

## THE FUTURE OUTLOOK

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## Now That School Is Out

By Miss Beatrice Herbin

Above pollution in the air, at this time of year in Greensboro City is the noise of glad children at the closing of school. And, while the teachers too, may be a bit jovial at this time, parents and neighbors come to be harassed by noise in the streets—the baseball fields of the communities. The schools have merely turned the fight over to residents who try hard, and most times unsuccessfully, to keep them off their lawns.

As the green grass sprouts, and little flowers blossom and shrubs nursed through the chills of winter strive to survive, footprints of children often snuff out their existence or cripple the grass and shrubs into a slow-dying death. If you have time to rest, forget that too, for the shouts of a home-run across your lawn can be heard to Yankee Stadium, and your better self is torn between the innocence of the youngsters and the hard work you have put into making a house beautiful.

Greensboro has many parks to which the children can resort for play; Greensboro has many streets, which if kept for cars would make feasible avenues to places here and there. Not only do you care about the lawn and flowers, you must also pick up polluted debris which the kids drop from their bubble gum and candy.

I wonder if parents would take a suggestion: that of teaming up with other families to take the children to the parks and to the ball fields? It costs a lot to grow a lawn and shrubs—my goodness! Or better still, couldn't the parents let their children play in their own yards? When kids reach eleven, twelve and thirteen, they are, or should be, capable of taking themselves to the parks. Most of them have bicycles and nice healthy feet big enough to walk them there.

Communities could be wonderful places to live if each loved his neighbor as himself; if each respected the property rights of others.

And then beyond the green, are older youths who crowd the shopping centers, hindering business and throwing trash all over the place, which makes more of the pollution which they say they abhor. I think it's time the older generation acted more like adults; it's time they recapture the society and keep children and youth in their places. Then when they become men and women, they can put away childish things. But how can they know when unless they are taught?

Parents, please lend a helping hand—teach your child, it may be your own that is saved, saved from an automobile in the streets, saved from ostracism as a brat, and saved for humane service that someday he can give because he was taught in the way that a child should go.

I fear that both citizenship and Christianity training have been abandoned in too many homes, and in the schools as well, eventually turning out violent rebels who know not how to think. Such products are a threat to society and to the welfare of all. Disrespect and petty thefts result, and God knows what else. And it, remind you,, does not develop over night; irresponsible citizenship begins in the streets.

### POET'S CORNER

The Lord had a job for me,  
 But I had so much to do,  
 I said, "You get somebody else  
 Or wait till I get through."  
 I didn't know how the Lord came out,  
 But he seemed to get along;  
 But I felt kinda sneakin' like,  
 Cause I knowed I'd done Him wrong.  
 One day I needed the Lord  
 Needed Him right away,  
 And He never answered me at all,  
 But I could hear Him say,  
 Down in my accusing heart,  
 "Boy, I've got too much to do,  
 Or wait till I get through."

—Paul Laurence Dunbar

# This Week's Sunday School Lesson

## MAKING WORSHIP MEANINGFUL

### BEGINNING WHERE YOU ARE

The church of which I am pastor sits at the edge of the campus of a great university with an enrollment of more than fifteen thousand students. This university shares all the problems faced by most schools in our day: permissive morality; sex-oriented movies in our theaters; a "suitcase mentality" (this may be the most independent college generation yet to appear on the American scene, but it is also the generation most likely to go home for the weekend).

Yet, in this rather small community, throngs of young university students gather in the churches. Congregations of a thousand or more are not rare. What a thrill to hear such a group singing the hymns of the church or the thunder of voices as a creed is recited or the Lord's Prayer is offered in unison!

The elements of the services of worship attended by these college youth and their elders are those familiar to every participant on the American Protestant scene. Hymns are sung, pastor prays, a creed is recited, an offering is received, anthems are rendered, and a preacher stands to preach.

What happens in the minds and hearts of the people as they gather in this fashion? The answer to this question may be beyond us, so let us consider another question, What purpose does the minister have in calling these people together? The answer would go something like this: "The purpose is to establish where it has not been established, and to re-enforce where it has been established, an appreciation for and a commitment to the life style of Jesus Christ, as the one totally appropriate for our own time."

In more traditional terms, the purpose is to evangelize and to edify. Our purpose is to persuade men to adopt a positive, affirmative relationship to Jesus Christ and to continue faithfully in that relationship. Our purpose is to persuade men who are unpersuaded that Jesus Christ is both Savior and Lord, the source of healing for all inner needs and the controller of all outer aspects of our common human experience.

The services of worship in this Alabama church are open to all men. At various times we have had representatives of five different ethnic groups in the congregation. Certainly the learned and the ignorant are gathered here, the old and the young, persons of varying degrees of wealth.

All these persons are brought together in unity before the sign of the cross; they sit under the reading and the exposition of the Word; they eat from one common loaf and drink from one common cup; the benediction is always given as a commission to one common task, the service of Christ in the service of the least among us who are his brethren. (See Matthew 25:31-46.)

## SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES

The Scripture for this lesson is 1 Corinthians 11; 14. Selected verses are printed below.

1 Corinthians 11:23-26

23 For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took bread, 24 and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, "This is my body which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me." 25 In the same way also the cup, after supper, saying, "This is my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me." 26 For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

1 Corinthians 14:23-26,40

23 If, therefore, the whole church assembles and all speak in tongues, and outsiders or unbelievers enter, will they not say that you are mad? 24. But if all prophesy, and an unbeliever or outsider enters, he is convicted by all, he is called to account by all, 25 the secrets of his heart are disclosed; and so, falling on his face, he will worship God and declare that God is really among you.

26 What then, brethren? When you come together, each one has a hymn, a lesson, a revelation, a tongue, or an interpretation. Let all things be done for edification.

40 But all things should be done decently and in order.

Memory Selection: All things should be done decently and in order. 1 Corinthians 14:40

## EXPLORING THE QUESTIONS

As we read the suggested passages from First Corinthians, a number of questions may come to mind.

What do these ancient words say to us about our worship as a Christian community? If we rightly understand the intent of the apostle's injunctions to the Corinthian Christians, how does our experience measure up to these standards?

What is the climactic act of worship in the average Protestant congregation of today? How well do Christians understand the Holy Communion or Lord's Supper? Do most church members eagerly look forward to Communion Sunday, or do they show a negative reaction to this occasion?

What needs of our human frailty can be met in the experience of worship? In an era when technological advances in every area of human concern point toward the possibility of total self-sufficiency for mankind, is worship outdated, outmoded, no longer a necessity? Are there still some limiting factors in our human condition that can be met in the relationship to God summed up in the term worship?

What can the experience of worship say to our inescapable human encounters with what Langdon Gilkey calls "the three faces of evil"? He lists these as fate—"the great social and historical forces that both defy

our wisdom and good will and manipulate our individual destinies"; sin—"a baffling irresistible force that subtly twists each of our acts and intentions into a glorification of self, that turns the self in on itself, so that all it does is done for its own glory and security"; and, finally, death.

Gilkey is commenting upon what has been referred to as the incredible fragility of human existence. Man does live under constant threat of annihilation. Immense, powerful, mysterious forces thwart his fulfillment and seem to laugh at his human creativity. These and other problems bring sharply into question the claim that human life has ultimate purpose and meaning.

In the midst of this uncertainty stands the church's call to worship. How does it contribute to our stability?

## FINDING HELP WITH YOUR QUESTIONS

Worship for the Christian arises from the desire to make adequate response to the presence and the gifts of God. A study of the Psalms, which sum up the highest insights and practices of worship of the Hebrew people, and of the varied New Testament references to the early Christian experiences of worship, brings out several important points.

1. Worship is a community expression. Though private worship seems to have been a common experience, pronounced emphasis is upon the community of God's people coming together for praise and thanksgiving, for intercession and petition, for renewal of commitment.

2. The community is filled with an awareness of the holiness of God. The worshipers show no easy familiarity, no "buddy, buddy" approach to God. The otherness of God as Creator, Judge, Lawgiver, and Redeemer is recognized. The worshipers come in full awareness of their dependent condition, their status as recipients of the goodness of God.

3. Joy is the prevailing note in biblical worship. Of course, penitence is genuinely and deeply expressed; the desire for amendment of life finds full expression. But the prevailing note in biblical worship is celebration, a joyful acceptance and participation in that which God has done for man.

4. Renewal is a constant result of biblical worship. At no point does the Scripture understate the seriousness of the moral struggle, nor is there room for the idea that God's people are to live in isolation and immunity from that rough-and-tumble arena which is life for most men. God's people are summoned through and by their worship to enter creativity into this arena and make possible a new dimension of human compassion, giving and forgiveness, service and creativity.

Langdon Gilkey states that if life is to have meaning, three factors must be present:

1. A hope for final or ultimate fulfillment of our deepest needs.

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