

# A Hymn Is Born

## Swing Low, Sweet Chariot

Negro slaves had many means of transportation to Heaven

In 1818 a Dutch vessel unloaded a strange cargo at Jamestown, Va. The 20 puzzled Africans were promptly placed on the auction block and promptly bought by the colonists. Torn from their native land, their customs and their people, the unfortunate victims of commerce could neither read, write nor speak the language of those who bought them. Thus began a dark chapter in American history—and an unique chapter in "civilization."

Groping for a means of communication with his owner, the slave struggled to comprehend his language. Thick-tongued and slow in speech, he smoothed out or committed difficult and unpleasant syllables. "This" became "da." "Door" was cut down to "De." "Sir" became "Sah" and "river" was more easily pronounced "ribbah." This softening of the English language rubbed off on the Southern slave owner.

Came the 1700s and the English hymn. There were few hymn books. Song leaders "lined out" verses for the congregations to sing, line by line. Worshipping in the same church with his white owner, the Negro sat in his "slave gallery" and sang the white man's hymns. During the week he sang these in the fields. When he "disembodied" the words he made his own. Came the 1800s and Protestant interest in "missions." Methodists and Baptists put out the same welcome mat for the blacks as they did for the whites. The Negro established,

however modest, his own church. He had his own colored preacher. The Christian faith filled a void for the slave. It promised a land of rest from his daily toil, a heaven where he would be reunited with his people from whom he had been separated by death and the auction block. He devoured every word of the Holy Book. What he couldn't read he memorized from the exhorter in the pulpit. His religion was real. Satan was "de debil." Christ was "Marso Jesus." In heaven "all God's chillin' got shoes." And God would deliver him to heaven just as He had delivered Daniel from the lions' den.

The Negro's imagination and the Scriptures supplied an assortment of transportation methods to heaven. He could get aboard "de gospel train." He could take passage on the "Old Ship of Zion." He could "climb Jacob's ladder," travel a "rough and rocky road," ride "two white horses," or, like Elijah, climb into a chariot as it swung down out of the clouds. "But whatever the method of transportation, the simple faith of the Negro gave promise that would some day "walk all ova' God's hebbin'."

With his instinctively superior feel for rhythm, the Southern Negro took the white man's language, his Bible and his religion, and gave him in return some of the sweetest music this side of heaven—the Negro spiritual. Here is one of them:

Swing low, sweet chariot,  
Comin' for to carry me home,  
Swing low, sweet chariot,  
Comin' for to carry me home.

O swing low, sweet chariot,  
Comin' for to carry me home,  
Swing low, sweet chariot,  
Comin' for to carry me home.

I looked over Jordan, an' what did I see  
Comin' for to carry me home.

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## The Christian Viewpoint

It is a great thing for us, when we have tried our best, to rest in the hands of the Lord. We are not responsible for results. We are only responsible for trying to do the best we know how with all our strength. It is the faithful people, those who do with their might the tasks of each day, who keeps the world in the way of righteousness. God sees our purposes and our aims, even when we do not reach them.

So when we have worked hard all day, we can put our hands upon a pillow at night, and resting our cares upon Him, sleep peacefully in His gracious keeping. "I trusted in thee, O Lord, I said, Thou art my strength."

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## Flowers, Outdoor Sports Highlight March Events In North Carolina

North Carolina's calendar of coming events for March features a nationally known flower festival, hunt race meeting and golf tournaments.

Wilmington will celebrate the blooming of "more than a million" azaleas with the Seventh Annual Wilmington Azalea Festival, March 25 - 28. Thousands of visitors will join the residents of this historic port city to enjoy parades, concerts, dances, a rodeo, garden tours, and the \$10,000 Azalea Open Golf Tournament.

The colorful sport of hunt racing and steeplechasing opens its 1954 season in the Sandhills of North Carolina on March 20 with the Stonybrook Race Meeting at Southern Pines. Top steeplechasers and race riders from the United States and Canada will compete in races sanctioned by the Hunt Committee of the National Steeplechase and Hunt Association.

Pinehurst, "winter golf capital of America," lists three major golf tournaments for March: the Pinehurst Country Club Seniors 4-Ball Tournament, March 1 - 5; the 62nd Annual North and South Invitation Golf Championship for Women, March 17 - 22; and the 6th Annual Donald J. Ross Memorial Mixed Foursomes, March 31.

Informal horse shows in the Pinehurst-Southern Pines area are announced as follows: March 7, William J. Brewster Farm; March 21, Lakelawn Farm; March 28, Pinehurst Race Track.

At the all-year resort of Tryon in the Appalachian foothills, March events include the Any and All Dog Show at Harmon Field, March 6; the Hunter Trials at Fancy Hills, March 20, and the Junior Horsemanship Show at Harmon Field, March 27. All of these events are sponsored by the Tryon Riding and Hunt Club.

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Scriptures: John 13-14  
Deuterian Reading: 1 John 4: 11-21.

**New Commandment**  
Lesson for March 21, 1954

## -Go To Church Sunday-

### The Two Ways

BY REV. C. HERMAN TRUEBLOOD

TEXT: "Enter ye in at the strait gate." Matt. 7:13

The Bible emphatically teaches that there is a difference between darkness and light, truth and falsehood, right and wrong, wickedness and righteousness, sheep and goats, rebellious sinners and obedient servants of God. The Bible also very clearly teaches that there are two destinations - eternal destinations, one for the lost and another for the redeemed. In the 13th and 14th verses of Matthew, 7th chapter, the Two Ways, or Destinies, are pointed out:

"Enter ye in at the strait gate; for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in therein. Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it."

Broad-mindedness is a good thing when it has proper depth - "rooted and grounded" in convictions that holds a person "safe and secure, through faith in Jesus Christ - Steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord." However, there is a so-called broad-mindedness that turns a person into a Mister Ditto, a Soft-Soapy, Wishy-Washy, Nabby-Famby, Weak-Kneed fellow, having no deep-seated constructive convictions of his own, is ever ready to say, "Yes-Yes," to every Tom-Dick-and-Harry that comes along with some new cure-all religious panacea - newly discovered, invented, or concocted, and made to order for popularity-seeking, gullible, individuals who almost lose their breath trotting after the "big crowd," in its pell-mell, head-long rush down "THE BROAD WAY, that leadeth to destruction." The biggest question of life is: "Which way am I headed? Which gate have I entered? On which road am I traveling, The Narrow road, or The Broad Road?"

1. THERE ARE TWO WAYS. (1) The Wide Way represents a life of drifting with the current, of selfishness, of disobedience to God, of self-gratification, and of unrestrained acceleration toward a Christless eternity. (2) The Narrow Way represents a life of faith in Christ, obedience to the laws of God, self-denial, restraint from the evil, love, sacrifice, and a worthy service for the up-lift of man, and the glory of God.

2. THE TWO GROUPS ON THE WAY (1) It is an inexplicable mystery that men are prone to indict themselves and choose their own eternal condemnation. Every community supplies evidence that a large percentage of people are walking in the Wide way. (2) Also in every community there are a small number, a "faithful few," that constitute the spiritual "salt of the earth - the light of the world."

3. THE END OF THE TWO WAYS (1) One is the way of "Destruction" - The wide, broad way, leads to eternal judgement, condemnation, remorse, and "outer darkness." (2) The other is a "Strait" Narrow way, that leads to "life more abundantly," righteousness, peace, joy, and the "Well-done," approval of Christ Jesus, our Lord. The gospel is Broad enough to include "Whoever shall call upon the name of the Lord;" it is Narrow enough to exclude those who "Believe not in the name of the only begotten son of God."

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Do you live in a house or in a home? Do you realize that some people only live in a house while others have a home? A house may cost much money and may be nicely furnished, but fail to be a home. A one or two room building can become a real home.

Do you know the difference between a house and a home? The difference is the Christ. The home houses people who are constantly seeking the Christ and always finding growth in the Christ-like life. The spirit of Christ will trans-

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**What's New About Love?**

Was Jesus exaggerating when he spoke of love as a "new" commandment? Had love never been heard of before? It is not found in those two ancient Laws Christ himself had quoted from Deut. 6:5 and Leviticus 19:18 - "Love God, and Love your neighbor." Well, love itself was not then new in the world. But love to the degree that Jesus meant, was indeed new. The careful reader will notice that Jesus does not stop with "Love one another." He goes on to add, "—as I have loved you." Granted that even sacrificial love had been seen in the world before, the fact is that for these disciples in the Upper Room, and for most of us if the truth be known, the kind of self-giving love which Christ had, and was in truth something new. We are all willing to love those that love us. We will love those who understand and appreciate us. We are willing enough to love if we feel we are getting some return, so to speak, on our investment. But which of us in Jesus' place would have loved others as he did? Those disciples were not at first what you would call lovable people. Sinners are not lovable as a rule, and Jesus came to help sinners. The thing that always bothered the Pharisees was that Jesus evidently loved people who did not deserve to be loved. No Pharisee ever understood this. It was something new in their world.

**Love Is Not a Blueprint**

Christians sometimes become too enthusiastic about this New Commandment. They speak of it as if it did away with the Ten Commandments, or as if it got rid of any need for thinking. If your intentions are good, that's good enough, they say. So they go through life with what they vaguely suppose are good intentions but actually doing a lot of harm. Jesus never meant this New Commandment as a sort of magic charm that would solve all our problems, get rid of all our difficulties, conquer all our temptations. Love is not a blueprint. You cannot take "love and love alone" and govern a city or found a college or run a business or a farm, just on pure love. It is something like the law of gravitation. You can't build so much as a pigsty without paying good attention to the law of gravitation. But that law does not tell you how to build the sty, nor a house, nor a skyscraper, though all of them are held together with gravitation's mighty power. So with all human institutions, the church, the state, the school, and so on; without the spirit of self-sacrifice (the New Commandment) they will not stand; yet self-sacrifice is no blueprint by itself. There is no substitute for hard thinking and planning.

**Love Is Concern**

If self-sacrifice sounds too lofty, let us come down the scale a little. New-Commandment love, to say the least of it, means concern for others. We all know what it is to be concerned about ourselves. We take good care of ourselves, we look for our interests, we worry for fear we may be left by the wayside somehow. We like to see that we ourselves get the most out of anything. All persons except complete fools are concerned naturally about themselves. Now, the New Commandment simply says to turn this concern in the other direction. Be as interested in the other person's welfare as you are in your own.