

12-1980

December 1980 (Vol. 4 No. 4)

Cedarville College

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Recommended Citation

Cedarville College, "December 1980 (Vol. 4 No. 4)" (1980). *Living Springs*. 43.
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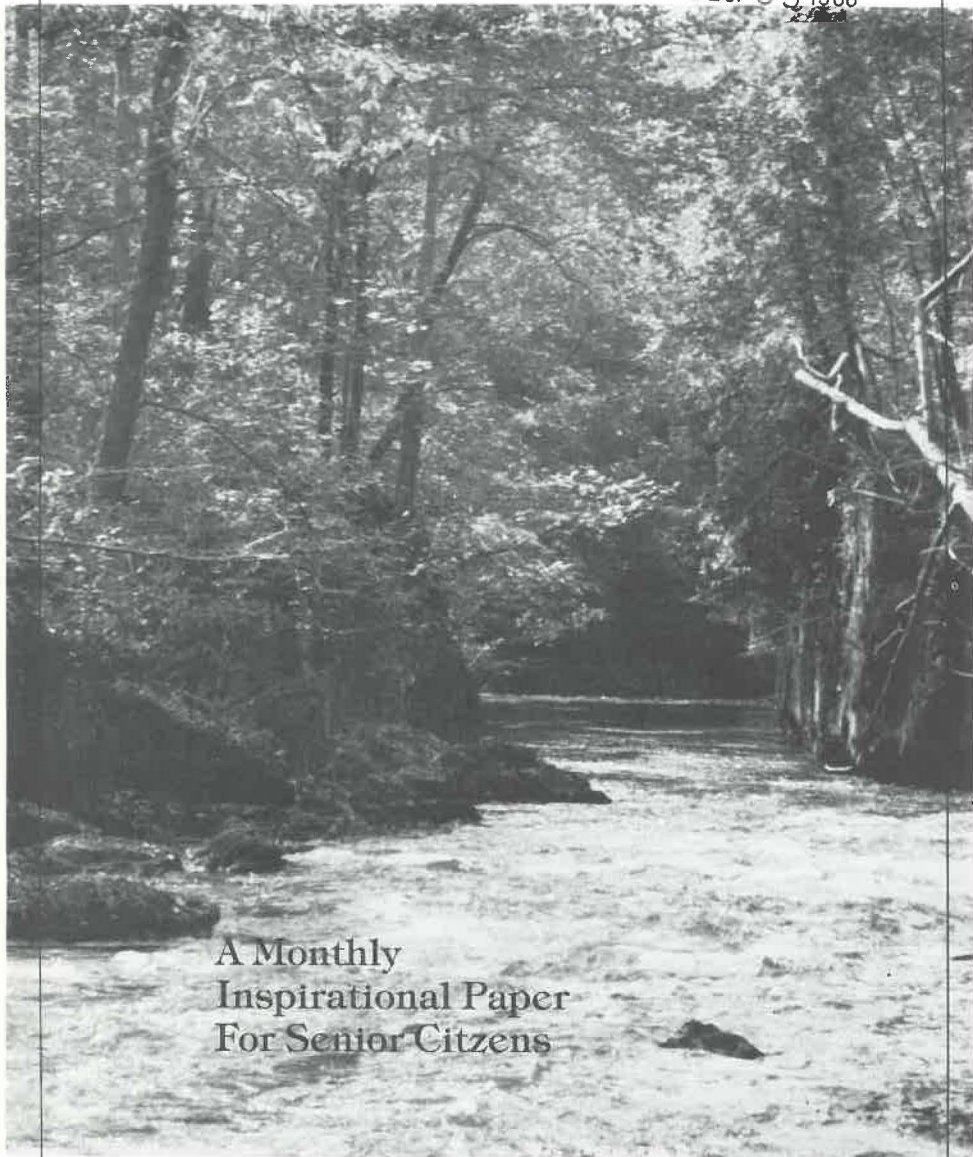
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Living Springs

Cedarville College Library
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Vol. 4 No. 4 © 1980 by Christian Education Publications

DEC. 05 1980



A Monthly
Inspirational Paper
For Senior Citizens

DECEMBER 1980

SANCTIFICATION

by
Lehman Strauss

The doctrine of sanctification is doubtless one of the most misunderstood doctrines of our historic Christian faith. Many Christians either withdraw from it completely or else they associate it with fanatical fringe groups. The result has been its continued neglect or mistreatment.

The basic meaning of the verb "sanctify" (Gr. 'hagiazō') is "to separate," or "to set apart." Possible the latter term comes closest to the Greek word. Sanctification, then, is that sovereign act of God whereby He sets apart a person, a place, or an object for Himself in order that He might accomplish His purpose in the world by means of that person, place, or object.

A day can be sanctified. "And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it..." (Genesis 2:3).

A building and its contents can be sanctified. God said, "And I will sanctify the tabernacle of the congregation and the altar..." (Exodus 39:44). "And it came to pass on the day that Moses had fully set up the tabernacle, and had anointed it, and *sanctified* it, and all the instruments thereof, both the altar and all the vessels thereof, and had anointed them, and *sanctified* them" (Numbers 7:1).

The house in which a man lives can be sanctified. "And when a man shall *sanctify* his house to be holy unto the LORD, then the priest shall estimate it, whether it be good or bad; as the priest shall estimate it, so shall it stand" (Leviticus 27:14).

A mountain can be sanctified. "And Moses

said unto the LORD, The people cannot come up to Mount Sinai: for Thou chargedst us, saying, Set bounds about the Mount, and *sanctify* it" (Exodus 19:23).

In all of the above passages the meaning of the word Sanctify is to set apart for holy purposes. However, a day, a tabernacle, a house or a mountain cannot sin. These items are neither moral nor immoral; they are amoral. It seems quite clear, then, that Sanctification in these instances does not mean a state of holiness in which it is not possible for sin to enter.

We know that our Lord Jesus Christ was sinless and therefore free from all moral impurity, and yet He prayed, "And for their sakes, I *sanctify* myself..." (John 17:19). In this statement He was simply testifying that He had set apart Himself to fulfill the holy purpose for which He came into the world.

Sanctification is used with reference to God. "And I will *sanctify* my great name, which was profaned among the heathen, which ye have profaned in the midst of them; and the heathen shall know that I am the LORD, saith the Lord GOD, when I shall be sanctified in you before their eyes" (Ezekiel 36:23). God is here telling of a day, still future, when He will set Himself apart as the one true and living God, and that all peoples in the earth will acknowledge Him as such.

In future issues, we will pursue our study in the doctrine of Sanctification in its relation to the believer in Jesus Christ.

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REFLECTIONS of FAITH

*edited by
Kathy Jo Kirkbride*

Christmas Is Eternal

While there's nothing I can give you
Which now you don't possess,
There is something I can tell you
In hope your heart 'twill bless.
When once the fallen human race
Was chained in bonds of sin,
With every trace of hope removed
And doubts and fears within,
Our gracious heavenly Father
Looked down from heights above
And sent to earth His only Son,
To seek us in His love.
From out of the ivory palaces
Into this earth's dark night,
There came a tiny infant Babe
Robed in transcendent light.
The shepherds heard the angel's song,
Their ears were tuned above.
They went in haste to Bethlehem
To seek Him in their love.
The wise men sought and found Him;
They were looking for their King.
Bowing their knees they worshipped Him
And precious gifts did bring.
And lo! this message still goes forth
In orbit 'round the SON;
'Twill still be told from age to age,
On earth 'tis just begun.

B.C. Jennings

The Virgin Birth

Such a unique moment; a time of unusualness;
A time for which man has no explanation;
An act directed by a holy, powerful God
Towards unregenerate man.
This was the Virgin Birth.

Such a joyful time, a time of singing of angels,
A time of shepherds worshipping and
Wisemen searching for a King.
This was the Virgin Birth,
The birth of our Messiah!

Bonnie Guenther

“The incarnation is the greatest contradiction imaginable,” wrote Dr. Will H. Houghton (Moody Monthly 12/61). “It makes a servant of men out of the Ruler of the universe. It places the Creator in a crib. It puts a ‘here not there’ in the experience of the Omnipresent. The One Who stored earth’s granary became hungry, and He Who built homes for bird and beast, Himself found no resting place! What a paradox! It is so confounding, and so contrary to the thought and experience of men, that we would never have known of it but for revelation.

Stand uncovered and look upon the little form in the manger. All the experience of the past, sin excepted, and all the hope for the future are concentrated in Him. The world ignores Him. The angels worship Him. A few receive Him. Yes, indeed, “Great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh” (I Tim. 3:16).

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God...And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father), full of grace and truth” (John 1:1,2,14).

Now the center of it all is the fact of incarnation. The utterance of God through ages past became in due time the Word of God. “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God” (John 1:1). Not that this Word ever had a beginning, for the Word is eternal even as the Father is eternal. Eternal Father! Then there is an Eternal Son! And Jesus is His name!

Is there a more comprehensive paragraph in

the Bible than that contained in Hebrews 1:1-3? These verses present the following great doctrines: *Revelation*—“God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake...”; *Inspiration*—“God...spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets...”; *Incarnation*—... hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son...”; *Exaltation*—“...Whom he hath appointed heir of all things...”; *Creation*—“... by whom also he made the worlds...”; *Deification*—“Who being the effulgence of his glory, and the very image of his substance...” (ASV); *Providence*—“and upholding all things by the word of his power...”; *Redemption*—“When he had by himself purged our sins...”

We must never forget that He came to the crib that He might go to the cross. “Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us. And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins” Matt. 1:23,24).

“But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons” (Gal. 4:4,5).

“Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature” (Col. 1:15).

Who can understand the depths of the incarnation? Here we see the eternal God coming to earth to take the form of man that He as the perfect man might give His life for the sons of men. “He died on a cross of wood, yet made the hill on which it stood.”

Daily Walk Through God's Word

December 1980

Verse: Psalm 118:1-

O give thanks unto the Lord; for He is good:
because His mercy endureth for ever.

December	Morning Psalm	Evening II Chronicles
1	116 & 117	12 & 13
2	118	14 & 15
3	119	16 & 17
4	120, 121 & 122	18 & 19
5	123, 124, 125 & 126	20
6	127, 128, 129 & 130	21 & 22
7	131, 132 & 133	23 & 24
8	134 & 135	25 & 26
9	136	27 & 28
10	137 & 138	29
11	139	30 & 31
12	140 & 141	32 & 33
13	142 & 143	34
14	144 & 145	35 & 36
		Ezra
15	146 & 147	1 & 2
16	148, 149 & 150	3 & 4
	Hosea	
17	1 & 2	5 & 6
18	3, 4 & 5	7 & 8
19	6 & 7	9 & 10
		Nehemiah
20	8 & 9	1 & 2
21	10, 11 & 12	3 & 4
22	13 & 14	5 & 6
23	Joel	7
	Amos	
24	1 & 2	8 & 9
25	3 & 4	10 & 11
26	5	12 & 13
		Esther
27	6 & 7	1 & 2
28	8 & 9	3 & 4
29	Obadiah	5 & 6
30	Jonah	7 & 8
31	Habakkuk	9 & 10

"...Thus shall ye do in the fear of the Lord, faithfully, and with a perfect heart" (II Chronicles 19:9). Faithfulness can be used to describe Clinton and Ruth Smith as they have served Christ for many years.

Clint and Ruth each were saved in their early twenties through the witness of friends. They met in 1942 while Clint was in the army and a few years later were married. After moving to Gallipolis, Ohio, they attended and soon joined the First Baptist Church.

For twenty-five years their service was quietly performed. Ruth said she tried to teach a Sunday school class once, but after several weeks felt it was not what God had enabled her to do. She was an active member of the Ladies' Missionary Society during those years, in addition to participating in her Sunday school class each week.

Clinton served as an usher for a few years. He is an extremely able man who is always willing to help. During his membership at First Baptist he took care of the grounds and did much manual labor.

In 1970 Clinton and Ruth left First Baptist with several other couples to begin a new work outside the town, Faith Baptist Church. This church celebrated its tenth anniversary this past fall. For these past ten years this couple has faithfully performed as custodians. Ruth does most of the cleaning and straightening each week in the building, while Clint vacuums and does the heavy work. This type of job does not

Thought Fo

"The humble Carpenter
the mighty Architect

Servants

by
Lahaie

receive the glory that many others do, yet without their service the testimony of Christ would suffer. In addition to doing the custodial work, Clint has been instrumental in the landscaping and upkeep of the church's eleven-acre site.

Because of her excellent record-keeping, Ruth has served Faith Baptist as Sunday school secretary for its entire ten years. Clint participates weekly in the visitation program. Due to a hearing impairment, many times he can only uphold his partner in silent prayer, which is a great source of strength to those who go with him.

I have known this couple for the past three years, and as I write this I am reminded that many times we overlook those who do the jobs behind the scenes. Clinton and Ruth miss church only for illness (which is seldom), and their presence each week is an encouragement to all as they greet everyone with a smile.

When asked what Christ meant to them, the couple both responded that He was *everything*. "He is always with us, leading and enabling us." God is faithful to them in every area of their lives. May each one of us be willing to serve where God calls us and with the writer of Lamentations say: "It is because of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because His compassions fail not, they are new every morning; GREAT IS THY FAITHFULNESS. The Lord is my portion...therefore will I hope in Him" (Lamentations 3:22-24).

The Month

er of Nazareth was also
f the universe!"

Note Worthy

by
LoAnna Hamilton

The well known doxology, which is sung in many churches, was written by a man who stood up for his belief in God. Thomas Ken lived in England during the reign of Charles II. As chaplain of the royal court at The Hague, Ken spoke out against the corrupt lives of the Dutch rulers: Again, when Ken was one of Charles' own chaplains, he continued rebuking the English monarch. When Charles requested Ken to leave his dwelling for a short time in order that a notorious character might stay there, Ken replied: "Not for the King's Kingdom." The King so admired Ken's boldness that he appointed him Bishop of Bath and Wells.

Bishop Thomas Ken wrote three hymns: a morning hymn, an evening hymn, and a midnight hymn. The evening hymn, "All praise to thee, my God, this night," is ranked as one of the four greatest hymns of England. It is said that he sang his morning hymn each day as part of his devotions.

Each of his three hymns ends with the doxology that is known so well in churches today.

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
Praise Him, all creatures here below;
Praise Him above, ye heavenly host;
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

Verse For The Month:

"For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." Isaiah 9:6

Christmas: A Higher Meaning



by
Paul D. Sewell

On Thursday, December 25, school rooms will be empty, major businesses will be closed, while shopping centers will be left vacant, and homes across the earth will be filled with warmth, joy and celebration. What is this strange occurrence of events? Taxes have not been decreased, gasoline is still soaring in price, and the Israel vs. Egypt peace talks haven't been settled; but on this day around the world people will forget their petty problems and postpone their monotonous activities to celebrate the world-wide holiday called Christmas.

"Christmas" was originated from a root word meaning "Christ's mass." Christians throughout the world will spend the day in prayer and celebration of Christ's birth. Although the celebration of Christ's birth is recognized on this date, Christmas has also become a joyous reunion for families. In America, families gather to exchange gifts. Countries other than America also participate in Christmas. In fact, most of Christmas tradition is the result of many countries practicing historic customs.

England took the Roman custom of exchanging green branches (a sign of luck) and first displayed Christmas trees in their homes.

North Americans exchange gifts on this day of celebration symbolizing the love gift of Jesus Christ sent from God.

Children in France traditionally leave their shoes on door steps so that Le Petite Noel, The Christ Child, can fill them with gifts. They also hang mistletoe as a symbol of good luck.

The English people started a world-wide custom when they displayed ornamented trees in their homes. In the home of a German on a Christmas morning you may notice several trees because they decorate a tree for each

member of the family.

Many countries celebrate by enjoying large feasts. Fasting the day before Christmas is a typical practice of Poland. At nightfall they will sit down to a large goose dinner leaving a vacant chair for the Christ Child to occupy.

St. Nicholas has been a part of Christmas for hundreds of years. In AD 300, the Bishop of Myre gave gifts on the eve of December 25 to poor children. Soon, children saw him as a kindly symbol of Christmas. Several years later, a Dutch settler in New York wrote of a man called Sinter Klaas, a name by whom St. Nicholas was often referred. In this poem, a jolly old man dressed in a red, fur-trimmed suit came bounding out of the sky on a sleigh pulled by reindeer. This man was none other than Santa Claus, who delivered gifts to all good little children. Santa Claus was first described in the well known poem entitled, "The Night Before Christmas."

The world has commercially decorated the Christmas spirit with many materialistic customs, and Christians can enjoy them as well. But to the born-again Christian, Christmas has a higher meaning: the incarnation of a virgin-born child called Jesus. The celebration of Christmas is summed up for the born-again believer in Matthew 1:21.

"And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sin."

Let's Chatter

edited by

About a Matter

Loanna Hamilton

During this Christmas season we are reminded of the gift that God gave us in sending His Son to earth. The following story reminds us of how we give to God:

On a boy's tenth birthday a thoughtful uncle visited him and as a gift gave him ten shiny dollars. The lad was very appreciative. He immediately sat on the floor and spread the dollars before him. Then he began to do some planning as to how to use the money.

He set aside the first dollar and said, "This one is for Jesus." He then went on to decide what to do with the second, third, etc. When he came to the last dollar he said, "This is for Jesus."

His mother said, "I thought you gave the first dollar to Jesus." The boy replied, "You see, the first one really belongs to Him, but this one I want Him to have as a gift from me."

Let's be willing to give to God because He gave to us so liberally. "We love Him, because He first loved us." I John 4:19.

Quizzle by Larry Lim

STAR SEARCH: About 2,000 years ago our Lord Jesus came to earth to save men from their sins. From the following scripture passage, find the underlined words in the puzzle. They are written forwards, backwards, up or down. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

Luke 2:10-14—“And the angel said unto them, Fear not; for, behold I bring you good tidings of great joy which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day, in the city of David, a Savior, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you: Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.”

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Looking At God's Creation

by
Sharon Lahaie

“...and lo, the star which they had seen...went before them” (Matthew 2:9). A star is a very unique part of God's creation. It is a self-luminous object which shines by radiation derived from energy within itself. A star will shine until all its hydrogen is used up in the burning process. It is the temperature of each star which determines the color it displays. Stars vary in color from red (coolest), yellow, and white, to blue (hottest).

The sun is the only star close enough to look like a ball. Most stars appear to “twinkle” in the sky. This twinkling occurs due to the star light coming to us through moving layers of air that surround the earth. Stars shine all day and all night, but because of the brightness of the sun during the day, we can usually see them only in the clear darkness of the night.

Man has studied the stars since ancient times. Farmers watched the stars for the planting and harvesting of crops. Travelers used the stars as directional guides. They have long



stood for man's hopes. The star of David signifies the Jewish religion. The star of Bethlehem heralds the birth of Jesus Christ. The stars of the heavens typified to Abram that his seed would be multiplied greatly (Genesis 15).

Numbers 24:17 states, “...there shall come a star out of Jacob, and a scepter shall rise out of Israel...” Jews readily identify this star as Messiah. Matthew records the appearance of “the star of Bethlehem” which the Magi saw

and followed. Many have tried to explain this star. One thing is certain: it was a miraculous star. It had not been seen previously, and from its appearing inferred the birth of a new King of the Jews. In the Greek language it is evident that this star referred to *Him* alone.

God set this star far above man's reach in the sky. Man's confession of need can be seen in his searching the heavens. This need can only be met from beyond our earth. The stars as seen from beneath may seem cold, even though the sky is jeweled; but seen from above they are a sign of God. May we be thankful this season for the star which announced the birth of our salvation.

