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St. Nicholas News

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from no 30



Our dear Friends,

A friend of ours is well known for his enthusiasm when things appear to be going all wrong. "When things are black" he sometimes says, I get so excited, because I know that God is going to meet me in some way and I wait like an expectant child to see how He is going to do it this time! This past month for us has had it's share of hurt, disappointment and ill health. But yes, God has been there meeting us in quite unexpected ways. One of the disappointments for Joyce was that she was too poorly to get out of bed to make a Birthday cake for Christina. Imagine her amazement and joy when, on the very day of the birthday, a couple arrived on the doorstep clutching a delicious coffee cake! The candles were hastily brought out and to Christina's surprise when she came home from school, there was a celebration after all! Others have written and brought gifts and food at just the right time. Thank you all so much! We often speak of healing. This time, the Lord seems to be using hospitalisation for His healing purposes, but healing of spirit has been coming through the kindnesses mentioned above. We never know how that phone call, that note or that caring word will be used to bring consolation to someone's grazed spirit. May we all continue that work of caring for one another. In his book "Friday Afternoon", Neville Ward writes this: "whether one makes a success or failure of life depends almost entirely on one's attitude to its hurts and disappointments." He goes on to remind us how Jesus Himself met suffering and pain, reflecting that "pain worked through with and for Jesus leads to a resurrection."



Just at this moment, we feel we need your prayers very much that we might hear and obey what God is saying to us through some of the batterings.

The month has not been without it's share of deep joy. Most of you will be unaware that week by week people have been coming into personal faith in Jesus for the first time. What greater reward in the ministry is there than leading someone to a personal knowledge of Jesus? It makes all the hard work more than worth while!

As Advent approaches, we look forward to having our friend Michael Wilcock with us once more. He is well loved by those who were on the Dumpton Houseparty some years ago and we personally look forward to seeing him very much indeed. Advent reminds us too that the Lord is going to return. Supposing His coming is soon. Would that make any difference to our life-style, our attitudes to events and people? May we live our lives constantly in the light of His expected coming, rejoice in it and find within our hearts the ready response: "Even so, come, Lord Jesus"!

Another of the delights of the month has been the sense of worship in Church. Many visitors comment on this, finding our worship uplifting and meaningful. Soon, we shall be worshipping in the words of the well known Christmas carol: "Oh Come! Let us adore Him, Christ the Lord." We found this article on worship a challenge. As we attach it to our letter as a sort of P.S, it is with the prayer that HE may be the centre of all our worship and loving this Christmas.

With our love,

David & Joyce.



TRUE WORSHIP

by Judson Cornwall



Worship not only brings us into a right relationship with God and with ourselves, but also into a right expression of ourselves to God.

Perhaps as dramatic an example of worship to be found in the Bible is the story of Mary washing the feet of Jesus. All four Gospels record the event, and Jesus said that wherever the Gospel would be preached, her deed would be spoken of for a memorial of her (Mk. 14:9).

She had to touch, to kiss, to weep, and to bow in order to thoroughly pour out herself on Jesus. The spikenard was merely a symbol of what was really being poured out on Jesus — Mary herself! This is the heart and core of true worship — the unashamed pouring out of our inner self upon the Lord Jesus Christ in affectionate devotion.

Mark's record of this event (chapter 14) reveals four diverse factors in worship. Firstly, worship is costly. The disciples quickly calculated that this nard could have been sold for a full year's salary for a working man — or about £7,500 at today's prices! That's quite a price to pay just to worship Jesus acceptably

But the monetary value was probably the smallest part of the price. This costly oil had been saved for one of two reasons: either as a dowry for marriage or to assure a proper burial. Both were vitally important to this Jewish maiden. When Mary poured out the ointment, she was surrendering all her plans, ambitions, and aspirations for the future. Worshipping in the present was far more important than longing for the future. Jesus said of her act: "She poured perfume on my body beforehand to prepare my burial" (v. 8). True worship often costs us some of our self-centred plans and ambitions. It requires us to put His glory above our goals.



Secondly, worship invokes criticism. Immediately the disciples were censorious that the ointment was not sold and the money given to the poor. Social service is laudable, and even Jesus required it, but there is also a time and place to minister unto the Lord.

Thirdly, the need for brokenness. The liquid nard was permanently sealed in a stone container. To release it required breaking the bottle. Similarly, worship, which is resident in the spirit of every saint, is sealed in by the outer container of the soul and body. Until something happens to rupture this stony container, the worship can never be released. Presenting the bottle would not have been worship; it would have been an offering. But fracturing the alabaster box allowed the oil to flow as an anointing of the body of the Lord.

True worship requires a splintering of our pride, a crumbling of our natural reserves, a bruising of our self-sufficiencies, as well as a crushing of our self-will.

The final factor is that worship is reciprocal; we get something in return. When Mary held the alabaster box over the head of Jesus and broke it with a hammer or a stone, the oil gushed out over His head. She quickly rubbed it into the hair and beard, and transferred the drippings to His feet. Then she let her long tresses fall and used her hair to wipe up the residue. When she left the banquet room, people could sniff and say, "She's the one; I can tell for she smells exactly like Jesus does."

When we pour worship out on the Lord Jesus Christ, we also get it all over ourselves. When we go out from His presence, we carry the fragrance of Christ everywhere we go.

Adapted from New Wine.



Tubingen, 12.11.79

Dear Joyce, dear David,

At the moment we are full of joy and thanksgiving because of the wonders God is performing here in Tubingen. Last week we had an evangelisation at the University and also in the town.

But let me start at the beginning. When I came back from England I joined the Bible-study group again which I belonged to before. The leaders, an American couple (Tom and Charlene), soon told us that there would be an evangelisation in November. This made us very glad because we realised that we needed some outreach. Tom is connected with "Youth with a mission"; they run a "School for evangelisation" which took over the main preparations for the meetings. God showed them in prayer that they needed a new approach to communicate the gospel: not only in words but in mime, dance and drama. So they asked God what to do and he showed them the whole mime which lasted about 80 minutes. It started with the creation of man, how everyone tries to get on but only becomes frustrated because he reaches limits and boundaries everywhere. Then it went on to show how Jesus came to earth and wanted to help man but he did not accept him and turned away; he became angry and nailed him to the cross, yet he rose from the death and this led to the conversion of Stephen and Paul and is still true and effective today:- It made a great impact on the whole audience and afterwards we had many good conversations and some students found new life in Jesus Christ. There were also

many Christians who came to know what Christian life really is all about.

During lunch-time we sang in front of the cafeteria. The songs were mainly worship chorusses because we wanted to show what Christianity is like. We also did some short dance and drama to worship the Lord.

The whole week and every day especially were prepared in prayer. Before we started the week we came together for one day for worship, repentance, cleansing and intercession for Tübingen. This was a very good experience which changed our views and expectance for the week. We experienced that God answered all our prayers. He gave us freedom, boldness, inner peace and joy to talk to other students about our faith. We learned to trust God fully and he did not disappoint us.



PRAISE

The last meeting of the week was kind of "Festival of Praise". It was meant for Christians from all the different backgrounds to come together to worship and thank the Lord for the whole week. We had one hour of worship and thanksgiving in songs and spontaneous prayer - something totally unknown in most churches. Yet we heard only positive responses. It was a great joy for us that a theology professor attended the service and also had a positive response. Christians came to know each other and the different Christian groups at the University are now more open for one another and accept each other. This is really great for us and only due to God's answers to our prayers.

This week I had to give a talk in a seminar about the Jesus-People movement in 1968-1972. The preparation for this showed me what God is able to do when we are open for him.

During this last week I remembered that the experiences which I had in England and especially in St. Nics were the preparation to understand and be open for the new approach of the evangelisation. I am so thankful that I had the privilege to be with you. Elizabeth Seddan is sending the News magazine to me and I can therefore find out what is going on and how God is working in your church. It must be exciting to have the elders now appointed and Mike as a new staff-member.

Please give my love to those who knew me. For your service and responsibilities I wish you God's guidance, his strength and wisdom and much joy.

In the love of our Lord Jesus Christ

Doris and Rolf.



FLOWER FUND

We all love to see the Church decorated for Christmas. Flowers are expensive these days and at the moment the Flower Fund is low. Gifts of money, therefore, would be greatly appreciated by Kathleen Robinson. She would also be most grateful for offers of help to decorate the Church over the Christmas period.



ST NIC'S FAMILY NEWS



Congratulations to Gordon and Jean Walker who have recently become grand parents.

The Festival of Praise at Hose was a time of blessing for many in the Vale of Belvoir. The Worship Workshop led the Music and Richard and Debbie Watmough were also involved.

Thankyou to those who supported the Christmas Bazaar in any way. The total of £180 which was raised for Tear Fund and the Church of England Childrens Society was most encouraging.

Mike Parsons. It was very good to have Mike staying with us recently.

The retiring offering for the Boat People recently, amounted to £257.

The CYFA Group held a hilarious "Tramp" progressive supper recently. So authentic was their disguise that, walking from Barrack Lane to Hamilton Drive, they were stopped by the police who wanted to know what they were up to!

Tony Field has had a prolonged spell in hospital and has been missing the fellowship and friendship of St Nic's. He sends his love to all his friends.



SHEILA KELLY

The death of Sheila Kelly breaks another link with the past of St. Nicholas Church. When she joined the Church there was no Maid Marian Way, and the Rectory and the Parish Room were in Castle Gate.

The Kellys joined the Church over 30 years ago, when Hubert Kelly was appointed Organist and Choirmaster. Under him the Choir flourished. He was a perfectionist who built up a choir of between 20 and 30 with a considerable repertoire, and one which received the commendation of the Royal School of Church Music.

Sheila Kelly took an active part in church affairs. She had a degree in Biology and taught in the Henry Mellish Grammar School. In Church she and her husband served on the P.C.C. and for a time she was Church Treasurer. The older members of the Church will remember her as a stalwart supporter of many of its activities, especially of fund-raising efforts for the Church, for Missions and for charitable causes. Many will have a special memory of her behind the C.M.S. Stall at the three-day Sales of Work. On Church, and indeed on other matters, she was forthright, held strong opinions and did not always disguise them. But she had other and varied interests which took up much of her time - the Association of University Woman, the National Council of Woman and the National Trust.

The mainspring of Sheila Kelly's life was her firmly held Christian faith. Above all she was a caring person, with the deepest interest in and concern for other people. Not many knew that she was a constant visitor of the old and the sick even when her own health made it difficult, and that she gave most generously to the charities she favoured, to the very

limits of her purse.

St. Nicholas is the poorer for her passing. We mourn her loss, but rejoice that she is now with her Lord, and thank God for her life and example.



Christmas at St. Nicholas



Carols by Candlelight

Sunday, December 16th.

6.30 p.m. Sunday, December 23rd.

CHRISTMAS EVE 11.30 a.m. Midnight Communion
to herald the birthday of our Lord.

CHRISTMAS DAY 10.45 a.m. Family Worship

UNITED CAROL CELEBRATION IN THE MARKET SQUARE
11.00 a.m. - 12 midday Saturday 22nd December.
Led by the Rector and others

Answers: to Crossword

ACROSS
1. Astrologists (anag.)
7. Jingle bells.
8. Sea
10. Isles.
12. Stage
15. etc.
18. Plum pudding
20. Fairy lights (anag.)

3. Rig
5. Geese
9. Ass
13. Timer
16. Tenet

DOWN
2. Shine.
4. Leeks
6. Rule
11. See
14. Cruel
17. Plea (anag.)
19. Dig

CHRISTMAS HOSPITALITY

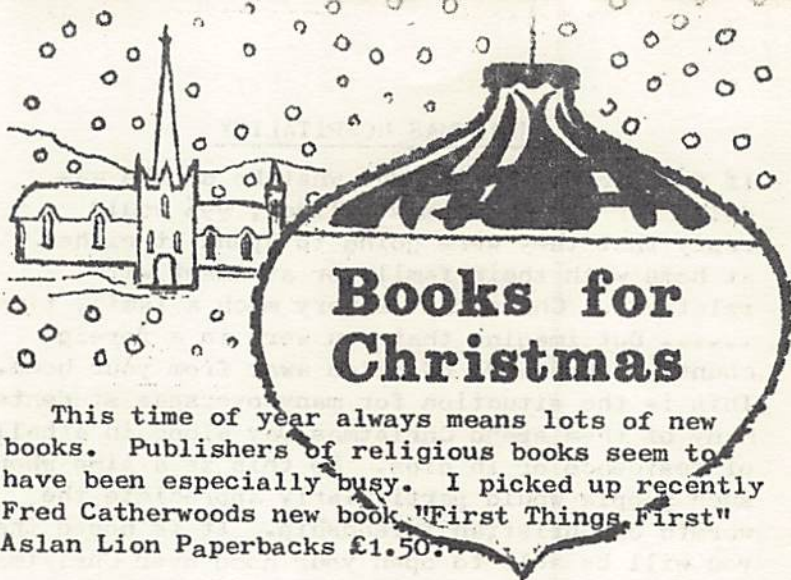
If you were to ask anyone what he or she was doing for the Christmas holiday, 99% would reply that they were going to spend it either at home with their family or at least with relatives. Christmas is very much a family time But imagine that you were in a foreign country, thousands of miles away from your home. This is the situation for many overseas students. Many of them spend Christmas Day alone in a hall of residence or in digs. So this is a time when such people would particularly appreciate the warmth of Christian friendship. It is hoped that you will be able to open your home over Christmas to one or two overseas students, so that they can share the joy of Christmas with you. Please do answer this plea for help if you can open up your home for any amount of time over the Christmas period.

If you cannot help with Christmas Hospitality - but are interested to help in other areas - then we do also have a need for hosts for SUPPER PARTIES. This is a time when two or three English Christians come along to your home with two or three o/s students to share a simple buffet meal with an English Christian family. It is hoped that at these times o/s students will feel relaxed and be able to get to know a Christian family fairly well.

So if you are able to help in either of these areas then..... *Please contact:-*

Debie Dadlani
27a Park Road,
LENTON,
Nottingham.





This time of year always means lots of new books. Publishers of religious books seem to have been especially busy. I picked up recently Fred Catherwoods new book "First Things First" Aslan Lion Paperbacks £1.50.

The reason: it is one man's contribution to Christian thinking on our Society. Sir Frederick Catherwood has spent his life in industry. He is also a European M.P. Incidentally he is an evangelical christian. Anyone with his experience of modern society and industrial life and who firmly believes that the ten commandments and the sermon on the mount are still relevant must be worth listening to.

He takes each of the commandments and analyses its impact today and shows how far this post-christian society has moved away from the Lord's teaching. He then tries to show the way back.

I emphasise this is one man's view. There are some sweeping generalisations and in some parts I found I was in complete disagreement with his views (e.g. on hanging). Sometimes I wished there had been more analysis of the problem under discussion and I thought the solutions were a bit too easy.

For all that it is a book worth reading because it shows how the bible still speaks to us today on our society and its laws. He points out the difficulty in relating these moral laws to public law. If the solutions are not easy it emphasises his point that Christians must think hard about Britain today, understand what God is saying by studying scripture and then obey this command to talk about God to others.

"WE NEUROTICS"

(A Hard-book for the half mad!)

If you are looking for a Christmas present with a difference for someone with a keen sense of humour and an interest in prayer, then here is a gem! One very ordinary young married man seeks, unashamedly for a way to pray amidst the pressures and tensions of his busy, though mundane life. The help he is given by his colourful advisers - the wise Little Nun, Miss Copsley-Smith with her eccentricities, the French Abbe whom he "happens upon" in Cornwall, is both hilariously funny and deeply profound. There were times when I found myself laughing helpless at the escapades of the unprepossessing Mr. Ponsonby, the man with "the nervous little giggle, the moist eyes and timid gait" whose charm lay "in his heavenly ability to laugh at himself." At other times, in learning of his sacrificial attitude to his daughter's chosen career, for instance, I was moved almost to tears. The unexpected, punchy, profound insights about the life and death of our Lord which lurked around various corners, stunned me to awesome silence. It is a book I shan't forget in a hurry and at 40p must surely be a "best buy"!! Published by Hodder, written by Fr. Bernard Bassett I'm glad someone placed it in my hands during my recent illness!



music...



And for relaxation ... what about Bob Dylan's new L.P. This latest record is his statement of faith. As always it is difficult to hear every word but this one is good, modern evangelical music played without a tambourine in sight. Not just good listening for ourselves but also a good idea for a present for our pagan friends.





ROUND THE WORLD

December

- Sat: 1st. That we may anticipate His Second Coming.
- Sun: 2nd. Advent Praise and Worship today
- Mon: 3rd. Fay Rumley as she comes home.
- Tues: 4th. Pat Dearnley in Inner City London
- Weds: 5th. Tim and Barbara Oakley in Liverpool
- Thurs: 6th. David and Irene Green in Kenya
- Fri: 7th. Fay Cameron in Australia
- Sat: 8th. Nigel and Ruth Jukes in S. Africa
- Sun: 9th. Mike Parsons in London
- Mon: 10th. Helen Taylor and her wedding plans
- Tues: 11th. Rolf and Doris in TUBINGEN, Germany
- Weds: 12th. Lyn and Elaine Failing in Nigeria
- Thurs: 13th. Tear Fund children "adopted" by individuals in the fellowship.
- Fri: 14th. Members of the Chinese fellowship now at home in Malaysia.
- Sat: 15th. The spread of the Gospel in main land China.
- Sun: 16th. Christians behind the Iron Curtain
- Mon: 17th. 'Boat people' at this difficult time.



IN PRAYER...

- Tues: 18th. Anne working with Vietnamese refugees in Lincoln.
- Weds: 19th. Barry and Anthea in Peru
- Thurs: 20th. Students going home for the vacation.
- Fri: 21st. Members of the Church family returning: Helen, Jane, Theo, Penny, Cecilia.
- Sat: 22nd. The children in our Church.
- Sun: 23rd. Anne Rose in Germany.
- Mon: 24th. Overseas students in Nottingham this Christmas.
- Tues: 25th. Oh! Come! Let us adore Him, Christ the Lord.



Join with us in praying
for France and Spain,

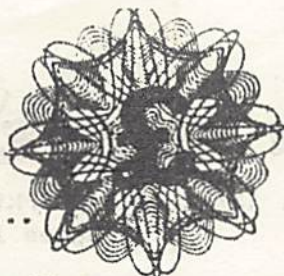
say
Ken and Nesta Mason.

Points for Prayer France is one of the world's most important mission fields today. Reckoned that 40 million French have no real understanding of the Gospel. Powerful influence of Communist Party, dabbling of many in occult practices is symptomatic of the need.



(See back
page.)

WHERE THE MONEY GOES ...



At the most recent PCC meeting it was agreed that part of the church's tithe to missionaries should be divided up in the following way:

Pete Chaplin (see last month's magazine)	£ 50
Lyn and Elaine Failing	£100
Fay Rumley	£100
David and Irene Green	£100
Barry and Anthea Harrison	£100
	<hr/>
	£450

This brings the total amount of money distributed to our missionaries this year to £2,000. These £2,000 constitute the church's tithe and do not include other sums raised on specific occasions such as the recent appeal on behalf of the Boat People and refugees of South-East Asia which amounted to £257.

£2,000 may seem a lot of money, but when you consider that about 400 people attend St. Nicholas every Sunday, that amounts to 10p per member of the congregation per Sunday. That's not very much, is it? Perhaps we should give a new twist to the expression "a penny for your thoughts", and change it to "20p per Sunday for your thought".

The Missionary Sub-Committee would like to take this opportunity to thank Tony and Janet Hills for all the very hard work and love they put into their job as link persons with the Harrisons in Peru. They have achieved a great deal in showing all of us how to take an interest in missionaries on the field, and their enthusiasm will be greatly missed. We wish God's richest blessing in their work with Dr. Barnado's in Ilford.



CHRISTMAS MEDITATION

APPROACH

What follows isn't necessarily something for you to think about, or study or even pray about.

Here is a series of ideas expressed in words and loosely structured.

Just relax and let these words be translated to pictures in your mind. Be natural and don't try and edit your thoughts.

Let your reveries range freely wherever they wish as the words written here suggest to them. There are no right and wrong responses.

Make connections wherever you please, draw out of this whatever you want.

Think how often in Scripture God spoke to people through pictures he projected into their minds.

Be open to God and commit your exercise to the prompting of His wonderful imagery.

MEDITATION

Read the following verse slowly several times. Focus your emphasis onto different words and phrases:

"The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined."
(Is.9.2.)

WALKED IN DARKNESS



Behind much Christmas ceremonial "was a serious intention, for these were once pieces of sympathetic magic to perform at the season when the soil was being prepared, when it seemed the vitalizing sun might disappear, the moon not rise, the plants not ever show green again, and there was urgent need to demonstrate the act of regeneration and revival to the sun, the earth and the anxious community watching the ritual. At this critical season everything had to be done to dispel the dark fear that the universe might collapse, and to ensure a share of luck for the coming year."

Try and imagine those ancient people as the soil sets hard and their water freezes, the days shrank into iron-grey twilights, the animals are slaughtered and the larders run bare. Families huddle round the fires whilst outside the forest grows black and seems to creep and groan around the door.

As you visualize this hopeless scene and the people in it give them the faces of people you know and care for who are in need. See whose faces emerge - - - what is the "darkness" from which they recoil - - - What is the source of light and warmth that they seek? - - - See the flames and shadows play on their faces - - - note their expressions - - - Pray for them.

IN DARKNESS HAVE SEEN A GREAT LIGHT

"The ways deep and the weather sharp,
The very dead of winter." (T.S.Eliot)

"I leant upon the coppice gate
When Frost was spectre-grey
And winter's dregs made desolate
The weakening eye of day"

(Thomas Hardy)



Christmas



Wednesday. Christmas Day 1878

Very hard frost last night. At Presteign the thermometer fell 2 degrees, showing 30 degrees of frost. At Monnington it fell to 4. Last night is said to have been the coldest night for 100. years. The windows of the house and Church were so thick with frost rime that we could not see out. We could not look through the Church windows all day. Snow lay on the ground and the day was dark and gloomy with a murky sky. A fair morning congregation considering the weather . . . The afternoon was very dark. I was obliged to move close to the great south window to read the Lesson and could hardly see even then. I preached from Luke 11.7. 'There was no room for them in the inn,'. "Kilvert's Diary)

That was 101 years ago.

Remember last winter? Christmas was a warm Spring day. Spring yawned and muttered in it's sleep as if it would wake, but it rolled over and fell into the coldest and longest winter we could remember.

But that Christmas was enough - Jesus had been born.

Praise God that at Christmas a flurry, of yule-logs and candles is enough in the midst of the cold, dark winter, because in that cold, dark winter Jesus has been born.

"He slept in the oak manger,
Radiant as moonlight in the hollow of a tree."

(Boris Pasternak)





For Christmas is the point upon which the ages
turn,
The rhythms of our lives and the seasons of the
year.

In the damp dark and in the cold,
What primitive men suspected in legend,
What pagans intimated in mystic rites
And admen proclaim in tinsel
Is known to us IN FACT;
That when our blood and pipes freeze,
Our hearts and batteries are flat,
That when a frozen March drags itself
Wet and miserable into a despairing April
And "Spring is late this year",
That the Christ-child is already born,
And has been for months.
Into the darkness and cold that goes on and on
The Babe is shivering in the manger
But is growing to power

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Hardy, Thomas - The Darkling Thrush
Kilvert, Francis - Kilbert's Diary
Lloyd, A.L. - Folk Song in England.



Christmas

The baby lay asleeping

The baby lay asleeping
As peaceful as a bomb,
While the wisé-men stood and wondered
Where in Heaven did he come from.

And then the bomb exploded,
It made the oxen start.
It singed Herod's beery beard
And blew the world apart.

It seeked the powers of darkness,
It fizzed slap-bang through Hell.
It blew Satan into tiny bits
It did it very well.

So as you gather round him
All gushing Christmas sighs,
Exercise due precautions
Because the flash, will set alight your eyes.



"The People that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined"



You can never truly enjoy Christmas until you can look up into the Father's face and tell him you have received his Christmas Gift.

ER..... I HAVEN'T
ACTUALLY CAUGHT
ANY..... BUT I'VE
INFLUENCED QUITE
A FEW....



Our forefathers in the faith were accused of 'turning the world upside down' with the good news they told people about Jesus (Acts) But with the Western world "Christianity is far from a revolutionary exciting dissemination of good news. It is seen as being on the side of the status quo, the conservative, the bourgeois, the dull. There seems to be little news about it, and what there is appears to be anything rather than good. Yet that is what evangelism means! I doubt whether most Christians ever guess that evangelism is the sharing of good news. And they certainly do not regard it as their business. That is where we differ so enormously from the early church, where every man and woman saw it as his task to bear witness to Jesus Christ by every means at his or her disposal. The Christians of New Testament days saw dynamic worship, together with bold and imaginative evangelism, as the twin purposes for which the church existed. They put first things first. With us, first things often come last ... evangelism - well in many circles it is almost a dirty word."

So begins a new book by Michael Gree on ?
yes you've guessed it, evangelism.

(Evangelism Now and Then I.V.P.)

But wait, before you switch off, or turn over the page, give the subject some thought. Whose responsibility is it out there? In the great seething mass of Nottingham's populace, who should be talking about Jesus? The answer of course is easy it's facing up to the question that is the hard part.

Let's suppose we decide to face up to these implications, what is involved?

Evangelist or Witness? There are very few of us who could write R.S. (Roger Simpson) after our names and maybe that is just as well. There are, after all, only a limited number of street corners available in Nottingham. However we are all witnesses whether we like it or not.

To quote a well known barrister who sits not a hundred yards from the pulpit on a Sunday evening. "There are three kinds of witnesses: good one, bad ones, and lying toads!" I trust we are not the latter, but I question how often we are the former. But what is a witness? What are the characteristics of a witness? Let's have a look.

A Witness:- is a model.

'We have been reconciled to God' (2 Cor. 5 v 18). Well, is it true? If it is then there should be something radically different about us - if there isn't then those around us are quite justified in questioning the authenticity of our supposed reconciliation. John outlines the level of expectation "Those who call themselves Christians ought to act like Jesus" (1 Jn. 2 v 6) (my paraphrase). It is imperative that when the body of Christ, or members of it, are observed by the watching world, Christ is seen.

The Witness:- has a testimony.

"Let the redeemed of the Lord say so, whom he has redeemed from trouble." (Ps. 107 v 2). Does anything in the following comparison sound familiar?

At church:



"How's the house going Mike ?"

"Oh great thanks, the Lord's really blessed us. We were unsure about it, but now he's confirmed everything. We nearly lost it but we prayed about it, and it's marvellous the way he worked things out in the end".

At school:

"How's the house going Mike ?"

"Great thanks we've been really lucky - we'd nearly lost it at one stage, but we managed to clinch it at our price. Our solicitor was very good."

Now I know we've got to be sensitive about how we relate to others the nature of our relationship with God, in order that we are not misunderstood, but all too frequently our tendency is to err on the cautious. The fact is that if we do have a relationship with God then it really ought to have some tangible effect in our lives. Once again an encredulous world is watching.

The Witness:- is a signpost.

'Nobody ever converted anybody' ... very true but, "... it pleased God through the folly of what we preach to save those who believe". (1 Cor. 1 v 21).

It is God who operates in peoples lives, who confronts them with his Gospel, who convinces them of their need. Yet, so frequently he chooses to do so through a human medium. God has entrusted us with the 'message of reconciliation' (2 Cor. 5). That means you and I personally not just the vicar. Sometime, somehow, somewhere, WE have got to start telling those around us how they can get to know God. It's our responsibility.



If all that leaves us feeling a little inadequate, let's take heart from one or two things.

Firstly: if we were venturing out into the world to preach a human message, say - Marxism; we'd have one or two things going for us:

- i) The strength (or weakness) of our message.
- ii) Our intellect and power of persuasion.
- iii) The readiness of our audience to receive a message.

As Christians, what we have going for us in the task which has been assigned to us, is something way beyond these earth-bound advantages. Paul, in (2 Cor. 6) talks about 'working together with Him' he talks about us being 'co-labourers with God'. God doesn't want from us our expertise as salesmen, (it's usually non-existent anyway) He wants our availability.

"If God is for us who can be against us?" God is going ahead of us, all around us I believe there are people being prepared by Him to receive the good news; we have simply to be faithful in sharing it.

We can also help one another. Quite a few of us have found, that by sharing with one another, our fears and frustrations, and also our answered prayers, we have been very much encouraged. It would be great if over the next few months more of us took the opportunity to pray with others about the impact we are having as Christ's disciples. Hopefully there will be more opportunities to join in the kind of group some of us are involved in on a Tuesday night, the 'sharing Jesus' group. There may be one or more of these groups at the parish weekend. If you think you would like to be involved in such a group please let me know.

Meanwhile let's heed His command in Matt. 28 vv 19 and 20.



- 2) Only 1500 of Frances 38000 towns, villages etc. have a permanent evangelical witness.
- 3) Young people most receptive. Literature and University outreach.

SPAIN



Religion Attitude of Government Franco regime persecuted Protestants and gave them no legal recognition for 30 years. In '68 discriminating laws were eased. R.C. still state church but liberalizations since '75 have eroded its privileged position. More religious freedom than ever now.

R.C.s 99% only 8% faithful.

Protestants 0.3% largest denominations :
Assemblies of God 10,000. Bretheren 8,000.
Baptist 5,000. Independent Evangelical 5,000.

Points for Prayer 1) Ending of dominance of R.C. church. Those disillusioned are attracted to Communism.

- 2) Feelings of inferiority among believers after years of oppression and rejection by society.
- 3) Lack of Bible teaching and education among believers makes it hard for most to give a reasonable account of faith that is in them.
- 4) Need for trained leaders and pastors. Now 8 Bible schools and seminaries (some part-time).
- 5) Evangelical churches concentrated in Catalonia, Andalusia, Valencia and Madrid. Rest of country very needy.
- 6) Now 300 missionaries - some indigenous.
- 7) Literature proves to be most potent weapon. Few Christian bookshops but at least freedom to print.



ST. NICHOLAS PARISH CHURCH NOTTINGHAM

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	George Dobbs	Tel: 394790
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	Malcolm Offord	Tel: 46924
Diocesan Reader:	Tom Robinson	Tel: 45470
Treasurer:	Bob Marlowe	Tel: 231711

SUNDAY SERVICES AND WEEKDAY ACTIVITIES

Sunday

- 10.45 a.m. Morning Worship.
Creche. Climbers. Explorers. Pathfinders.
- 5.20 p.m. Hospital Ward Service
- 6.30 p.m. Evening Worship.
Coffee is served in Church after the Service

Each week

- Parish Fellowship Group Studies and Prayer
- Worship Workshop Thursdays 7.30 p.m. Lower Lounge
- Mid-week Lunch Wednesdays 12.30 - 2.00 p.m. Lower Lounge

Fortnightly

- Area Link Groups Wednesdays and Thursdays 8.00 p.m.

- Women's Fellowship Mondays 2.30 p.m.

- Coffee Club Wednesdays 10.15 a.m.

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