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Arnold Vander Muelen, who will deliver a special message at New Bern's Tabernacle Baptist church Monday night, was a criminal at 14. Today, at the age of 35, he travels some 50,000 miles a year in prison evangelism, and has helped others to establish rescue missions in many parts of the country.

Recalling his early lawlessness, Muelen says, "For spending money, in my home town of Grand Rapids, Michigan, we rolled drunks, mugged old people or robbed business establishments. We even robbed several churches. For recreation we roamed the streets looking for fights, and always finding one."

After two felony convictions in that town, he moved on to Detroit. "By this time," he admits, "a doctor had confirmed my own suspicion that I was a hopeless drunkard. I could go without food for days at a time, but couldn't do without a drink for more than an hour."

In Detroit he managed to make some "important" underworld and political connections, and worked himself into a high-paying position in the numbers racket. He made really big money, and spent it as fast as he could lay his hands on it.

"I was sentenced to Southern Michigan Prison before I was 16 years old," he recalls. "I climbed to the very top of the underworld, enjoying the very best the world had to offer. But through drunkenness and later on dope addiction, I slipped to the very depths of sin and despair."

Muelen's trail of crime wasn't confined to the state of Michigan. "I was in and out of jails all over America on charges ranging from drunkenness and disorderliness to armed robbery and assault with a deadly weapon."

It is commonly known that broken homes incubate juvenile delinquency, but this didn't hold true for him. "I was raised around an old-fashioned family altar," Arnold says. "I attended Sunday school regularly, and submitted myself to every demand of the church. This Bible training in the home and in the church made a deep and lasting impression on me, and it was this early training that followed me all over the country as I drifted far away from God."

Fourteen years ago, on New Year's eve, he found himself in front of the Pacific Garden Mission, while wandering along State street in Chicago. "I went inside," he remembers, "and was welcomed with open arms. I was permitted to stay for five weeks to regain my strength and grow strong in the grace and knowledge of my new-found Savior, Jesus Christ."

And, says, Muelen, "It was in the Pacific Garden Mission too that I learned if I was to be used of God and blessed of Him in winning others to Christ, I would have to make restitution for the past. When FBI agents came for me, I surrendered meekly. I waived extradition to the state of Michigan, and there pled guilty to counterfeiting and forgery and was given a long prison sentence."

Describing events that followed, he says, "I went to prison with Christ, God going with me to pave the way. I was enabled by God's grace to direct the Prison Bible school, which grew to some 700 students. Although I was wanted by law enforcement officials in other states and by the Federal government on various felony charges, God undertook in my behalf and one miracle followed another. In 23 months I was a free man."

Almost immediately after his re-



BE PREPARED—Living up to their motto, Boy Scouts of the Neuse Basin District polish up their know-how in this scene at Havelock. They want to be ready for the huge

Camporee that is soon to be held in New Bern, with thousands of youngsters attending.—Photo by Billy Benners.

Church Pews Never Empty When Easter Comes Around

Thousands of New Bernians who don't ordinarily attend religious services will be crowded into local church pews Sunday morning. It was that way last year, when Easter rolled around, and all the other years. And it will continue to be the pattern of behavior in years to come.

Their glad rags and corsages notwithstanding, most of the folks who make it a point to show up on Easter morning are spiritually sincere. Good or bad, saint or sinner, they want to be in a place of worship on the day of the Resurrection.

Look at their faces—the young and the old alike—and you'll see in the expressions worn a common bond of gratitude. To every professing Christian, Easter's glad tidings give life its meaning and faith its hope.

Christ, the devout believe implicitly, is risen from the dead, and thus His own words have been justified.

He entered into an unusual ministry, that of prison evangelism. After two years of travel in this work, back and forth across America, he founded a Rescue Mission in his home town of Grand Rapids.

Since then he has been instrumental in founding missions at Battle Creek, Mich., and Bristol, Va. It is worth mentioning that, like Muelen, a world-famous evangelist of the past generation—Billy Sunday—turned to religion in the Pacific Garden Mission.

Hearing Arnold Monday night here should be an inspiring experience.

Christ is risen from the dead, and thus God has given Him the sign of His mission. The final and absolute seal of genuineness has been put on all His claims, and the indelible stamp of a divine authority upon all His teachings.

In writing of Easter, Spurgeon makes this observation: "The fact of resurrection is not extraordinary; it is in accord with what we who believe at all believe to be the uniform law of life—that death does not touch it. The witnesses to the resurrection of Christ were unprejudiced, unexpectant, incredulous, and their honesty is not doubted even by skeptical criticism."

Warfield penned this thought: "From the empty grave of Jesus the enemies of the cross turn away in unconcealed dismay. Those whom the force of no logic can convince, and whose hearts are steeled against the appeal of almighty love from the cross itself, quail before the irresistible power of this simple fact. Christ has risen from the dead. After two thousand years of the most determined assault upon the evidence which demonstrates it, that fact stands."

Mitchell, describing the Resurrection, wrote these lines: "Over all earth's scarred and grave-riddled surface it kindled the light of this great hope: These smoldering ashes may live again in human form. By the testimony of the senses, Jesus is alive from the dead, and by the emptiness of Joseph's sepulcher, by Mary's risen Son, the resurrection is not incredible. Bereaved hearts may wrap themselves

around with its sweet hope; human graves may be made vocal with its promise; the dying race of man come unto victory through faith."

Talmage views Easter thusly: "It was for the glory that was set before Him that Christ endured the humiliation and suffering of the cross. Let us keep our eyes fixed steadily on the crown immortal, and then our sacrifices and services, and sufferings for Christ's cause, will seem light and trivial in comparison."

And, quoting Mitchell again: For forty centuries, in one unbroken column, the race of man had been marching into the shadows. And of all the millions who had descended into the shadowed valley, not one had ever returned. No dead human form through all the centuries had risen up into a post-mortem life. There was in all Earth's area not one empty grave.

"No human heart believed, no human voice declared that there was such a grave—a grave robbed by the power of a victor stronger than man's great enemy, death. It was therefore a new and wonderful message which the Apostles communicated, when unto the dying race of man he lifted up his voice in the words: 'One human form has risen from the dead; one grave of death is empty; the man Christ Jesus who was dead is alive again.'"

Napoleon had this to say about the Man of Galilee: "Alexander, Caesar, Charlemagne and I myself have founded empires; but on what do these creations of ours depend? Upon force. Jesus alone founded

His empire upon love; and to this very day millions would die for him."

Benjamin Franklin made this comment: "As to Jesus of Nazareth, my opinion of whom you particularly desire, I think the system of morals and His religion as He left them to us, is the best the world ever saw, or is likely to see."

Even the millions of mortals in the world who don't profess the Christian faith are keenly aware of the impact that Christ's birth, death and resurrection had on all mankind. And they concede that His teachings have exerted a wholesome influence on peoples of all faiths.

Although the Carpenter's Son never traveled further from His birthplace than two hundred miles, His impact on literature, music and art has extended to the four corners of the earth. In every field of endeavor it is apparent.

Certainly the ideals that Christ held up to mankind are firmly embedded in our American way of life. And the world's hope for peace and brotherhood depends largely on acceptance of what He advocated.

Aside from the religious significance of Good Friday, countless people in New Bern and Craven county insist that Good Friday is the time to plant and none other. This despite the fact that it isn't a fixed date from year to year, but comes in March as well as April.

A lot of our citizens swear by the almanac, and wouldn't think of sticking a seed into the ground un-

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