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**Saturday
Soundings**

The Elizabeth City District of the United Methodist Church will offer a very exciting, often requested, and much needed learning experience called "Saturday Soundings" on November 11 from 10:00 A.M. to 4:30 P.M. at the First United Methodist Church of Elizabeth City.

Its purpose will be to inspire, motivate, and enable local churches "to discover their foundation, to determine their channel, and to chart their course." In order that they may better understand their mission. The United Methodist Church is congregational rather than congregational in structure; consequently, its strength for ministry lies not in a loose association of separate entities working independently of each other but in a closely knit organization of interrelated parts functioning cooperatively. It is of fundamental importance that the structure of the church be understood as the necessary and effective means of executing its mission of ministry; therefore, Dr. Nicholas Grant will be on hand to interpret this concern as it relates to the General Conference; the Reverend Belton Joyner, Jr., as it is related to Annual Conference and Mr. Grier Garrick, as it relates to the local church. In addition, Bishop Robert Blackburn will speak on the subject, "My Thoughts and Goals for Our Churches."

**Dropout Rate Of
Small Town
Youths Highest**

Young men from small towns are more apt to drop out of high school before graduation than their central city counterparts. According to FINANCE FACTS, a monthly newsletter on consumer behavior published by the National Consumer Finance Association, 1970 census data shows that 15.2 per cent or 1.6 million of the young men 16 to 21 years old were school dropouts.

19.8 per cent of the young men in small towns (or rural nonfarm areas) were not then enrolled in school nor were they high school graduates. In comparison, proportion of school dropouts in urban areas (which includes central cities and suburbs) was 14.1 per cent; in rural farm areas, 14.3 per cent.

FINANCE FACTS noted that while the proportion of school dropouts in urban and rural areas closely paralleled the national percentage, the dropout proportion in small town areas was significantly higher.

It is much easier to be critical than to be correct.
-Benjamin Disraeli.

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Do you plan to retire soon and want to know how Social Security establishes your age? The people at your Social Security Office located at 401 S. Dyer Street, Elizabeth City, North Carolina, can tell you how. Their telephone number is 438-3831.

If you are fortunate enough to have a birth certificate that was recorded near the time of your birth or a church record of your age made before your fifth birthday, this is all that will be needed. If neither of these records is available you still may have other sufficient documents. Usually two records are sufficient if at least one of the records was made before age 21.

Other records that are easily available include: Family Bible, school records, insurance policies, marriage certificates, Army or Navy discharge papers, children's birth certificates, or voter's registration records.

Sometimes you may need to obtain a census record, but if you are in doubt whether you have sufficient documents to

establish your age, call your Social Security Office, telephone number 338-3931. Someone at the office will be glad to discuss the records you have with you and advise you if you need to obtain additional records now.

Income Tax Errors

Mathematical errors still plague North Carolinians filing their federal income tax returns.

During the first nine months of 1972, the Internal Revenue Service checked 1,716,740 individual returns. Of this number, 95,338, or 5.5 per cent, had math errors.

Over 55,000 returns had errors favoring the government, resulting in additional assessments of \$5.7 million. This figure was offset by \$2.6 million in refunds to the taxpayer, making the government's net gain \$3.1 million.

It is easier to pull down than to build up.
-English Proverb.

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- Sunday
 - Psalms 141:1-7
 - Monday
 - Isaiah 63:17-25
 - Tuesday
 - Jeremiah 31:11-14
 - Wednesday
 - John 13:1-35
 - Thursday
 - I Corinthians 11:23-27
 - Friday
 - Hebrews 10:16-25
 - Saturday
 - II Peter 3:1-18
- Scriptural references by the American Bible Society



I'm Serious!

Maybe you like smiling babies? Berry to disappoint you, but I've got a lot on my mind.

There's something wrong in America... and I'm the chap who is getting hurt!

Our Constitution says that no one can be denied the right to worship God. I'm an American! According to the Constitution I have the right to learn about God, to hear the Bible Stories, to be taught the Christian Way of Life.

But here's the hitch. While the Government can't deny me the right to attend church school and church—MY PARENTS CAN. They can rob me of my most sacred right just by neglecting my spiritual needs.

Did you know that about half the children in America are growing up without religious training? And yet there's a church in every village!

Yes sir, I'm serious! Instead of talking about it, we ought to do something! And we ought to start Sunday!

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ALL NATIONS UNDER GOD
International Sunday School Lesson for November 12, 1972
LESSON TEXT: Isaiah 45:1-6; Amos 9:7-8; Jonah; I Timothy 2:15.

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Today we deal with a trait that is common to all nations; springing from pride of country, it's roots are admirable, but the flowering can sometimes be less than perfect! And it is a failing common on a nationalistic basis today, as it was in Paul's time.

In our text for today we find Paul (a Jew) speaking to the Greeks, rebuking their sense of nationalistic exclusiveness, and reminding them of God's creative work, His activity in the history of men, and His redemptive purpose for ALL nations.

It is unfortunate, but human nature being what it is—all good things are susceptible to abuse. Pride of race can degenerate into racism; patriotism can become as high specialized a commodity that it becomes isolationism... breeding contempt and disregard of others.

Today's Lesson can be broken down into three areas: (1) God uses ALL nations; (2) God judges ALL nations; and (3) God provides salvation for ALL nations.

Studying we find that the return of the exiles was made possible by the conquest of Babylon by Cyrus the Persian. Cyrus had become an instrument in God's hands! He was to play an important part in the history of Israel. Israel, therefore, become involved, whether she liked it or not, with a foreign power. And in that involvement Israel was taught a lesson. The "Chosen Race" would be justifiably proud to have been singled out by God...but when that pride lead to nationalistic arrogance, God humbled her, as a loving father chastises a beloved child! God uses...

Israel was soon to learn that to be chosen of God involves responsibility, as well as privilege. She failed utterly to see that this involved a response of gratitude, and of dedication. In Amos she received a warning of the consequences of conceit and arrogance. Their very special relationship to God did not give them immunity to disasters; God does not "play favorites"...He is an impartial judge. He created and loves ALL His children equally. He agonizes over them, and He rejoices with them! God judges...

Through the sacrificial death of Christ on the cross at Calvary the world was given its greatest and most loving gift. Christ died for ALL men's sins, that they might repent, and—repenting—be born again into a sinless life! God saves...

One must, therefore, pay special attention to the word "repent". We must repent of our selfishness—a selfishness which shuts out the good of others; we must repent of our arrogance—that which tells us that we are better than others, that we are "special".

We ALL exist under God. We exist BECAUSE of God. We all are USED by God!

Today, with modes of travel vastly superior to what it was even one hundred years ago, the world has become smaller. Man's inventions have speeded up the tempo of life, and moved our horizons outward. Would that man was ready to so expand the horizons of the soul! For then, and only then, will all nations be united in the Christian brotherhood so greatly desired by God. Until this comes to pass we will be (as were the Israelites) subject to correction and punishment.

We most assuredly need to reflect that the life that beset our day and time are possibly the signpost of God, signifying that we need inner renewal before we can truly come into our own...as God would have us do!

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