

The King's Highway

AN ADVOCATE OF SCRIPTURAL HOLINESS

VOL. XXXIX

MONCTON, N. B., OCTOBER 15, 1962

No. 18

What the Church Means to Me

by Ethel Mullen Young*

"Our church never does anything for us," said the fourteen-year-old in my Sunday School class that morning. I knew from her tone of voice that she was not expressing a concern over the fact that the church did not provide enough areas of service for her age group, but rather that our congregation had not entered into full-scale competition with the school and other groups in providing enough weiner roasts and pizza parties to keep the younger set amused.

I very gently reminded her that the class project for the previous Thursday night to roll bandages for the medical missionary box, which had been so enthusiastically discussed the Sunday before, had been abandoned to the older ladies of the church in favor of a basketball game.

In spite of my justification, my family found me very occupied as I peeled the potatoes for Sunday dinner. "Our church never does anything... our church never..." Was the church failing her age group? Or was she too spiritually immature to understand and appreciate the true purpose of the church? Had she confused pizza with prayer, and weiner roasts for worship?

As I dried the dishes I was still troubled and I realized how superficial my answer had been! I wanted to call her up that minute and say: "Oh Debbie, if you only knew what the church has done for you!" I thought of her father—once a tall, tough marine—a quick-tempered Dutchman, beautifully saved, tithing his money, teaching a Sunday School class; her mother—a gentle, serene woman with a deep faith and a quiet devotion. Both of them converted at the altar of the church which never did anything for her.

Then as I put the last dish up in the cupboard, my thoughts became intensely personal: Well, what has the church done for me?

It gave me the priceless heritage of grandparents and parents who feared the Lord. I don't remember when I murmured my first prayer or first asked God to forgive me of my sins. Never in my home did I see a cigarette smoked or hear God's name taken in vain. Never did I see a cheap magazine or hear bawdy music. But I did see love, joy, and contentment; I heard my father's voice in prayer.

I heard the Bible read, and it was in my home that I was introduced to some of the most Heaven-inspired music in the world. I will never forget the image of my father as he cupped his hand over his ear and bent near the speaker of our old radio to catch some of the words of Handel's "The Messiah".

I don't remember any church-sponsored pingpong tournaments or ice-cream socials, but I do remember the prayer meetings. It was there that with childish audacity I peeked through my fingers and watched the faces of the people as they prayed. As I watched the tears slowly trickle down, a whole new dimension of

"LIFT HIGH THE CROSS"

The Denominational Sunday School Contest begins the first Sunday in November under the above title.

Let every Church put an emphasis on the Sunday School Program during November.

Pastors have been notified and material has been offered to each church at very little cost.

Send in your \$2. to enter the contest to: Rev. W. L. Fernley, 23 Belgrave St., East Saint John, N. B.

May God grant to us all the Greatest Sunday School month in the history of our Denomination.

Everyone praying, working, and witnessing will be the means of an increase in attendance in every Church.

Rev. W. L. Fernley
Sunday School Promotion

spiritual insight opened up to me. These people were talking to God! They were not only talking to him, but they somehow had a hold on him, and they would not let Him go!

Then there were the worship services when I sat with my mother in a pew 'way up front. How could I ever forget the wonder and awe which caught me up and held me at the unsurpassed imagery and adoration of "Oh, Worship the King"? Or the courage and blazing faith in "Faith of Our Fathers"? And it was hardly a worship service to Father unless we had sung "Love divine, all love excelling, Joy of heav'n, to earth come down!"

The church gave me a Christian college to attend where the value of learning carried more than a price tag. To paraphrase a famous political personality, it made her students ask the question: "What can I do for the church?" and not "What can the church do for me?" It was there that I found the finest and most lasting friendships. It was there that I met and married a Christian.

Now the church has given my husband a place to serve in the ministry as it did my father for over forty years. Now it is serving my children. Last Sunday my three-year-old rushed up to me after Sunday School and triumphantly lisped her memory verses in my ear: "I am the Good Shepherd" and "Be not afraid, only believe." And as the morning sunlight cast a ray of glory over the sanctuary as we rose to pray together, my query was answered: The church has done everything for me.

*6126 San Rolando Way
Buena Park, California