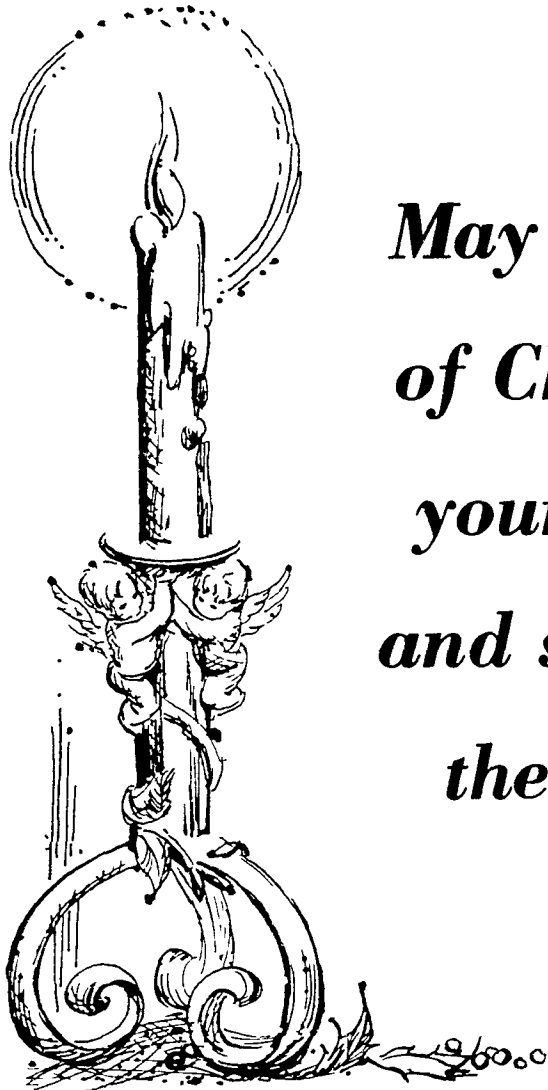


BY CURT HARLER, EDITOR



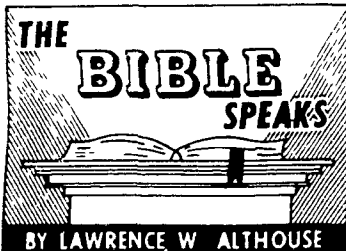
Lancaster Farming says...



*May the true meaning
of Christmas brighten
your holiday season
and shine throughout
the holiday season*



*Lancaster Farming's
Management and Staff*



BY LAWRENCE W. ALTHOUSE

CHRISTMAS PEOPLE

Lesson for December 23, 1979

Background Scripture:

John 1:1-8; 20:20-31;
21:24,25

Devotional Reading:

Luke 1:26-35.

People are fond of dividing

their fellows into various classifications and categories. Among these would be both the silly and the profound: left-handed people and right-handed people; optimists and pessimists; conservatives and liberals; activists and quietists; and so on ad infinitum.

The World Knew Him Not

In a sense, the writer of the Fourth Gospel divides the contemporaries of Jesus into two groups. One of these groups he characterizes as having rejected the Incarnate Word of God, Jesus Christ. "He was in the world," says John, "and the

world was made through him, yet the world knew him not. He came to his own home, and his own people received him not" (John 1:10,11). It was not just that the world rejected him as a stranger, but that the world should have recognized him as being of God. His own people, for the most part, though many had been waiting for the Messiah to come, did not recognize who he was or whom he represented.

The other group of people, as John sees it, obviously are those who did recognize and accept Jesus as God's Son. "But to all who received

him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become the children of God..." (1:12). Included in this group of people were many who would not have seemed likely to become his disciples. Some were Samaritans, Romans, Greeks, and, worst of all, odious sinners! Even Jesus himself noted this irony. One day, when told that his mother and brothers were standing outside, waiting to see him, he replied, "My mother and my brothers are those who hear the word of God and do it" (Luke 8:21).

Power To Become

Yet, this division between

the accepters and non-accepters of Jesus is not so much a separation of the "good guys" and the "bad guys". It is not so much that the rejectors are marked for punishment or even spiritual stigma, but that in neglecting to receive the Incarnate Word they deprived themselves of God's greatest gift: "power to become children of God."

For the next fifteen weeks the writer of the Gospel of John will be introducing us to some of those persons who encountered Jesus. Some of them, such as Judas Iscariot, Annas, Caiaphas and Pilate, belonged to the first group — they "received

him not." Most of them, however, including familiar names such as John the Baptist, Simon Peter, Thomas, and so forth, as well as nameless others (the man born blind, a paralytic, the woman of Samaria), belong to that second group who "beheld his glory" (1:14) and received "grace upon grace" (1:16). We might say that these are the Christmas people, who looked in a manger and saw not just a child, who beheld a cross and saw God's victory in the heart of the suffering Jesus the Word become flesh, the Son of God who "has made him known."



NOW IS THE TIME

By Max Smith Lancaster County Agricultural Agent
Phone 394-6851

TO CHECK

BARN VENTILATION

The proper ventilation of all types of livestock and poultry barns is very important during the winter months. When the warm,

moisture-laden air is not moved out of the area we usually get condensation on the windows, walls, and ceilings. This is especially true with little or poor insulation. Electric exhaust fans can move out the air and protect the building. This time of the year the barns are filled with livestock, these animals give off large amounts of

body heat. When condensation occurs it is a sign that some attention is needed; in most cases it is a problem with ventilation or with insulation.

TO STORE WOOD CAUTIOUSLY

The use of wood as a fuel is getting wide usage. Many folks are turning to wood to reduce their heating costs. The storage of this wood is

important in order to keep buildings from getting infested with insects. When wood is stored in a building for any length of time, the structure could become infested with powder post beetles or with carpenter ants. When stored in a heated building for a week or two, many other kinds of insects could hatch out. Wood can be protected from

the weather but should not be kept in buildings.

TO ORDER TREES

Land owners who are thinking of making a tree planting next spring should be getting their trees ordered. This is true with fruit trees as well as forest trees. Many nurseries are unable to meet the current demand for trees. To get the variety, size, and quality desired, the order should be placed in the near future. Most trees can be planted during March and April in this part of the state; they should be ordered now for delivery at that time.

TO PLAN 1980 FERTILIZER PROGRAM

Do you know what fertilizers you will be needing next spring? Have you had some complete soil tests run in order to guide your fertilizer investment? If these questions cannot be answered in the affirmative, then some attention might be

in order. Fertilizers will be more expensive next spring according to several sources. By placing an order now some saving might be expected. Good planning of the fertilizer program is timely and should help with maximum returns per acre. The consideration of farm manure, and the value of legume sods, should also play a part in a good fertilizer program. Consult your 1980 Agronomy Guide for additional details

RURAL ROUTE

By Tom Armstrong

