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For Parents Only

"Happiness in the New Year"

By Nancy Cleaver



"Happy New Year!" we wish our friends—and we wonder what 1954 will hold for them—and for us. Our children have been having a marvelous Christmas holiday. But gifts and entertaining have reduced the family budget to an all-time low!

But it is important that mother and dad achieve satisfaction in their work. They need to relax and enjoy their leisure time. If either parent is habitually dissatisfied or irritable, the atmosphere in the home will be anything but happy. Because mother spends more time with her children, than father, to a great extent, it is she who colors their outlook on life.

new ideas or information, having a helpful attitude to other people are certainly good paths to happiness. Relaxing and enjoying life is also very important. Many parents are so ambitious to get ahead—to give their children more "advantages" than they had, that they become tense or fatigued. They forget that some of the things which children need most, cannot be compared with money.

Do our children look at us and conclude that being a grown up isn't much fun? Has the weight of our duties somehow destroyed our zest for living? They are being cheated—and so are we—if in our daily lives there is little of the glow of happiness. "The older children get the more things there are to worry about" one mother said rather petulantly. "If it isn't anxiety over illness, you're scared they will be in an accident or start going around with an undesirable gang!"

NOTES and COMMENTS

Old Tin Bath Tub Brings Memories

The past 50-year span has been outstanding from the standpoint of personal cleanliness. Since 1909 the per capita use of toilet soap in the United States, and presumably also in Canada has increased 300 per cent. Bath facilities in the home have been revolutionized. In fact there were many homes minus bathrooms 50 years ago and now practically every one has a bathroom and many have two.

Authority for these figures is J.R. Dick of the National Vanity Corporation, Bayonne, N.J. He should know because his business devotes itself to glamorizing the bathroom which is a flourishing business.

At the turn of the century bathing facilities in the home were rather primitive and tubs were prominent. Most of the bathrooms had the tin variety.

One, too, can recall the cold rooms because heating was difficult and Saturday nights all the children of the family in turn, from the oldest to the youngest, were bathed with fresh hot water being added for each victim. Bathing was an adventure then, not a pleasure as now.

Whether the improved bathrooms caused the greater use of soap or the desire to be cleaner than 50 years ago is a debatable point.

The cold bathroom with the tin tub has gone the way of the pot-bellied stove in the hall with the red mica "window" and the wood shed. The new bathrooms have brought oodles of colored and perfumed soap, and finally soap operas that get milady all adither with suspense. What the picture will be 50 years hence regarding soap, bathrooms and soap operas we shudder to think.

Cannot Force Anyone to Church

One of the most ridiculous suggestions we have heard for a long time was recently made to the Ontario Legislature's select committee on reform institutions a body which has been almost swamped with ideas of cranks and fanatics. This suggestion was that a law should be passed making it compulsory for children to take their parents to church. It is hard to believe that a suggestion of this kind was made seriously.

We do agree that it is eminently desirable, in the interests of character building, that children should, in their early lives be made familiar with church and with Sunday School. One of the sad facts about our modern living has been the decline in Sunday Schools generally from the standpoint of enrolment and attendance. It does seem as if parents do not encourage their children, as they used to do, to attend Sunday School.

But passing a law to compel their parents to take children to church and Sunday School is quite a different matter from giving them encouragement to attend. The essence of Christianity is that it is voluntary. It cannot be imposed from without, but must come from an inner spiritual experience. People can be led to it, but they can never be driven to it, and any measure of compulsion would destroy the deep spiritual value of the Christian religion.

Christ's own way of putting it was "Come unto Me ye are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest." The founder of Christianity never suggested parental compulsion or any other kind of compulsion to bring followers to Himself.

We already have enough laws that are neither enforced nor obeyed; enough laws that are defiantly disobeyed in a spirit of bravado. It would be senseless to add to the list a law that would be impossible of enforcement, even if a new army of sin hounds were created for that purpose.

Then and Now

Since the colder weather arrived, a lot of new attention has been paid to the heaters in cars, and there is a lot of griping if they aren't working well.

Many of us can remember when motorists felt lucky if the side curtains weren't flapping as the car breezed along at 35 miles an hour.

Restore Postal Efficiency

The principal advantage of higher postal rates in Canada after April 1 next year will be that airmail service within the country will be provided, where available, at ordinary rates. That is an advance in efficiency on a national basis. But it is being achieved at the cost of efficiency in local, urban mail deliveries. Trans-Canada air transport for first class mail has been in at least partial effect for some time with additional cost to the Post Office Department. Savings were made, however, owing to the one delivery per day in most cities, including Toronto. That saving also made possible the wage increase to postal workers, an increase which has public approval.

But with the national postal rate going up to five cents and the local delivery rate up to four cents the postal department is under no obligation to restore former efficiency in the latter field. A recent shift of Toronto areas to different postal zones has resulted, for instance, in making the once-a-day delivery in the afternoon instead of the morning as formerly. This is having the effect of delaying the exchange of correspondence by a full day—a backward step in metropolitan postal service.

Higher postage costs and less service are not consonant with the obligations of the post office to citizens. The post office is not supposed to be a revenue producing department. Its proper function is to provide an essential public service at cost. Part of the essential quality of that service is prompt delivery. Unless urban deliveries are improved, the higher local rates cannot mean anything else than that Finance Minister Abbott is in course of changing the post office into a revenue-producing service, without regard to serving public need.

In debating the new rates members of Parliament need not pay too much attention to post office surpluses. They are irrelevant, in the circumstances, to the recent deterioration in local delivery methods. There seems to be little point in jacking up postal costs to make airmail available at ordinary rates when local deliveries are as late as early evening and continue on a once-a-day basis.

—The Globe and Mail.

Have You Got Mice In Your Evergreens?

Believe it or not, mice are regarded in some parts of Ontario as No. 1 among hazards besetting owners of evergreen plantations, even more insidious than fire or smothering by grass. They girdle the trees in the fall and winter and, although the trees may look fine, the damage shows up in the spring and they die the next year.

Lake Huron District Forester I.C. Marritt, of Hespeler, offering suggestions for coping with the mice menace, says:

"It has been the generally accepted view that the mice do not cause damage until after the snow comes. They work under the snow so that neither damage nor mice are

Chopping Wood

Along in January after the fall's rush of work is over, chopping wood is a pleasant task. Gray day or bright day, there is always something of interest in the woodland. Shep starts up a rabbit; a partridge rises with startling roar; chickadees come around and chant their optimistic alto songs.

This is nature's rest time for plants; oaks and maples, beeches and ash are intricate gray etchings against the winter sky. Millions of buds wrapped in water proof capsules, are patiently biding their time until the miracle of a new season.

As the axe sinks in the wood and feather-edged chips fly the fragrance of living wood is tangy and bracing. The heady fragrance of the wood blends with that of the moist leaves underfoot—leaves beginning the magic process which returns them to humus.

Sometimes there is snow on the ground in the twelfth month, and the tang-ed chips make an abstract pattern on the whiteness; sometimes the forest floor is faded brown, waiting for the snow. Hour by hour the pile of chopped limbs and trunks grows in size.

A man chooses the trees carefully, for the day of ruthless cutting is over. A woodland gives a crop to be harvested when trees are right sized, or when they need to be thinned out. Late in the afternoon when the sun has disappeared a man puts his axe on his shoulder, and takes a last look at his day's labor. Some essential work in this world doesn't show very much, but a woodpile is evidence to all that a man's labors count.

—Ottawa Journal

THIS WEEK'S SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

JESUS USES HIS AUTHORITY

Golden Text — God is a Spirit and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth John 4:24

THE LESSON AS A WHOLE

Approach to the Lesson There are some peculiarities in John's Gospel which are exceedingly interesting.

One of these is that its vocabulary is the smallest and simplest of all the Gospels, yet it presents more profound doctrine than any of the others. Perhaps that is a hint to those of us who are preachers.

The doctrinal content is very high in the fourth Gospel. Indeed the history seems to be quite secondary to the doctrine. See how the story of Nicodemus introduces the doctrine of the new birth; the story of the Samaritan woman brings out wonderful truth about God and worship; the feeding of the five thousand leads to the teaching about the Bread of Life—and so it goes throughout the Book.

Over against a remarkable absence of parables there is a wealth, one might almost say a riot, of imagery. The "shepherd" passage (chap. 10) and the "vine" passage (chap. 15) are not true parables but the imagery is vivid and magnificent.

Again, there are only eight miracles of Christ related in John's Gospel, while Matthew and Luke twenty. (These figures and Luke twenty. These figures are taken from W. Graham Scroggie's "A Guide to the Gospels," Fleming H. Revell Co., Westwood, N.J., \$9.) Of these eight, only two are recorded elsewhere—the feeding of the five thousand, recorded by all the evangelists, and Christ's walking on the water, related by Matthew and Mark. Here are the eight in order:

- 1. Turning water into wine (John 2:1-11)
2. Healing the nobleman's son (4:46-54)
3. Healing the impotent man at Bethesda (5:1-9)
4. Feeding the five thousand (6:1-14)
5. Walking on the sea (6:16-21)
6. Healing the man born blind (9:1-7)
7. The raising of Lazarus (11:17-44)
8. The draught of fishes after the Resurrection (21:1-14)

Verse by Verse

John 2:13 — "And the Jews' passover was at hand, and Jesus went . . ." The Passover, commemorating the deliverance from Egypt, was one of the three yearly feasts for which the Jewish male population was expected to assemble at the appointed center of worship. See Deuteronomy 16:16.

Verse 14 — "And found in the temple those that sold . . . and the changers of money." The business of selling animals for sacrifice and exchanging secular money for the shekels of the sanctuary was perfectly legitimate, but it was conducted in the wrong place, and had degenerated into a "racket."

Verse 15 — "He drove them all out . . . and poured out the changers' money." The stern action of Christ is a reflection of the divine wrath against sin. Grace does not mean an easy attitude to sin.

Verse 16 — "Make not my Father's house an house of merchandise." Notice how intimately Jesus refers to the Temple as "my Father's house." It had not yet been rejected. Later He calls it "your house" (Matt. 23:38). Compare "house of merchandise" with "den of thieves" (Matt. 21:13).

Verse 17 — "The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up." The disciples saw in this act a mark of the true prophet (Psa. 69:9.) This called for faith on their part.

Verse 18 — "What sign shevest thou unto us seeing that thou doest these things?" On the other hand, the unbelieving Jews regarded it as something to be challenged. They demanded that the Lord Jesus Christ demonstrate His right to interfere with their traffic.

Verse 19 — "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." In verse 14 the word translated "temple" signifies the entire enclosure, including courts. Here it is the "sanctuary," the very habitation of God. Such was the body of Jesus. Our Lord had the cross and resurrection before Him at the beginning of His ministry, not just toward the end, as some suggest.

Verse 20 — "Forty and six year was this temple in building . . ." The Jews, of course, thought He referred to the material Temple, and later turned His words into an accusation (Matt. 26:61). Actually the restoration of the Temple was not yet complete. Indeed it was completed only six years before its destruction.

Verse 21 — "But he spake of the temple of his body." One of the many comments that John interjects into his narrative.

Verse 22 — "When therefore he was risen from the dead, his disciples remembered . . . and they believed . . ." The very words which stirred the anger of the Jews became a confirmation of the faith of the disciples in later days. Some things which we do not understand at the moment become luminous in God's time.

Verse 23 — "Many believed in his name, when they saw the miracles which he did." Here was a popular movement based on "signs"—rather precarious.

Verse 24 — "But Jesus did not commit himself unto them . . ." "Commit" is the same verb as "believed" in verse 23. Jesus knew the shallowness of their "faith," so He had no faith in them.

Verse 25 — "He knew what was in man." Every man is an open book to Jesus. See Hebrews 4:13, and compare Jeremiah 17:10.

The Heart of the Lesson

Our Lord is not the enemy of legitimate business, but of business which engages in dishonest or oppressive practices, or business which encroaches on the rights of God in the soul of man, is no longer legitimate, and comes under the divine wrath. In an economy which required animal sacrifices it was to be expected that the rearing and selling of suitable cattle would become a business, and at such a feast as the Passover, when Jews gathered from near and far, sales would be at their peak. And since monetary offerings must be made in the shekels of the Temple, the pilgrims would require a money exchange.

All this, however, ought to have been done outside the

sacred precincts of the Temple. Instead, the Temple courts themselves were turned into market places with the lowing of cattle, the bleating of sheep, the clanking of coins, and the shouts of the traders. On this occasion, our Lord made no reference to the dishonest practices, as He did on a later day (Matt. 21:13), but centered His rebuke on the intrusion of this trading into the place hallowed for the spiritual service of worship. Instead of sanctifying the secular, these men had secularized the sacred. Thus the Temple was defiled.

What gave our Lord the right to move against the desecration of the Temple in Jerusalem? The fact that His own Temple, the temple of his own body, was kept inviolate. The body was a true sanctuary of God, and was wholly devoted to the will of God, even unto death. But beyond death was the triumph of the third day, and that was to be the perpetual sign of His authority in all the house of God.

Our Lord is building another temple—of living stones (Eph. 2:19-22; 1 Pet. 2:4, 5). In this temple the stones are believers—real believers. Like the stones in Portland quarry which were rejected by Sir Christopher Wren for his masterworks in London, so there are spurious "believers" who do not become part of the holy Temple. One Nicodemus is worth a host of "sign" believers (vs. 23-25).

Flecked Look Trend in Suits

Men's clothing is undergoing a style trend that designers hope will catch the masculine taste permanently.

A check indicates this trend might be christened the "flecked look." Sedate business suits in black, charcoal gray, dark blue or brown are now being manufactured with sprinkles of fleck.

The flecks are short irregular lines of white, red, orange, or light blue that give color and dash to what otherwise would have been a dark garb. A practical note which gives motif the edge over glen plaid or pin stripes is that it will easily match accessories.

The reason: Flecks are less assertive, they blend into the solid dark background of the cloth, giving the suit a plain solid look, like an ordinary flannel.

One local merchant felt the men's wear industry is "wising up at long last." He said they're beginning to give men's clothes that are dignified and practical, yet appealing to a fellow's vanity and his yen for the colorful without making him feel like the "Sheik of Araby."

Colourful diamond sox, a poor seller for some time, are making a comeback. The casual youthful quality of these socks doesn't stop them from being more and more popular with businessmen and college boys alike.

With the accent on neatness hats are being made narrower. Suit lapels are also narrower for the same reason.

The average weight of a suit has gone down sharply. "A suit doesn't have to be heavy to be warm," a clothier explained. A lightweight warm suit will not only look better and fit better under your overcoat, but it will actually make you feel less tired at the end of the day," he said.

The Ox and the Frog

A LITTLE FROG was playing about at the edge of a pool when an Ox came down to the water to drink. In fear, the little frog swam home. "Why are you so frightened?" asked his mother. "An enormous creature with four legs came to our pool this morning," replied the little frog. "Enormous, was he? Was he as big as this?" asked the mother frog, puffing herself out to look as big as possible. "Oh! yes, much bigger," was the answer. The mother frog puffed herself out still more. "Was he as big as this?" said she. "Oh! yes, yes, mother, MUCH bigger," said the little frog. And yet again she puffed herself out. "As big as . . ." she began—but then she burst.



Illustration by Arthur Rackham, from the Heinemann Edition of Aesop's Fables.

MORAL: Growing bigger takes time—and hurryup methods are apt to be risky. The sure way to financial growth is to open a savings account with The Canadian Bank

of Commerce . . . add to it regularly . . . and watch your balance swell and swell—safely. Visit our nearest branch today . . . and start growing your bank balance.

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