

**THE FUTURE OUTLOOK**

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**THE FUTURE OUTLOOK**

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**PREPARATIONS FOR SPRING**

Spring is just around the corner. The old cold and rugged winter days are passing fast.

Spring is the most beautiful season of the year especially for those who make preparations for it. As one passes along the streets and highways he will see families beautifying their homes and surrounding territories by cleaning off the old winter rubbish, putting on a new coat of paint, cultivating the flower and vegetable gardens, and making other preparations for Spring.

During the Spring season we celebrate the most glorious and honorable holiday of the year, the Crucifixion and Resurrection of our Lord, Jesus Christ. A fast of forty days, beginning on Ash Wednesday and continuing till Easter, is designated as the Lenten season, with special services arranged by the saints. The general theme is depicting the cross. In the hymns that demonstrate Jesus' suffering, which these saints sing for his honor are "In the Cross of Christ I Glory", "Were You There When They Crucified My Lord?" and "When I Survey the Wondrous Cross." The most favorable chapter in the Bible for this season of the year is the sixth chapter of Matthews, "The Sermon on the Mount."

It is an honor to suffer for righteousness' sake; both spiritually and physically.

What are you doing this Lenten season, for beautification and human suffering? During these warm days with the brilliant hot sun shining upon us for a few hours we change our winter garments. Many of the illnesses take place, namely communicable diseases, whooping cough, measles, chicken pox, and many of the like. Do you have a family doctor? Consult him about a vaccination. He will explain to you the type you need for your complaint.

This is an old saying, "Haste Makes Waste." How true. When you travel the highways just about every fifty or sixty miles you will observe an automobile accident. On many occasions some are injured for life. Since a law has been passed that all vehicles operated on the highways must have liability insurance one should not take too much for granted in violating the traffic laws. It is an old saying, "The Life You Save May Be Your Own," and no insurance can restore life. Most such accidents occur during a beautiful sunshiny day approaching Spring, when the young teen-agers and college youth just decide to air out a little while, with ten or twelve in old cars, loudly talking and cheering, just having a good time.

There have been quite a few teen-agers who have been thrown out of school and developed their thinking capacity and moved it into the devil's workshop. Many of these are touring in sections with air rifles shooting out window panes when the residents aren't expecting it, creating ill-will in the various communities. Many have said they are just mischievous, approaching these warm beautiful days.

Sap is in the little pines. Before commencement exercises the parents receive a letter stating, "Your daughter has been suspended due to pregnancy" or "Your son spent too much time in the hospital as a result of an accident."

Spring is in the air . . . are you making preparations for it?

Will you hasten home from your routine of work? The little boys and girls are out of school soon and they planned for a baseball game in your back yard and oh, how much damage they can do, breaking windows, running over your rose bushes and shubbery! On many occasions they are watching the ball and fail to see an approaching vehicle, which results in an accidental death or body injuries.

There are many character-building organization, namely, the YWCA, Boy and Girl Scouts, church, and other community organizations, all with trained staffs to work with our youth in helping to keep their minds busy with more resourceful activities.

The parents shouldn't depend solely on these institutions to do their duties. They should give their children

**This Week's Sunday School Lesson****CHRIST, OUR EXAMPLE  
IN SERVICE****What Is Our Concern?**

Some teen-age boys were apprehended by a state trooper when their car raced through a stop signal. Their story slowly unfolded. Yes, they had "borrowed" the car from a parking lot. It hadn't been hard to start. Why did they do it? "We didn't have anything better to do," they declared. "We did it just for kicks."

A reporter interviewed some mountain climbers. After taking notes on their intriguing story of the conquest of a mountain never before climbed by men, the reporter asked the human interest question: "Why did you go to all that trouble, face all those dangers, to climb that mountain?"

They gave a cryptic reply: "Because the mountain was there."

Most of us have followed the Mercury and Gemini space flights and plans for the even more daring Apollo ventures. Many of us, at times, wonder why so many young men work so hard and vie so intensely to be part of the space team. Or we question why great nations should spend millions of dollars in a frantic attempt to put men on the moon.

We know of business executives who give themselves to promoting the growth of their business to the point of physical and mental collapse. When we inquire why, the reply often is, "We have so many people depending upon us."

These and other illustrations of the drive that makes us "keep on keeping on" are all ways of asking a basic question: How can a person find meaning and purpose in his life? What brings lasting satisfaction? The issue of this session is this: Does Jesus' example of servanthood throw any real light on our search for meaning and purpose?

**Before You Read The Scripture**

To get at this study, we need to remember the discovery made last week. The raising of Lazarus was for John the climax of Jesus' self-revelation. This event marks the high point in John's Gospel drama of the Logos of God incarnate in the life of Jesus of Nazareth.

The brief account of the Triumphal Entry gives John the opportunity to suggest that even this popular response of the people was rooted more in their amazement over the Lazarus event than it was in either an understanding of or a commitment to Jesus. John hints at the universality of the Christ in his story of the Greeks who sought Jesus. All these happenings build toward the beginning of John's Passion story.

**The Passion Story**

To understand Chapters 13 through 17, we need to have in mind the central place the Pas-

sion story held in the experience of the first Christians. The events that began with Jesus' entry into Jerusalem and ended with his followers' experience of his resurrection provided the content of the first Christian preaching. Even the order of events in John's account of the Passion does not vary greatly from that in the other Gospels.

At two points John's unfolding of the closing scenes in Jesus' life does depart radically from that of the other Gospel reporters. The first of these departures is found in the long discourses of Jesus that John included in his account of the Last Supper. The second departure is John's omission of any reference to the institution of the Lord's Supper by Jesus.

We need first of all to keep in mind that John's Gospel was written after the other Gospels. Many scholars feel the date of John's Gospel was much later. If this is the case, then the additional lapse of time provided opportunity for the enrichment of the Passion tradition.

Clearly, the first reporting of the exciting events of Jesus' passion was oral reporting. The fact of Jesus' condemnation and crucifixion was common knowledge. The experience of his resurrection was limited to those to whom he had revealed himself. The important message those first men had to communicate was very simple: This Jesus whom you crucified, God has raised from the dead.

In the proclaiming of this simple message, those who had been with Jesus acted what they knew. Across the years the story, told and retold, became a rich tradition of events and sayings that supported the central truth of the message.

How do we account for the absence of Jesus' words instituting the memorial of his death? These words are found in the other three Gospels and in one of Paul's letters (I Corinthians 11:23-26).

One reasonable explanation is that the observance of the Lord's Supper was so much a part of the experience of the church in John's time that he did not feel the need to call special attention to it. Another possibility is that John felt the observance of the Lord's Supper held too dominant a place in the life of the church, so he deliberately left out any mention of it.

**What the Scripture Says**

The Scripture for today is John 12 and 13. Selected verses are printed below. See Home Bible Study suggestions in the back of the quarterly.

**John 13:1-15**

1 Now before the feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that his hour had come to depart out of this world to the Father, having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end. 2 And during

supper, when the devil had already put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray him, 3 Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he had come from God and was going to God, 4 rose from supper, laid aside his garments, and girded himself with a towel. 5 Then he poured water into a basin, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel with which he was girded. 6 He came to Simon Peter; and Peter said to him, "Lord, do you wash my feet?" 7 Jesus answered him, "What I am doing you do not know now, but afterward you will understand." 8 Peter said to him, "You shall never wash my feet." Jesus answered him, "If I do not wash you, you have no part in me." 9 Simon Peter said to him, "Lord, not my feet only but also my hands and my head!" 10 Jesus said to him, "He who has bathed does not need to wash, except for his feet, but he is clean all over; and you are clean, but not all of you." 11 For he knew who was to betray him, that was why he said, "You are not all clean."

12 When he had washed their feet, and taken his garments, and resumed his place, he said to them, "Do you know what I have done to you? 13 You call me Teacher and Lord; and you are right, for so I am. 14 If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. 15 For I have given you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you."

Memory Selection: I am among you as one who serves.

—Luke 22:27

**How We Understand  
The Scripture**

As we begin to think about the meaning of Jesus' act of washing the disciples' feet, we will find it helpful to recall a number of passages in the other Gospels. It is true that no other Gospel reports this incident, but a number of happenings and sayings reflect the central place servanthood had in Jesus' thinking.

The first passage we might examine is Luke 10:25-37. This is the record of Jesus' answer to the man who wanted to know whom he should consider his neighbor. Time has rightly called the Samaritan "good" because he responded to the need of a man whom chance left in his path. Jesus admonished his questioner to go and do likewise.

Another passage is Luke 22:24-27. Jesus' disciples disputed among themselves as to which of them was to be regarded as greatest. Jesus replied by contrasting the accepted standard of greatness with his own. He concluded by saying: "I am among you as one who serves."

Matthew 25:31-46 gives Jesus' description of the Last Judgment. In it he contrasted those who will receive the approval of the King and those who will be rejected. The basis of his judgment was this: "As you did it to one of the least of these my brethren, you did it to me."

As we turn to John's report of Jesus' servant act, we can

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first counsel in the home and cooperate with these character-building leaders. Youth study more mischievous things during the Spring season when they can congregate together on a warm sunny day than any other time of the year.

Spring is near. Our youth need supervision, christian guidance and health protection. Are you making preparations for Spring?