

Sisters All!

Dear Martha,

The holiday season is going fast, and it will soon be 1963. Grace and Paul left for home yesterday morning, to be back for their own Watch Night service. It was wonderful to have them with us a little while which is all we ever have our loved ones with us on this earth. They are busy in their church work and excited over plans for the future, especially the prospect of having their first baby next summer.

Delighted as I was at the news, at first I had mixed feelings about becoming a grandmother. It made me feel very middle-aged. But that was only a passing reaction, and I must admit that my enthusiasm is rising daily. However, it did stir me up to do a little thinking about my time of life and its relation to the Christian outlook.

It's natural enough for the young to be full of eagerness and zeal, but middle age can dampen the ardor of even the most confident of us. We tend to become complacent and rather dull, as well as a bit bored with youth's combination of wide-eyed wonder and self-preoccupation. After all, we have been through it all, and behold, it was not half so exhilarating in reality as in imagination. It has all happened so many times—birth, marriage, children, death, interspersed with a multitude of inconsequential events. What is it all for? Where does it lead?

Frustrating as they are, these are questions we cannot answer fully this side of eternity. Some have tried to find reality by strict self-denial—the Stoics. Others simply said, "Life has no meaning, and so I'll live for pleasure alone." But there have always been some men of insight who have seen God as the answer: the prophet Isaiah, David before him, Moses, and still earlier, Abraham, the patriarch.

Yet, in spite of the strong and unique contribution of the Jewish faith in their one God, a dimension was lacking. What was it? Precisely the thing that is wanting in our present-day, civilized, respectable existence. The Jewish religion was notable in its emphasis on ethical behaviour, with a code that demanded strict and fair payment in kind for every good deed and every injury. Micah's formula for righteousness, "to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God," was a high standard for those dark times. But it was still a drab, legalistic religion, burdensome to follow, quick to punish transgressors, and somehow missing a spark of vitality.

Then Christ came. He lived the life of an ordinary mortal, with its succession of small human crises, its disappointments, its apparent futility. But He had an inner radiance that glowed warmly from Him, imparting a spirit of adventure to every life that touched His. Thus, wherever Christians were on the scene, life could not be monotonous, because it was no longer a matter of law; therefore, it was not predictable. When a man was a follower of Christ, you might hit him in the face and you couldn't even be sure he would hit you back! Moreover, the ancient, paralyzing fear of death was swallowed up in a new and lively awareness of eternal life, in which the end of man's existence on earth was merely an incident.

All this must have been what Jesus meant when He said, "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it in all its fulness" (R.S.V.). Without that "fulness" of eternal significance, the good things in life are empty because they are transitory; the evil is an inescapable and intolerable bondage.

When one is in Christ, ordinary occurrences are transformed. Every human contact is a potent means of expressing His love and our own ultimate concern. We care about anyone and everyone, and so all that happens

HOME MISSION RECEIPTS

September - November

Aaron Churchill	20.00
Wood's Harbour	10.00
Seal Cove	100.00
Gospel Jets	13.00
Fort Fairfield	47.49
Mrs. Emma Dow	100.00
Moncton	130.00
Mrs. D. C. Doucette	5.00
Victoria Corner	25.00
Westchester	20.00
Black's Harbour	75.00
Norton	6.25
North Head	22.00
H. G. McCrea	25.00
Sandford	60.00
Jonesport	37.50
Gospel Jets	210.00
Killams Mills	50.00
Calais	10.00
Grey's Mills	20.00
Barker's Point	100.00
Old Town	15.00
Digby	10.00
Houlton	6.50
East Ferry	10.34
Sandford	75.00
Perth	75.00
Saint John	140.77
Marysville	335.00
Gordonsville	12.00
Crystal	9.75
Norton	10.00
Doaktown	10.00
Moncton	200.00
Presque Isle	33.50
Bristol	20.00
Glassville	16.00
Victoria Corner	15.00
Lr. Hainesville	15.00
Black's Harbour	66.00
Fort Fairfield	165.77
Millville	60.00
Gospel Jets	108.00
Brazil Lake	5.00
Mrs. D. C. Doucette	5.00
Wood's Harbour	12.00
Westchester	5.00
Mrs. Ruth Tidd	5.00
Roy Hatt	10.00
Beals	187.25
Mrs. Arthur Cook	20.00
Brazil Lake	20.00
Grand Harbour	45.77
Woodstock	144.25
Woodward's Cove	34.00
Gospel Jets	154.00
Yarmouth	51.35
Sandy Point	25.00
Old Town	10.00
Jonesport	37.50
Old Town	5.00
Victoria Corner	10.00
Hartland	75.00
Grand Harbour	13.03
Calais	10.00
Gospel Jets	21.00
U. S. Premium	8.95
Interest	101.25

TOTAL \$3,510.21

The response to the "Home Mission Day" is encouraging. Approx. 30 churches were heard from. **THANK YOU!**

G. A. Inman, Treasurer.

truly matters. We live sharply and richly Sometimes it hurts, but its beauty takes our breath away.

Middle-aged as I may be, I am still excited by today's events and tomorrow's possibilities. I have so many things yet to learn, such immeasurable grace to try to absorb, so much of Christ's love to express in my corner of this needy world.

We are coming to a New Year, with its three hundred and sixty-five new days. We have a New Covenant, in which God's universal law may be written into our very hearts and minds, instead of being hidden away in dusty volumes. We look forward to a new heaven and a new earth—"Even so, we should also walk in newness of life." (Rom. 6:4)

Hezekiah's hymn of praise in Isaiah 38:16* is my prayer for this New Year: "O Lord, with thee are the days of my life, thine alone is the life of my spirit. Oh, restore me to life, and make me live."

Your loving sister,

Mary

*R.S.V. Oxford Annotated Bible

The King's Highway