

"Remember now thy Creator in
the days of thy youth."

—ECCLES. 12:1

YOUNG PEOPLE'S PAGE

Voice of the Reformed Baptist Y. P. A.

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THE CHRISTMAS SPIRIT

Once again we come to the Christmas season. How swiftly the days and months have flown since last Christmas. It seems that we have hardly taken the tree down and put away the decorations. This is a joyous occasion, and a time of year marked by sentiment and fond memories of the past. How much Christmas has meant to us all, especially in our younger days! Around the Christmas season circles all that is best and most wholesome in family life.

What could be more blessed than to have the loved ones gather around the family altar and the family table on Christmas day, when they have come from far and near after months of separation? Oh, the beautiful memories of Christmas!

What would our lives have been with no Christmas? It is indeed deplorable that so many take Christmas as a day of revelry, when they desecrate the name of its Author and Giver. But this need not make others think less of the day, or make the day itself any less sacred and blessed. Even the unconverted all around us are better for the ideals and sentiments associated with the day. Nearly everyone will respond to some degree to the Christmas spirit, and feel a bit of thrill at the friendly greeting of "Happy Christmas." Surely the most hardened one must soften a little and respond to the tender appeal and enchantment of Christmas.

I have tried to imagine what the world would be like if it woke up on the morning of December 25th and there was absolutely no Christmas spirit. No more story of the Christ Child, no more Christmas carols, no more Christmas greetings from our loved ones and friends, no more friendly handshakes with the hearty and familiar "I wish you a happy Christmas."

I presume almost everyone is familiar with the letter of a little girl named Virginia, and the reply, when she wrote to the editor of one of the big New York papers to ask him if there was really a Santa Claus. The reply was most beautiful and has become classic in our literature. The editor said in his reply, "Yes, Virginia, there is a Santa Claus." He did not try to convince her of one with reindeer and sleigh and jingling bells, but he told her of the tender and compassionate spirit of love and kindness that went out to bless and comfort others along the pathway of life. We can yet say, thank God, there is a Santa Claus! God pity us all if there were not!

As a people we have personified the Christmas spirit in the jolly old saint, but it would be exactly the same if we called it "Father Christmas" as they do in England, or used some other term. He must be a hard person indeed who can be a Scrooge, like the character by that name depicted by Charles Dickens in his famous Christmas carol. It took the ghost of his friend Morley, and a vision of some of the extreme wretchedness of some poor folk to mellow him down to believe in any Christmas benevolence, but at last even Scrooge himself responded to the Christmas spirit, and became happy in giving to others.

Personally, I thank God I was brought up under the teaching and influence of the old-fashioned Christmas. It never did me any harm even to believe in Santa Claus, but when I found Christ as a personal Saviour, it en-

hanced and glorified every good sentiment and ideal I had possessed before, and made all that went with the season more delightful and blessed.

To enjoy Christmas supremely, one must have not only the Christmas spirit, but the spirit of Christmas. I mean by this that we must have the spirit of Christ, for after all it is the spirit of Christ that makes the real Christmas. There is a deep difference. We may have the Christmas spirit for a few days, but if we have Christ Spirit we have the spirit of Christmas all the year around.

Wishing all readers of the Highway a very Happy Christmas.

H. C. MULLEN.

SING OF HIS GRACE

John Bunyan Smith

Perhaps some of us who belong to the household of faith have hung our harps on the willows. Then let us take our silent harps, tune them in harmony with our Father's will, and sing again the songs of the redeemed.

Christianity sings not only in the day but also in the darkest night. Songs in the night are signs of the morning. Such songs defeat despair, recommend our faith to a songless world, and are a great lubricator for the friction of life.

Let us praise God that, though we may be poverty-stricken, He is not. Too many Christians are singing a dirge. Let them take their Thanksgiving harp and sing.

The night of despair and disappointment, disease and death, may have beclouded and befogged our pathway. Thanksgiving season is the time to sing our songs of hope and praise in the night. Such singing of our thanks brings joy in the morning.

Let us join with the great group of noble souls who have started us singing. Thank God for Matheson, who sang in the gathering gloom, "O Love that will not let me go"; for Lyte, who struck a responsive chord in human hearts with "Abide with me, fast falls the eventide," when the walls of his life were crashing in ruin about him; for Fanny Crosby, who, her blind eyes jeweled with tears, caroled, "Draw me nearer, blessed Lord"; for Mattaniah, who, in Old Testament days, used his priestly office to teach the people to sing; and for Jesus Christ, who walked bravely out of the upper room into the garden of grief and death after "they had sung an hymn."

Shall we not tune up our Thanksgiving harps and join together in singing an old song of praise on this new Thanksgiving day?

—The Pilot.

WHEN HIS HAND IS HOLDING MINE

By Leon E. Cogswell

Once I wandered in a woodland,

Going fishing with my dad,

And a jellier companion

No small boy has ever had.

And the fear of bears and wildcats

Made the chills run up my spine

But I felt secure from danger,

When his hand was holding mine.

Now, I have a Heavenly Father,

Watching o'er me, day and night,

Caring when my footsteps falter,
Urging me to do the right,
And I pray that He will guide me,
(Now, that I am older grown)
That he'll always walk beside me,
Keep His hand within my own.

When the tempter in his fury,
Tries to turn me from the track,
When the future seems uncertain
And I fear I must turn back,
And I pray in faith, believing:
"Keep me, Lord, forever Thine,"
Then He leads me through temptation,
For His hand is holding mine.

When the hour of sad bereavement
Leaves me with a vacant chair
And when trouble, pain or heartache,
Seems far more than I can bear;
He, with tenderest compassion,
Reaches down with love divine
And he leads me through the valley,
While his hand is holding mine.

When my testings here are ended
And I've reached the river's side
And I gaze with some misgivings,
O'er the waters, dark and wide,
Then there'll be a swift transition,
To that land of joy sublime,
For he'll lead me safely over,
With his hand still holding mine

PREPARE YE THE WAY OF THE LORD!

"Behold, I come quickly." So come, we beseech Thee;

But what are we doing to hasten the day
When earth shall be filled with the light of
Thy glory,

To bring back the King from the land far
away?

Are we sowing the seed on the field and the
wayside?

Or reaping the harvests long waiting and
white?

Are we keeping our lamps filled and shining
and burning,

And holding them high in the darkness of
night?

"Behold, I come quickly." So come, we entreat
Thee;

But how are we helping to answer our
prayer?

Do we gather the stumbling-blocks out of the
highway,

And make smooth the path for the feet that
walk there?

Are we doing Thy will? Are we giving Thy
message

To souls Thou hast loved and redeemed on
the cross?

Do we show forth Thy grace to the sad world
around us?

Thy patience in trial, Thy comfort in loss?

We watch for the signs, and we love Thine
appearing,

We long for the peace that Thy kingdom
will bring.

But what are we doing to hasten Thy coming?

And how are we helping to bring back the
King?

—Selected.