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RANDOM THOUGHTS

by Doris Burton

Most of you know the motto of the inter-demonstrational group known as "The Christophers". "If everyone lit just one little candle what a bright world this would be." I've been thinking frequently of late about many people I know who do merely one kind thing, occasionally, and have no idea that their kindness has brought warmth into lives they never knew they'd touch. In many cases, the person performing the deed hasn't known that anyone even knew of it other than the recipient.

But it is amazing how the good stories, as well as the bad, do get around. The candle they lit was so tiny that not many could see its glow or feel its warmth. But suppose everyone who had the chance should light one of these little candles? The fire would light up the whole Earth!

And just because your life is of necessity one of small horizons don't ever believe that opportunity can't come your way very often. If it is only the opportunity to take a pie to the home of a sick friend, or to smile and say "hello" to a lonely person, or to listen to the troubles of another with an open heart, then you are lighting a candle.

That is the beauty of Christopher creed to me. They do not ask for a great big candle that in itself will set the world on fire. They ask merely that one does, in his own small way, what good one can for any unfortunate who comes his way.

I know a young girl who spent ten long months in a hospital, dying, everyone thought of gangrene. But she could move around; and even there, where she underwent surgery on an average of once a week, she brought gaiety and joy with her to hundreds of lonely frightened patients. She couldn't do much for them but she could roll up a bed, tell a joke, listen to their troubles, or run an errand for them. And her own serious trouble, she laughed at. Fortunately she recovered, though she will never use one arm again.

But I believe that all the little

candles she lit combined their light until it became so bright that even God saw it! And so many people must have prayed for her, because of her kindness, that He heard.

I honestly don't believe that this girl has ever consciously thought that the things she did for others were of any importance. She probably will never know that everyone along the corridors of that hospital would ask, each day that she didn't come by their room, where she was and add that they missed her.

This type of thing, I believe, is what the Christophers ask of each of us. Wherever one may be, whatever his circumstances, he can, if he wishes, light a candle. And each one he lights will make the area around himself a little brighter and possibly inspire another to try to make his own small corner a brighter place in which to live.

Each of us can, by example, influence every life which touches ours. It is our responsibility to make our own existences as good as possible! Then it becomes impossible, we cannot, harm another. And I can think of no better way to start improving oneself than by following the Christopher motto.

Then, it could follow, that someday the chance will come our way to light a candle of such magnitude that it alone will spread a glow over the Earth. Not many of us will ever get that chance, but by never failing to light each and every small one which comes our way, we will still have done our share to make of this old world a brighter place in which to live.

Nickel is the third most magnetic element after iron and cobalt.

Devices for protecting the eyes from excessive light or glare go back to antiquity, even before the use of glass. The Eskimos used tubular wooden goggles with slits to admit light. In Venice in 1551, slits were put in the visors of armor for the same purpose. Colored glasses for lenses came into use in the latter half of the 16th century.

Overlook On Life

By WARREN S. REEVE

Note: The idea of "Overlook" is taken from the Overlooks provided for viewing panoramas along the Blue Ridge Parkway.

Yesterday I began this Overlook, thinking to follow a certain line of thought, but today when I take up my pen to continue, I feel constrained to leave what I had in mind until another time, and to tell you this week of a little experience I had the other day. I do so not without trepidation, for I know how fickle are human emotions - both my own and those of people in general - and I shrink from being liable to wrong emotional reactions both in myself and from some of my readers. I plead your magnanimity therefore, and would desire your prayers more than your criticisms.

An evening without any meetings or appointments seemed an opportunity for "catching up" with work at my desk. Amid the succession of ideas that darted into my mind about the different things I might accomplish before bedtime, came the thought that what I needed more than anything else at this particular time was the cultivation of my fellowship with God. I had need, my deeper conscience said, to drop from my mind for the time being the numerous responsibilities that I had felt weighing upon me. Let my desk stay all cluttered up a little longer. Let those letters I thought I should answer wait until tomorrow. Let those records and notations I wanted to make go for now. Stop, drop everything else, and have a visit conference with God! In other words, pray! Or just be quiescent before Him. Or pour out your heart in adoration! In some such terms my deep conscience commanded me, and I decided to obey it. I did so at first with considerable reluctance because I did not want to have those various desk-jobs hanging on any longer. I begrudged, you might say, the loss of an evening when I thought I could get so much done. But once having made that decision, and the more my mind got adjusted to the idea, the happier I was over it. And deep down within me I knew that I had made a right decision. I consented with myself that my deepest need just now was indeed a time of aloneness with God.

For years it has been a custom with me to do a certain amount of reading and study and writing in bed. I concluded therefore that on this particular evening I would get the best results if, finishing up first all the "pre-going-to-bed"

chores, I did my praying sitting up in bed, I could then feel that all night was ahead of me and I could pray as long as I might wish without any danger of being interrupted and with no thought of any set time when I must stop. I knew from many experiences that prayer to God is greatly helped when one can do it unhurriedly and with a sense of the utmost leisure.

As you have read this, perhaps you will have thought, Will he not get sleepy? And will he not fall off to sleep? No such thought whatever came into my mind, for I have in the course of the years done much thinking and reading and studying and writing in bed and have not usually found sleep was out of the control of my mind and will. If I intended to work till such an hour, I could usually do so; and upon making up my mind to lie down and sleep, I could usually do so at once.

There have been exceptions to this, of course; and this night that I am writing of was one of them. Barely fifteen or twenty minutes had elapsed before I dropped off to sleep, though still sitting up and with the light on. After about fifteen or twenty minutes I woke up, roused myself a little bit, and started again to pray and meditate, for the evening was still young, and the hour earlier than anybody's bedtime unless of little children or of very early-rising farmers. Again, however, I swooned into slumber. Twenty or twenty-five minutes later I came to once more and, drowsily, urged myself to get awake and pray. Perhaps I read a paragraph or two in a devotional book. But before I knew it I was dead to the world again. This sort of thing kept up all evening, and in the brief waking intervals I was almost mad at myself at having my intentions frustrated. Finally, between ten and eleven, I gave up the effort of keeping awake; I put out the light, and lay down, thinking that after having had so much extra sleep in the early hours of the night, I might wake and get up earlier than usual in the morning, and bring my refreshed mind and heart to God then. To my amazement, instead of waking up early, I slept later than usual the next morning.

While doing my morning chores, I reflected on the meaning of what had happened. The first thought that came to me was a superficial one: I had lost a valuable evening, neither getting my work done nor my praying done. Precious hours had been wasted in sleep that according to my normal regime was extra and not really necessary. But is not God the Giver of sleep? I said to myself, I had not asked for sleep. I had fought it. But my fighting was as useless as to try to stop the rain from falling. I had better change my attitude and realize that though in my wisdom, praying (or doing my 'desk-work') would have been a better use of those hours, God judged that on that particular night I needed the extra sleep and He insisted on my having it. So I put from my mind all regret about it and acquiesced gratefully in the Lord's gift of refreshment that the night had brought me.

I had supposed that by giving up my initial wish to accomplish various jobs the evening before, and in putting God's claim to my prayer services first, I would get a great spiritual blessing.

Though I had not done much actual praying or meditating, the denial of my first natural desire to do various jobs, and the intention to pray brought a blessing. I entered upon a new day spiritually reinforced more than I would have supposed possible. God had used His way of smashing self-rule within me and established His rule in my heart. That, after all, was and is my deepest wish. I can only rejoice that God's ways are better than my ways, and often surprisingly different.

Obituaries

R. C. DEYTON

R. C. Deyton, aged 71, a retired Jack's Creek farmer, died at the home of his daughter, Mrs. Charlie Black, near Burnsville at 9 a. m. Friday, Nov. 23, after a brief illness.

Funeral services were held Sunday at 2 p. m. at the Windom Methodist Church. The Rev. E. P. Blevins and the Rev. P. E. Woody officiated, and burial was in the church cemetery.

Surviving are his wife; another daughter, in addition to Mrs. Black, Mrs. Claude Williams of Telford, Tenn.; four sons, Burdette, Bernard, Dudley and D. C. Deyton of Rt. 1, Burnsville; and 20 grandchildren.

POETRY CORNER

Conducted By

Edith Deaderick Erskine  
WINTER TIME

Why do I like the winter?  
Is it because of snow?  
No, there are many more reasons—  
Listen, I'll tell you so.

We can sit around the fire  
With candy and popping corn,  
Reading and telling stories,  
Staying up until the morn.

This too is why I like winter—  
It is holy Christmas time,  
Which brings much joy and glad-  
ness

To your good friends and mine.  
The children are so happy,  
Their hearts are full of glee.

To see old Saint Nick coming  
With gifts to trim their tree.  
The prettiest scenes in the winter  
Are the trees covered over with  
snow,  
But this doesn't last too long  
When winter winds start to blow.  
Mrs. R. C. Parsley, Burnsville

WE ARE GRATEFUL

The skies adorn the mountain crest  
In golden flame of evening sun.  
Clouds upon the brow bring rest  
With soothing touch when day is  
done.

The soil holds a royal gift,  
The jewels of our fruit and grain.  
The rain and sun are tools to lift  
Them up, a crown of earthly gain.  
We are grateful, Father, yet fer-  
vently pray

For peace to hallow Thanksgiving  
Day  
Edith Deaderick Erskine



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