

THE FUTURE OUTLOOK

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THE FUTURE OUTLOOK

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A TRADITIONAL CUSTOM

Some Christmas customs are centuries old. Others are new as the fresh-fallen snow. A new holiday custom this year is "Christmas Seal Town".

The Christmas Seals of the Piedmont Tuberculosis-Respiratory Disease Association are the impetus for this new holiday custom. Representing a joyous, gingerbread old-fashioned "Our Town", the sheet of Seals contain 100 different Seals. And dozens of holiday customs are represented.

The new 1970 custom is the adapting of the "Christmas Seal Town" on the sheet of Seals . . . and the many happy holiday customs pictured . . . into practical decorating ideas.

"Many people are planning their Christmas decorating to represent the Christmas Seal Town." Mr. Lee Kinard, Chairman, says: "For instance, bright red bows at the top of wreaths, little red balls or apples on Christmas trees, candles in the window, crossed candy canes. Each with a Seal pasted on. "It's wonderful to have a custom that accomplishes so much good as Christmas Seals and at the same time is so much fun."

"Most important of all is the custom of contributing to Christmas Seals. These tiny Seals accomplish a great deal in our fight against tuberculosis and other respiratory diseases, as well as against air pollution and cigarette smoking. They truly are 'a matter of life and breath'."

MIDI? MINI? MAXI?

What's your fashion fancy? Midi? Mini? Maxi?

"One thing that's always in fashion is Christmas Seals," says Lee Kinard, General Chairman for the Piedmont Tuberculosis and Respiratory Disease Association.

"They've been going strong for 64 years in this country and city. Christmas Seals aren't fad . . . they're a custom not only here but all over the country and the world."

Hopes are high that Christmas Seal campaign of \$75,000 will be raised . . . and exceeded . . . by the official end of the drive on Dec. 31st, according to Mr. Kinard. "I'd say 'go to any length to make your Christmas Seal contribution' he said. "We need maxi contributions so that the Piedmont TB-RD Association can achieve maxi results next year. And, actually, it takes mini effort to write out a check. Just a few minutes and drop it in the mail."

"Everything seems to be midi this year" Mr. Kinard added. "I guess you could say, 'let's make a maxi contribution with mini effort right now in midi-campaign!'"

SING WHILE YOU DRIVE

45 miles per hour—sing, "Highways are happy ways."

55 miles per hour—sing, "I'm but a stranger here, Heaven is my home."

65 miles per hour—sing, "Nearer my God to Thee."

75 miles per hour—sing, "When the roll is called up yonder, I'll be there."

85 miles per hour—sing, "Lord, I'm coming home."

THIS WEEK'S SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON**TRAINING FOR SERVICE****Beginning Where You Are**

A university chaplain has given a vivid description of how we react when God's call to service disturbs our comfortable self-satisfaction:

"Contrary to the popular notion, I think God usually calls us not directly — we can manipulate that call too easily — but indirectly through other people, and the call comes in some such fashion as this. Have you ever been to an old vaudeville show? There are not many left, but inevitably they include a magician whose patter is almost always the same. He starts with one about the dentist and the manicurist who got married and spent the rest of their lives fighting tooth and nail. Then he says, 'You should show more respect for my jokes, they're older than you are. My act is terrific: it not only answers the question who killed vaudeville, but re-enacts the crime before your eyes.' And everybody sits back to enjoy what to me at least is wonderful 'corn.' Then suddenly he stops. 'Will the gentleman in the end seat please come forward?' You look around to see whom he has got this time, but you hear him say, 'No, not you, the gentleman turning around,' and to your horror you realize he means you. You're furious. You didn't pay your money for this. You paid to be a spectator, and now this fellow is calling you to take part in the act.

"But are you furious, or let's say annoyed, because the call is a call to action? In part yes, because I think fundamentally most of us really would like nothing better in this world than to purchase a life membership in the Association of Bystanders. More annoying, however, is that by making an unforeseen demand upon you, this call robs you of the initiative in action, that is, it threatens your freedom; but worst of all the call places you under judgment, for in the response you make will be revealed the kind of person you are."

Searching The Scriptures

The Scripture for this lesson is Proverbs 2:1-15; Mark 1:16-22; 6:7-13, 30-34; Ephesians 4:11-16. Selected verses are printed below.

Mark 1:16-20

16 And passing along by the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and Andrew the brother of Simon casting a net in the sea; for they were fishermen. 17 And Jesus said to them, "Follow me and I will make you become fishers of men." 18 And immediately they left their nets and followed him. 19 And going on a little farther, he saw James the son of Zeb'edee and John his

brother, who were in their boat mending the nets. 20 And immediately he called them; and they left their father Zeb'edee in the boat with the hired servants, and followed him. Ephesians 4:11-16

11 And his gifts were that some should be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, 12 for the equipment of the saints, for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, 13 until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ; 14 so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the cunning of men, by their craftiness in deceitful wiles. 15 Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, 16 from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by every joint with which it is supplied, when each part is working properly, makes bodily growth and upbuilds itself in love.

Memory Selection: Jesus said to them, "Follow me and I will make you become fishers of men." —Mark 1:17

Exploring The Questions

We hear a lot these days about the generation gap. The implication is that persons who live in different times do not always experience things the same way. This certainly has been true in the church throughout the ages. It is true with the material in this lesson.

The verses from Mark reflect the word-of-mouth tradition of the earliest church. The early church fathers stated that Mark's account is a summary of Peter's preaching. It was written down about A.D. 65 or 70, the earliest of the Gospels.

The Book of Ephesians, on the other hand, was written about A.D. 90 and gives evidence of being addressed to a more highly organized church than existed in the early days. You can see, therefore, that we will be attempting to bridge a time span of twenty or twenty-five years. Then, of course, we will need to take a big leap — to the church in 1970. Perhaps this is the biggest of all generation gaps.

Finding Help With Your Questions

Mark's story of the call of Peter and Andrew and James and John to discipleship is a familiar New Testament passage. We know that Jesus had been baptized by John and then had spent a period of time in prayer before beginning his ministry. But the account of these

events, like those of Jesus' encounters with the four fishermen, is too brief to satisfy us. It omits all the details we ordinarily think important in a good story.

Responding to God's Call

The Gospel of Mark gives us no indication whether any of these four men were previously acquainted with Jesus or, indeed, whether they had even heard of him. We know little of their backgrounds and nothing of their psychological make-up from this narration. Obviously they were not expecting Jesus' call; they had made no preparations for leaving their work.

How is it, then, that the writer of Mark can expect to satisfy us with a meager summary that passes over all the important details of the encounter? How are we to understand the fact that these four men felt compelled to leave their work, their homes, and their families without a question and follow this preacher from Nazareth?

Perhaps we need first of all to ask: What was the purpose of the Gospels? Why were these stories about Jesus written down? The New Testament material seems to have had three purposes in the life of the early church: evangelism and mission, instruction of converts in Christian living, and a defense against pagan philosophies.

For these purposes Mark is particularly concerned to present Jesus as the Son of God, whose mighty works were signs of the presence and power of God's kingdom. Jesus' command, "Follow me," and the disciples' immediate response suggest that the call of God in Christ comes to men with a divine power that overrules all human considerations. Thus the kind of problems we raised earlier pale into insignificance.

We have here not an exact biographical sketch of these four men — Peter, Andrew, James, and John — but a religious story concerning the overwhelming nature of Christ's call and the kind of unquestioning response a Christian should make. As the writer quoted in the opening section of the lesson says, the call of God places us under judgment because our response reveals the kind of persons we are. The proof of the pudding, so to speak, comes in how we react to the demands of God in our life.

This is how one person has stated it: "Sin is being mechanical where one should be vital, being imitative where one should be original, being submissive to an external authority where one should be responsive to the ever-ransomed, ever-

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