



Off the Sounding Board

By Sheila Miller, Editor

The very best gift

What was the best present you ever received for Christmas?

Answering that question would take some thought, because all the gifts I've received from parents and loving friends and relatives over the years have been so very special.

But, if I had to narrow it down to the "very best" present, it would surely have to be the present that was too big to wrap and came two months before December 25. What was it? Why, it was the chance to buy our farm.

Some folks might not consider that much of a gift, considering that it took six years of planning and saving for my husband Mike and me to come within arm's reach of owning a farm. But for us it was the culmination of a goal, a heart's desire, a childhood dream.

This will be our second Christmas on the farm. Holiday decorations don't abound since our rat-race pace keeps us pouring most of our efforts into "must-do" chores before heading off to face the challenges of our respective jobs, but the thankful spirit the season sparks can still be felt without all the glitter and garland.

We, like other farmers across the state, take a few moments at this special time of year to extend season's greetings to friends and neighbors. Whether through a colorful card or telephone call, a Christmas "hello" brings a smile from anyone on the receiving list.

And, if the rest of the world shares my

sentiments, it is so much more inviting to open a mailbox stacked full of envelopes when not one of them is a bill.

Not only are our Christmas greetings extended to friends of the "human" sort, but we, like most farmers, can't resist sharing our holiday cheer with our animals — slipping in an extra slice of hay to the horses, and dipping a little deeper into the grain barrel for the cattle. Even the canine "freeloaders" that lead dogs' lives on the farm find a hidden biscuit in their normally unadorned dog food dinners.

These holiday "spoils" of our livestock reflect the special feelings most farmers have for their animals. And, it's only fitting since animals were a special part of Christ's birth, too.

How honored farmers can be, knowing that of all possible settings for the miraculous birth, God chose a humble manger. Surrounded by sheep, cattle, and donkeys, the Christ child entered this world. Not only kings and princes witnessed the event, but shepherds who were watching their flocks that night traveled to Bethlehem to see Him.

As this Christmas season finds us milking while others drink eggnog, and feeding livestock while others dine at Christmas Eve parties, we need to remember that stable where so long ago a baby was born.

Yes, come to think of it, the chance to buy a farm was only the second best gift I ever received. Merry Christmas.

NOW IS THE TIME

By Jay Irwin

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To Review Partnership Agreements

There are a number of advantages to establishing farm partnerships, but an annual review of the agreement and its value in relation to current needs is essential.

I would like to offer a few suggestions for those who have entered into farm partnership agreements.

Once a farm partnership is drawn up, the agreement should be reviewed at least once a year. This should be done for two reasons. First, to see how well each of the partners is meeting his obligations... and secondly, to carefully evaluate the agreement to see if it is doing its intended job.

Then too, farming is a rapidly changing business. So don't be surprised if the agreement you set up just a couple of years ago isn't entirely adequate to meet today's needs.

So, review that agreement carefully. If it doesn't quite

measure up to current needs, plan to make the necessary changes before 1983 rolls around.

To Control Livestock Parasites

The winter feeding programs are underway and parasite infested livestock are poor money makers. Body lice are often found on nearly all species of livestock. In cold weather the heavy hair coats make it difficult to eradicate these pests. For best results, use two treatments at 12 to 14 day intervals. Some cattle operators will have automatic louse control devices filled with an insecticide. This is excellent and efficient - if the materials are kept in the equipment. In milder weather cattle can be sprayed with the material using cold water. Stomach worms should also be eradicated in order to make the best use of feeds. The local veterinarian can check fecal samples to determine the infection. You can not afford to operate with parasite infestation of any kind.

To Consider Machinery Purchase
Machinery manufacturers and

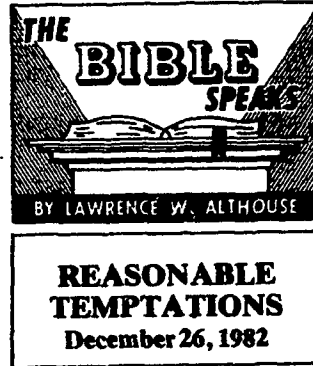
dealers are beginning to work down stocks of machinery. Most dealers still have a long way to go, though, as they will tell you in a minute. But one of these days the very attractive deals that are currently available will no longer exist. In fact, the USDA outlook claims that the time is coming when you'll probably have to order major items rather than buy them off the floor. That time, judging from the current and near term farm economic climate, won't occur for a while. If you have the financial strength to handle the deal, now is a very good time to acquire, either through purchase or lease, equipment you really need, claims Chester D. Hughes, Extension Livestock Agent.

To Protect Trees and Shrubs

Your trees and shrubs will be able to withstand the winter conditions in better shape - with a little help from you. Some winter protection might help save your valued trees and shrubs.

Thin-barked trees can be

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is no temptation at all. Note that all of the offers that Satan made to Jesus followed a kind of logic: Jesus was hungry, so if he was the Son of God, why not use his power to save him from collapse from hunger? There was nothing illogical about it. And when Satan showed him all the kingdoms of the world and offered them to Jesus if he would worship him, there was a logic to that as well. No less logical and reasonable was the challenge to prove his Sonship by throwing himself down from the pinnacle of the temple. The temptor was calling his Sonship into question; was it not reasonable therefore to attempt to prove it?

IT IS WRITTEN...

You and I never have to wonder if our temptations are real. We know they are. We know how reasonable they seem, how logical their invitation. That is why it is important for us to know that the temptations of Jesus were real temptations, for only thus are we assured that he can understand what it means to be tempted.

And because of the way Jesus responded to his temptor, you and I know that we too can resist temptations and find redemption when we have failed to resist it. Jesus fell back for support on what he knew about God. Each time, he said, "It is written..." and remembered important truths from God that had been handed from one generation to another: "Man shall not live by bread alone," "You shall worship the Lord your God, and him only shall you serve," and "You shall not tempt the Lord your God."

Defeated for the moment, the devil departed. But he would be back at an "opportune time." Just as he returns again and again to us.

Background Scripture: Luke 3:21 through 4:15.

Devotional Reading: Luke 3:15-20.

There are essentially two things that we must understand about the temptation of Jesus as recorded in Luke 4. The first of these is that they were real temptations.

Lots of people have tended to regard the temptation of Jesus as more of a drama than an actual temptation, as a setting simply for a confrontation between Jesus and Satan. It is hard for these people to think of Jesus as really being tempted.

HE WAS HUNGRY

"Really being tempted" means more than just having an attractive offer. It means having a yearning to accept that offer. Luke wants us to understand that the temptation in the wilderness was for Jesus a real temptation: he not only perceived the attractive offer from Satan, but he had some yearnings to accept that offer. That is why Luke tells us, "And he ate nothing in those days; and when they were ended, he was hungry." His hunger made the offer from Satan attractive.

Secondly, we must realize that the temptations were appealing because they were so reasonable. A temptation that is not reasonable

Farm Calendar

Saturday, Dec. 25
MERRY CHRISTMAS
Monday, Dec. 27
Lancaster Conservation
District meeting, Leola
Family Restaurant, 10
a.m.

Thursday, Dec. 30
Columbia County Annual
DHIA Meeting, noon,
Lightstreet Grange Hall.
Saturday, Jan. 1
HAPPY NEW YEAR



NO MAY THIS HOLIDAY BE FILLED WITH ADVENTURE AND EXCITEMENT FROM BEGINNING TO END!

From the L. F. News Staff

OTIS

