

COME BACK, O CHURCH, COME BACK

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extracting portions of time and pieces of money from them. Can religious hobbies absorb the energies of a people in communion with the Lord and in communication with the Word? Society can protect itself against stacked committees and professional stances; but evil has no defence against Christians exercising 24-hour-a-day commitment to Jesus Christ. Let the results of preaching-worship materialize wherever the people go. Charge Christians to think and act Christianly in their cars, their homes, their jobs, their politics and their play. Have at home a little church, guided by forgiveness, correction and love. Make affairs of office, factory and field opportunities to unravel the meaning of the Gospel, and make the long hours of leisure targets for minds that have heard from the Word and hearts that worship the Lord. Let all life become live footnotes to preaching-worship. Deny the plea to do "something special" for Christ, deny it with the declaration that everything must be done for Christ. Say aloud that there is no protected niche for those who have preached, heard and worshipped; tell these favored ones that every facet of life must be brought captive to Christ, every act impelled by his will, and every attitude squared with his Lordship.

Are we so soon done with his mission? Eager ones, returning with report of having done the Christian task, stand at the foot of the Cross and see that ten lifetimes will not take you beyond its shadow! Bow before the empty tomb and understand that a hundred life-spans will not open all life's crevices to its brilliant rays!

Remind those startled by this day's leaping advances in science, and horrified by the same day's plunge to new lows of immorality, that Christ reigns beyond the rocket's final sputter, and that he still calls for the repentance of those who befoul themselves and all they touch. Say to those beguiled by the pretensions and idolatries of Left and Right that Jesus Christ is king. Assert that those by his blood and pardoned by his life must be patriots to his purpose. Show that earthly loyalties are valid only when derived from homage to Heaven. Say to all that the day of all knees' bowing to his personal and cosmic Lordship will come. Meantime, following him, it is ours, through evil days, to do justly, to love mercy and to walk humbly with our God.

This is mission: to proclaim Christ's redeeming grace to people where they are. There is little glamor here, but grace, not glamor, is our glory. There is small public favor here, but fidelity, not acclaim, is our goal. There may be meagre success here, but success is God's to give or withhold: our job is to try where the trying is hardest. Our mission's crown of success may be made of thorns: He whom we serve found it so. From dark nights, in due time, God splits the sky for the bursting forth of Easter Morn. Come Back, O Church, Come Back to the mission of Christ!

THE SPRING OF OUR HOPE

Soldiers of the cross! You may crumple under the crossfire of this world's hell, but for you the security of an impinging eternity is infinitely greater than the calamities of earthly deviltry. While earth's battles rage, the veteran Captain of our salvation trains all for destiny's decision and eternity's call through total loyalty to his Word, worship and work.

The last day comes when the bruised and broken body of Christ, target of satanic fury, becomes the Church victorious. Its stigmata shall be its glory, the scandal of its cross shall be its crown, and its shredded garment shall become its seamless robe clothing the redeemed of all ages. It shall keep only what it has given away in Christ's name, and it shall enter Paradise, at God's call, supported by

ORGANIST FORTY YEARS

Lines written in honor of Mrs. Otis Ames of Fort Fairfield, Maine upon her retirement as organist in the Reformed Baptist Church, . . . after forty years of faithful service. We hope she will be with us many more years as substitute organist and as an officer in the church.

By an old church member

I remember you in high school, you were studious and good.

To do a mean, dishonest thing, you never, never would. And your lessons, although difficult, you always seemed to know

As you sat across the school room just fifty years ago.

The years have brought their ups and downs as they are bound to do

But you took them all to Jesus and He always saw you through.

You missed a lot of sorrow and escaped a lot of woe

When you gave your heart to Jesus more than fifty years ago.

Some preachers came who said that Christ could cleanse us from all sin;

That He would make us holy if His Spirit dwelt within. We built a beautiful new church; displayed a cross and crown.*

We thought that it was just about the finest church in town.

When brother Hilyard came to preach he knew just what to do:

When we needed a new organist he was wise in choosing you.

And how the people shouted when God cleansed them from all sin

For when we opened up our hearts He poured the Glory in!

The years sped on and changes came but you remained the same:

You came to church four times a week in spite of snow or rain.

The wind was cold, the snow was deep but you were not dismayed.

You knew, in spite of obstacles the organ must be played.

We read in God's own precious Word that a crown of life we'll win

If we are faithful to the end and put our trust in Him. We honor the saints who have gone before; we could name a lot of names

But none have shown more loyalty than Mrs. Otis Ames.

* One stained glass window pictures a cross and the other a crown.

Written by Leon Cogswell

those to whom it is the messenger of grace.

The Christ of God, long since returned from Calvary's bloody victory, shall meet it and greet it and claim it as his own for ever.

Come Back, O Church, Come Back: the Master calls you to His preaching, His worship and His mission. Come back, bearing your shield of faith, or be carried on it, but come back!

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—IN CHRISTIANITY TODAY

The King's Highway