But could understand "Savior" an Old Testament word times it meant God and sometimes it meant a man. "Deliver" presses the meaning the Testament puts into the Savior was always one who others what they most desired and did for them which could never do for themselves.

The shepherds understood other words too, Christ and Christ the Messiah, God's King, we have seen how the use was clung to through centuries. If this baby was the it meant that the long waiting hoping was over, God's was now at hand. And the word was not new. It was perial documents, it was imperial statutes, men had cruelly, and would die because they would not of Caesar "Lord." But here Lord, THE Lord of mankind of Caesar.

(Based on outlines prepared by the Division of Christian Education, National Council of the Churches in the U. S. A., Community Press Service.)



Davidson

THIS WEEK

—In Washington

With Clinton Davidson

Political Influence

Political experts who have been studying the election returns since John F. Kennedy nosed out Richard Nixon for the Presidency, have come up with some unusual and significant answers to "what happened."

The big question that at first puzzled the political experts was why the big city vote was, in most instances, overwhelmingly for Kennedy while in the rural areas outside the South, Nixon had a decided edge.

The thing that at first puzzled the researchers was the fact that Kennedy won in

the big cities where in nearly all instances the large newspaper came out in favor of the Republican candidates.

Fifty years or so ago the support of the newspapers in a large city was almost a guarantee that their candidate would win by a heavy majority in that city. The owners and editors of newspapers had tremendous political influence.

Times Have Changed

If the big city vote in the past election is any criteria, the political influence of the metropolitan daily newspapers once wielded has greatly diminished, if, indeed, it now exists at all.

It seems to be a reasonable conclusion that TV has largely replaced newspapers as a media of major political

power in the densely populated urban areas. People watched the TV debates, listened to the candidates, and made up their minds on the basis of what they saw and heard.

The significant and encouraging thing is that voters in November reached their own conclusion about the political candidates without paying much attention to the advice of the editorial writers in the big city papers **Radio & Small Town Papers**

There seems to be considerable evidence that in the small towns and among farm voters local newspapers and radio stations were, in the last election and have been for at least eight years an important factor, especially in the congressional elections. TV, of course, also helped rural voters make up their minds.

There are two big reasons why the weekly and small town daily newspapers are becoming increasingly influential in congressional elections. One is the gradual change over the past 50 years from highly partisan efforts of the editor of the papers to greater emphasis on reporting the facts with-

(Turn to page 5)

Now Is The Time . . .

BY MAX SMITH



MAX SM.

TO MULCH STRAWBERRIES—It is difficult to mulch strawberries by the calendar but usually the month of December would be the time to perform this practice in southeastern Pennsylvania. A two- to three inch covering of straw will protect the plants against severe winter temperatures and help prevent "heaving" of plants. Sawdust, ground corn cobs, peat moss may be used but be careful to cover the crown of the plants more than one inch deep with these materials.

TO KEEP THAT CHRISTMAS TREE MOIST—All tree owners should buy as fresh a tree as possible and keep the trunk of the tree in water or moist sand during the holiday period. This is very important in order to keep the tree from drying out. A dry tree in the house is a definite fire hazard.

TO CHECK THAT FIRE EXTINGUISHER—During winter months there is more activity in and around farm buildings. At times the fire engine may not be able to reach your building due to weather and road conditions. This places more importance on the need for one or more good fire extinguishers. Be sure they are in working condition and be sure every member of the family knows how to use them.

TO PROVIDE EXERCISE FOR THE DAIRY HERD—It is important that the milking herds be given daily exercise in order to have more healthy animals and a successful breeding program. Many successful dairymen turn their cows out each day (except real bad weather) for a short period; this adds to cow comfort and provides a chance to get the barn well bedded. Caution should be used not permitting the cows to lie down on the cold ground.

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RURAL RHYTHMS

CUTTING THE TREE

By: Carol Dean Huber

It's a special privilege this year as we go along with Daddy to cut the Christmas tree. There is some discussion of which one to choose; Shall we take along an axe or saw for Daddy to use?

The snow is soft and white, the woods are deep and still. We find the perfect pine tree upon a windy hill. Going home in triumph we sing a Christmas song; A happy day to warm our hearts the whole year long.