

# From Where We Stand . . .

## The Fragile Wall Of Respectability

Reprint by special request

He thought about it afterwards.

How had he been reduced, from respected citizen to common beggar, in just a few hours? How had it all started?

It was only a tiny spot of printer's ink on the cuff of his trousers, but the chain of events which followed produced a comedy of errors without much humor. Being reduced to begging is seldom, if ever, funny

He had worked late that day on a report promised before midnight. As was his habit when quitting time found him still in the office, he phoned his wife to tell her he would be late.

"Why don't you bring the report with you and finish it at home?" she asked. She said dinner was almost ready — would be by the time he could drive home — and the children liked to eat at least one meal per day with their father. He could take the report to his man after dinner.

He knew he was nearly out of gasoline and had planned to stop on the way home to fill up, but dinner was waiting and he hurried on thinking he would stop at the service station when he went out later in the evening

With dinner over and the report finished, he sat down for a few minutes before delivering the material.

Then he thought about it — that spot of ink on his cuff would dry and be hard to remove. It was a good thing he wore "wash and year" pants, he thought.

Into the laundry with his old painting dungarees he went. Onto the convenient shelf went keys, wallet, jack knife, change and other assorted pocket paraphernalia. Into the washer went the soiled trousers, and into the disreputable old painting clothes went he.

He really needed a shave. It had been a long day. But he would just drop the report into the letter slot and no one would see him. The hint of snow in the air made him think of his warmest clothes so he reached for his old sheepskin coat with the fur collar, and his old stocking cap. They didn't look so good, but he wasn't planning to be out in society. He pulled on his boots against the cold around his ankles, and he was on his way.

Pocket the report, he thought, and then stop and get gasoline at Paul's where he had a charge account. But the hour was later than he realized and the station was closed.

"Oh well", he said, "There are other stations open along the road."

When he had gone quite a distance from home he pulled in alongside the pumps of a strange gasoline station and reached for his wallet.

Truth came to him like a pricked balloon in the pit of his stomach. He saw in his mind's eye the convenient shelf in the laundry with the wallet on it.

Well, only one thing to do. Deliver the report and hope there was enough juice in the tank to let him reach home.

With the report delivered and the nose of his car pointed toward home he had begun to hope for the best when the engine sputtered and died

The lights of an all-night service station winked "GAS" invitingly in the distance. He turned up the collar of his old sheepskin coat against the snow and headed toward the lights.

He didn't wonder at the startled look on the face of the attendant as he walked up to the pumps and tried to explain his situation.

It wasn't lack of money that bothered him. Many times before he had been away from home with no money in his pockets, but now he had been robbed of his identity. He couldn't even prove the car he told the attendant about was his, and he certainly didn't look like he could afford a car of any kind.

His pleas, his improbable story, and the offer to leave his old sheepskin coat and his boots as security finally moved the heart of the attendant, and enough gasoline for the trip home was handed over.

He was thankful the attendant had not demanded the coat and boots as collateral, and as he trudged back toward the helpless car, he mused on the fates which had changed him from respected newspaper editor to common beggar in just a few hours.

"The wall that separates beggars from the likes of us is as fragile as a film of mist," he thought.

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

### ★ ★ ★ ★ RECORD AFTER RECORD

Last year we Americans established another record in beef production and consumption. It worked out to some 95 pounds per person. And all the signs point to another increase — to 97 pounds per person — in 1964.

That's the prediction of the chairman of the board of the American Meat Institute. It means that total beef production will reach the astonishing figure of almost 17 billion pounds this year. And total red meat production is estimated at 30.6 billion pounds — a figure that only an accomplished higher mathematician can adequately visualize.

In this spokesman's words, "The nation is fortunate in having a vigorous livestock and meat industry that is able to keep pace with this continually expanding demand for total meat. Satisfying this demand is a testimonial to the effectiveness of the free enterprise system and its ability to meet the competitive challenge."

That isn't all. The same spokesman foresees no general increase in retail meat prices in 1964. At the same time, while prices hold steady, disposable income — the actual amount of money we have in our pockets to buy the multitude of goods and services we need and want — is expected to rise. So: "This means that the American housewife will again be spending a smaller portion of her budget for meat, even though her family will be eating more."

Here is a happy prospect indeed — for just about everyone likes meat, eats it once or more every day in the year and, beyond that, modern dietetics tell us that meat is a prime source of mental and physical health and energy.



### Two Rich Men Lesson for January 26, 1964

Background Scripture: Mark 10:17-31; Luke 19:1-10.  
Devotional Reading: Luke 12:22-31.

RICH MEN are not all alike, any more than poor men are alike. Jesus knew both rich people and poor, though he himself was very poor. Unlike some poor men, Jesus did not hate a man for being rich; he did not love a



for that reason either. Luke tells stories about two rich men who encountered Jesus, and though he does not follow up his stories about them (for he was interested chiefly in Jesus, Dr. Foreman not in the people Jesus knew) he does give us hints as to what became of them.

**A study in contrasts**  
Aside from being rich, these two men, Zacchaeus and a young man without a name, were different in many ways. One was young, the other probably older, for the publican's game would hardly make a man rich overnight. One of these men was respected and honored in his community; one writer calls him a "ruler," an office holder of some kind. He was no doubt popular too; but the older man Zacchaeus was beyond a doubt the most hated man, or at any rate he belonged to the most hated class of people among the Jews. A publican was a tax collector, and in those days there was no fixed rate. It was the publican's business to squeeze the public for all they would stand, and instead of a salary, the publican, who had bid for his appointment, was allowed by the Roman government to keep whatever he could collect above the amount of his bid.

**Drawn by the same magnet**  
Did these two men, so different in most ways, men who probably never had met each other—did they have anything in common but their wealth? Even their

money was different; for the younger man had come, by his honesty, while the older man had not. But there was one thing that is true of both: they were attracted to Jesus. The young man expected that Jesus would speak to him; Zacchaeus had no such expectation. All he wanted was to see the teacher from Galilee. You may argue that this wasn't a very lofty desire—no better than mere curiosity. But it was something; and when Jesus gave Zacchaeus (and all his listeners too!) the shock of his life by inviting himself to dinner at the publican's house, Zacchaeus did not back away and make excuses.

But now comes another difference between these two men. The nameless young man had a definite question, about as important a question as could occur to any one: he wanted to know how to get hold of eternal life. He must have thought Jesus knew—and Jesus did. But the young man would not take what Jesus said. Anything but that! So the story ends with the greedy publican giving away half of what he owned, and offering to make good 400% any overcharges he had made to his Jericho fellow-citizens; while the young man went away sorrowful. He wanted eternal life, yes; but he wanted money even more.

**Two questions**  
Two questions come to mind, on reading these stories. Is money a bad thing in itself, so bad that if you have it you must lose no time in getting rid of it? The answer is no. The young man was challenged to give up all his possessions; but Jesus did not lower the publican for giving away only half. And some other comparatively rich people whom Jesus knew, he never encouraged to be rid of their wealth at all. Money is a dangerous thing, and for some persons is spiritually fatal. But Jesus did not prescribe this drastic operation for every one, any more than a good doctor advises all his patients to have their gall bladders removed.

This brings up the other question: Did Jesus mean to say that we can buy our way into the Kingdom of heaven? By no means. A man's money is not the measure of his true self. God does not reward us for being rich, nor for being poor. What he looks at is how we use what we have.

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## Now Is The Time . . .

BY MAX SMITH

### To Get Most From Your Machinery Dollar

Many dollars are invested in farm machinery, edonomists claim that far too many farmers are over-invested in machinery. In larger operations it may be best to own the various pieces of big machinery, however, in many instances it might be more efficient to hire the work done. When expensive machinery is owned, then it is strongly advised to follow the recommendations of the manufacturer in relation to care, operation, and maintenance. Stretch and protect these high investments in farm machinery.



MAX SMITH

### To Expand Cautiously

Many farmers have been forced into larger production units in order to spread the overhead and to attempt to meet expenses

Greater volume does not always result in greater net profit. Efficient production is still the goal to successful farming; it's not the amount of money handled during the year but the amount of profit left after all expenses have been paid. When we produce more than the market will consume, then we're in trouble. Better management in order to get greater yield per unit seems more fitting than larger enterprises that bring on greater surpluses.

### To Attend County Events

During the next two months a number of educational meetings and sessions will be held by our Extension Service, these will be conducted in order to bring the latest information to our county farmers. Our Penn State Extension Specialists will appear on the programs and be here to discuss your questions. We urge all farmers to take advantage of these educational events.

Home-owners might find the next several months a very good time to get the lawn-mower sharpened and serviced. Many service men will appreciate the work at this slow time of the year and the owner will not be delayed by the spring rush. Most mowers need blades or knives sharpened annually in order to do a very good job. Many rotary mowers continue to beat off the grass blades instead of cut them off, because the blades are dull.

### Maintain Health

As you grow older, you need just as much protein and as many vitamins and minerals to maintain health, reminds Louise Hamilton, Penn State extension nutrition specialist. But, you need fewer calories. Foods that supply protein, minerals, and vitamins, but fewer calories, include skim milk, lean meat, poultry, fish, eggs, fruits, vegetables, and fruit and vegetable juices.

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