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EDITORIALS



THE FIRST CHRISTMAS MESSAGE

The first Christmas service was not held in a temple, but under the stars in a grassy meadow. The light used was "the glory of the Lord," which shown all around. The people there were all men, not rich and great, but poor and low. They were shepherds, "keeping watch over their flocks by night." The preacher came from a far off land; he was the "Angel of the Lord." The sermon was short but full of meaning. He told them to "Fear not, for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day a Saviour, which is Christ, the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you: Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger."

The story of the shepherds is one that never grows old. No other story that you can think of can stir the human heart as the story of the Bethlehem manger and the baby Jesus.

Gifts we buy cost money, but the heart-gifts we can all give are worth much more to our friends and loved ones; and the beauty of them is that they last all year. Love, sympathy, and tenderness are not sold in stores; good cheer is not sold by the pound. Money cannot buy these gifts; yet we can

give them, not only at Christmas, but all the year.

THE REAL MEANING OF CHRISTMAS

"Christmas fosters the general good of all mankind and specifically the cause of peace. There are years, and this is one of them when we almost despair of banishing war. Yet once a year there goes ringing through the skies the great chorus of "Peace on earth," and though dictators scorn it and millions pay no heed, there are those who remember and take new heart.

"In our own nation it is perhaps fortunate that the Christmas season begins so soon after the presidential election. It helps to sweep away the angers and confusions of political strife. We have just passed through an unusually bitter campaign, one so hard fought, with such basic differences of opinion, that the outcome could not but leave a great many people sore, discouraged, and even apprehensive about the future. But Christmas comes to restore our sense of proportion, to remind us of the larger realities, of the essential decency of the people, the persistence of home and kindness and love, the power of courage, of faith and hope and charity and the curative magic of good will among men.

"Christmas rekindles the hearth fires of home. Most of us are not very articulate, especially among those with whom we live. Through shyness, or heedlessness, or by just not knowing how, we fail to speak and show the love we feel. Then comes Christmas to make us remember and give us a way of expression.

"But perhaps after all the greatest message of Christmas is, "Be as a little child." Put away the doubts and worries, forget the new uncertainties and remember the old verities, open your eyes, your ears and your heart, and cry to all 'Merry Christmas!'"