

THE BENNETT BANNER

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REFLECTIONS OF AN IDEALIST?

The Christian world is preparing for another gaudy, tinsel, tipsy, hilarious Christmas. Gifts will be exchanged; music will fill the air; the cities will bedeck themselves; people will sing and jostle each other as they, hunting and seeking gifts, move from store to store. For whom do they buy the gifts?

What is Christmas? Is it gifts and fun and fir trees? Is it snow, Bing Crosby, and Handel's Messiah? Or is it the affirmation of pain, birth, tragedy, and triumph?

I would like to suggest that Christmas is life. The Madonna and Child are symbolic of an event that is miraculous—as indeed all of life's miraculous. They demonstrate the belief that death is not against life, but an integral part of it. Christmas affirms the continuing hope in the minds and hearts of individuals that bigotry, hatred, lust, pride, greed and all the hosts of enemies that assail man are not the final arbiters of his destiny, nor the perennial companions of his day to day existence. All the horror of disease and pain is absolved in the heartfelt awareness that life has nobler dimensions. The coming of the Child heralds the beginning of a Golden Age.

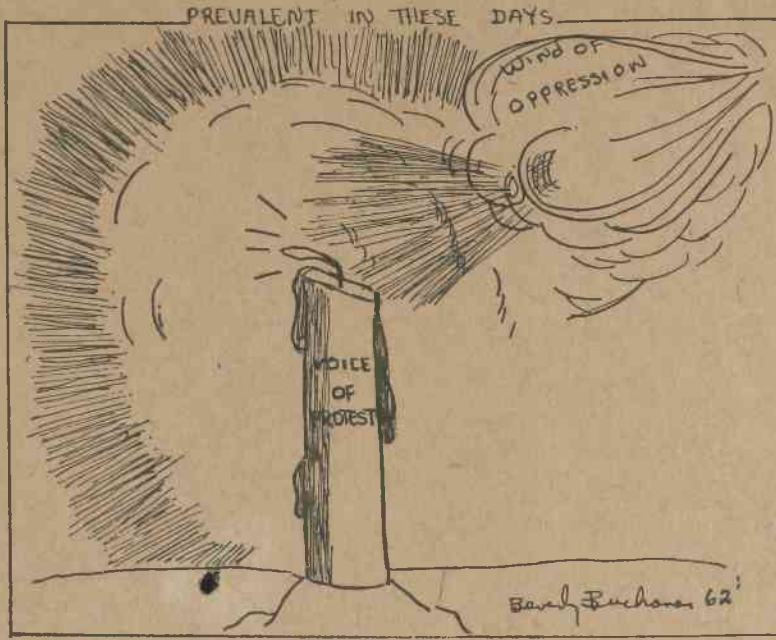
In every clime and throughout every age men have testified to this loftier meaning in life. The tragedy—our tragedy—is that today this meaning is threatened. It is in danger of permanent extinction. The "children of darkness" are seeking to extinguish the Christ-Child's light. Who are the "children of darkness?" We are — you and I. The intoners of solemn prayers, the purveyors of cheap ideals, the hollow, shallow, drab individuals who have no convictions and no sense of purpose. The killers of the dream and the vision, that the Kingdom of God can come here on this earth are our characteristics.

How far must we traverse to restore the balance in life? Can we effect a recovery of faith in man? Is the integrity of the person something to be trampled on at will? How far is it from the Manger in Bethlehem to the Cross at Golgotha? How many Golgotha's must there be before man understands? How long O God, before Thy Kingdom comes and Thy will be done?

In a world of unspeakable misery, grinding and poverty, where man is jugged against man, brotherhood, equality, and dignity are nightmarish specters, vestigial remnants of a bygone area, fabrications of sensitive souls who dared believe that man bore in him the Shekinah — the light of God. Man seems lost in the mass culture of a technological civilization that has drowned him in its gadgets. Man has killed God, life, the hopes, dreams and aspirations of the fragile and timid souls who have tried to discover and interpret the meaning of life for us.

But there is hope, for Christmas is neither apocalyptic nor schizophrenic. It is not a concept, theory, or point of view. It is tied to no race, no nation, and no season. Wherever there is Madonna and Child, there is Christmas. For it is event and miracle, affirmation and fulfillment, realization and possibility, a cry of joy and a poem of hope, a confrontation and a response, and an indication that God is ever-present and ushering us toward His city where peace and sanity rule supreme. Once we realize this, then the Kingdom of Heaven can come on this earth. It is with this fervent hope that I wish all of you a Merry Christmas.

—Mr. John Hatchett



PROUD OR HUMBLE?

Pride tops the list of the Seven Deadly Sins. Now, all people are a little sinful. It follows, logically, that most are a little proud. All pride is not sinful just as all humility is not good, even though, humility is paramount on the list of virtues.

The roles of both pride and its counterpart, humility, are confusing. Should one be proud or should one be humble? A completely humble person is sometimes rejected by society. A proud manner may be considered obnoxious. Yet, pride and humility may be concerned with identical types of objects. The vain woman is proud under her new hat, large, flowery and flashy. The nun is truly humble as she dons the wimple of her order. The vain woman is proud of her hands and painted fingernails, filed to a sharp point; the nun's neatly rounded nails and soft, unstained hands are hidden beneath the flowing sleeves of her garment.

It is important that both these aspects of life are kept in balance, yet in proper and separate places. Abolition of pride would cause the loss of many wholesome ideals of incentive and ambition. Eradication of humility would bring chaos to our world. In each case, the competition for the top position would become a compulsive rivalry. The amount of sin would increase as the people of the world strove to be the most humble or the most proud.

The struggle between pride and humility is evidenced in the daily lives of all citizens of this world. Pride in itself is the source of constant conflict between nations and peoples. Humility produces an expression of defects, according to Webster, and a concern for correction of these defects. No conflict is evidenced in concern, but the degree of concern in conflict brings about a correlation of pride with humility. On the other hand, the two words are considered exact opposites by Webster. Now, the confusion arising from this situation is brought into an even clearer view.

The greatest problem faced by people is the choice between these forces. One school states that one gets no place with humility. "You've got to show them what you've got." Another school says, "Be proud and show how much you ain't got."

Perhaps, the solution lies in a compromise. It may be noted here that compromise does not necessarily connote equality of the factors concerned. Sunlight stimulates growth but, rainwater is an essential component in the production of the fruit of any plant. Are these elements taken in equal amounts in each individual plant? No, it depends on the type of plant, the location of the plant, and the product desired. One must experiment, in the same way as a woman searches for the most appealing blend of face powder, with the proportioning of these factors, pride and humility. One should begin this earnest search early in life, base his actions and thoughts on his conclusions, and use his findings until they become an unconscious part of his nature.

—Barbara Whitfield

The Inquiring Reporter

What are your thoughts concerning the psychological effects of Russia's resumption of nuclear testing?



Frances E. Marshall, senior, sociology major, Nassau, Bahamas.

"The general psychological reactions to these nuclear testings are expressed in fear, tension, more scientific awareness, a more sincere approach to God, or a withdrawal from Him, and a flux of hasty marriages, on one hand, and fear of "getting left" on the other. "As an individual, I would not be

expressing the true essence of my feelings should I say that unlike the mass of people I am not fearful. However, mingling with my apprehension is a ray of hope — hope that man may return from his materialistic inclination to a stronger source (God): hope that he may begin to marshal his resources to insure human survival; hope also that man may see this extraordinary period in the life, organization, and culture of western society, not as a last stage in the cyclical web of history where 'no remedy can avert its destiny and no cure can prevent the death of western culture,' but see it as a representation of the senate form of western ideology to be followed by a new and more integrated form."



Dorothy Wilkerson, freshman, pre-law major, Charleston, S. C.

"It seems now that the worry is not whether or not there will be war but how much of an effect the poisonous particles will have on the people of the world as a result of the nuclear testing. Even though there are those who feel that the United States should show their readiness or unreadiness to the threat of the Russians, whether or not they are actually prepared is a minor problem in the minds of the people. A possible solution is a serious disarmament talks with the Russians."

Constance Spotts, junior, history major, Roncerverte, Va.



"There is much to be said about anything which threatens the survival of the human race. The resumption of nuclear testing has taken its psychological effects on the people of the world. Certainly the college mind is thinking; students are heard making comments to the effect 'I plan further study if there's no war.' The challenge which rests in the hands of the nations is the maintenance of peace. The present testing is another phase of the cold war between the ideologies of communism and democracy. Never before in history has man had his present potential to destroy himself whether it be with weapons or words. The cold war will continue and man's mental powers alone will allow him to remain free."



Catherine Bounds, sophomore, foreign language major, Moorestown, New Jersey.

"I feel that Russia's resumption of tests in September has had a profound psychological effect upon the entire world.

"The Soviets again stepped to the vantage point, particularly with their explosion of a 50 plus megaton bomb. They instilled fear in the hearts of the people of the free world. There was confusion over fallout and fallout shelters, the danger of radiation sickness, and other related subjects such as the deformity and mutation in future generations, all caused by the rapid and successive tests which carried ominous clouds of radioactive particles over the entire earth."

SEASON'S GREETINGS FROM THE BENNETT BANNER STAFF