

The Unspeakable Gift

In translating 2 Cor. 9:15 the New English Bible puts it, "Thanks be to God for his gift beyond words."

That describes well our feeling at this time of year. Thanksgiving to God is necessary. Dare we forget? But words do not express it adequately. Something beyond words is forthcoming when we gaze at the lowly Christ-child and when we scan the sky for Bethlehem's Star. Words do not express our amazement at the Angel's Song and the Shepherd's Story. The whole drama of the Incarnation is filled with such awe and wonder that before it we share the Apostle's predicament—a word shortage. But words are not the only means of expression and communication. In fact, words often confuse the very idea that we seek to express.

What about worship?—Not the mere recitation of hymns and prayers, in whatever church they may happen to be; nor the formal presentation of ourselves at an appointed meeting place. This is not true worship.

The worship we mean is that which springs from a genuinely humble heart, touched by Divine Love, and which in utter simplicity and reverence bows itself before God. There in acknowledgement of our dependence upon Christ and his grace we commune, spirit with Spirit. It is here that we experience the sacred fire of God's altar and the shekinah glory of his presence. It is here that thanksgiving finds its highest expression.

And what about sacrifice? No worship is complete without it. The sacrifice that pleases God is that of a broken spirit and a contrite heart, the sacrifice of ourselves in total abandonment to God.

Let us come again this year with thanksgiving to Bethlehem's manager. But let us come with thanksgiving that is more than empty words from hearts that are proud and cold. Let us come, rather, and lay before God our best gifts—the love of a warm heart, the adoration of a humble spirit.

STORY OF SILENT NIGHT

Clyde H. Dennis

On Christmas Eve in 1818, Franz Gruber, church organist in the little town of Oberndorf, Bavaria, made an alarming discovery. The organ would not play!

For several days previous to Christmas Eve, Oberndorf had been snow-bound. Gruber, knowing there was no one in Oberndorf capable of repairing the organ, was afraid there would be no music for Christmas. He could hardly imagine Christmas without music.

Quickly he went to the vicar, Joseph Mohr, and told him his story. He asked Mohr to write a new Christmas song which would be easily sung without the use of the organ.

Later as Mohr sat reading Christmas stories from his Bible . . . "Unto you is born this day in the City of David a Saviour . . ." the words welled up in his soul like a heavenly anthem. Long into the night he sat meditating on them. As the full meaning gripped his soul, he wrote a poem about the wondrous story.

Early the next day, Gruber took the newly written words and composed a melody. Now the people were gathering at the church. There was one man who could pick out tunes on a guitar. He was asked to accompany the new carol.

The people of Oberndorf loved the song immediately . . . and thus Joseph Mohr and Franz Gruber gave to the world one of the most beautiful and best loved of the

Christmas carols. It was not long before the Tyrolean Singers took the song to America. For years it went under the title, "Song from Heaven." It was more quickly and better known in America than in Europe and today, "Silent Night" is sung in nearly every language of the world.

Oh, that the real meaning of Christmas would grip each one this season as, like Joseph Mohr, you consider these glorious words: "Unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord (Luke 2:11). This Saviour is unto you . . . you who have gone astray, you who are burdened with many cares, you who need the forgiveness of sin.

Christ the Lord came into this world for you. He died on the cross for you. He shed His precious blood for the putting away of your sins.

Tonight will be a "silent night" and a "holy night" in your soul if you will trust in the Saviour, Christ the Lord. "God so loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins" (I John 4:10).

WHITHER?

The innkeepers looked and shook their heads. "No room—pass on."

Pass on? Whither?

Once more Joseph knocked on the door of an inn. This was the last in the village. Fear and hope mingled in his breast. To have Mary again ask, "whither?" would be more than he could bear. They must find rest here.

The abrupt opening of the door and the rough voice jolted his tired mind. Before he asked, "Is there room in the inn?" he knew deep within his heart the answer would be "No!"

But wait—

The innkeeper's voice softened, "The stable—yonder. Sleep there for the night if you like."

Joseph thanked him. Gently, with a caress in his voice, he told Mary that their journey was at an end. Shelter had been found—at least for this night.

Thus did Christmas dawn. No room for Him, save a stable—and that given as an after-thought.

In 1962, almost 2000 years after the first Christmas, has the meaning of this day been burned so deep that now the world has only a stable to offer Him? Can it not offer its best?

If He turned away and told, "Pass on," will the world not soon plead, "Whither?"—Selected.

The King's Highway

An Advocate of Scriptural Holiness

— THE ORGAN OF THE —
REFORMED BAPTIST ALLIANCE

Published Semi-Monthly at Moncton, N. B.

L. K. Mullen, Editor and Business Manager

W. E. Green, Editor Y. P. Page

All subscriptions and renewals should be sent to Rev. L. K. Mullen, Box 723, Woodstock, N. B.

All material, except notices, must reach the editor by the 15th and the 30th of each month.

— SUBSCRIPTION PRICE —

Per year, in advance . . . \$3.00
United States Subscribers . . . 3.00

Printed by Moncton Publishing Co., Ltd.
Printers and Publishers, Moncton, N. B.

AUTHORIZED AS SECOND CLASS MAIL
BY THE POST OFFICE DEPT. OTTAWA
AND FOR PAYMENT OF POSTAGE IN CASH

MONCTON, N. B., DECEMBER 15, 1962