

From The Pulpit

by Rev. Donald M. Clark

THE TASK OF INTERCESSION

Text: "God forbid that I should sin against the Lord in ceasing to pray for you!" I. Sam. 12:23. TO CEASE to pray for others is a sin against the Lord.

This is a truth that may escape us but the call to pray for others raises a question. If a child were in danger we would not have to beg his father to go to his aid, and God is all and more than the best of earthly fathers can be. What need can there be for us to draw His attention to someone who desperately needs Him and to plead for His help; and why should it be a sin against God if we cease to pray for them?

The answer must be that we are God's Agents. He has no other way of feeding a starving man if we do not feed him, or of lifting a wounded man from the road if we do not lift him. It is the same with our prayers for others. God needs them and uses them just as He uses our hands.



REV. D. M. CLARK

WE ARE all knit together and each of us is open to undercurrents of thought and feeling that pass from mind to mind below the level of consciousness. We are members one of another more than we realize.

These hidden channels of thought and feeling can be opened up to God through our prayer. It is a means by which the minds of those we pray for can be penetrated by His Spirit. We make the contact through which He is able to work.

OUR PRAYERS can make a contact point through which God's Spirit can find His way into the hearts and minds of others.

It may take a long time and a vast patience before God can find an entry. A bolted door may not be easy to break through, but sometimes the result of intercession has been almost immediate. Someone for whom we had prayed had become suddenly aware of God's grace and responsive to it. Some might call this telepathy and think they have explained it. It does not matter what we call it. The point is, that through prayer, the Spirit has found a channel for the water of life; creating patience, or hope, or courage.

INTERCESSION IS the most vital part of Christian service. It has been found that revivals of faith have had their origin in the persistent gatherings of small groups of praying people.

READY FOR CURTAIN?

You'd Better Believe It



Probably the most exciting vocal group locally (or anywhere) is Zion Methodist Church's "Mickey Mousers" whose scheduled trip to Needles, California Sunday, as participants of the Zion Methodist Church's Program at the Rev. J. Wesley's St. James Methodist Church in Needles was postponed because of unexpected transportation difficulties.

Happily, the jaunt has been re-scheduled for Easter Sunday, March 26... Adults pictured with the adorable and talented "Mousers" are church members working with group who will accompany them on the trip. Pastor Rev. Marion Bennett proudly posing with the group is shown in rear of Mrs. Lillian Osborne who designed Mickey Mousers' uniforms. Mrs. Osborne is a native of Bermuda and also a member of Zion Methodist.

ALTAR CALL

By EMORY G. DAVIS, D. D.
NEGRO PRESS INTERNATIONAL

"NOTHING TO SAY: REV. SAYS IT ANYHOW"

"Stand up or get out" was the ultimatum a Grenada (Miss.) white, Methodist minister gave his congregation last fall, following the school integration incidents there, according to a Look Magazine feature story recently.

The Rev. C. B. Burt, 53, pastor, First Methodist Church, exhibited the kind of strong spiritual leadership it's going to take to effect a change in the deep South's racial bigotry.

HE VIEWED the violence directed at Negro school children from the window of his church study. He asked himself at that moment, "My God, what has the church been doing that this could happen?"

There are many other malodorous societal conditions that ought to be viewed by the church that should evoke the same query. In fact, this is a daily question that the church hierarchy, the parish minister and the laity should be asking of the institution into which they pour millions of dollars and countless man-hours of devotion and tribute.

Rev. Burt further raised the issue of the church's relevance, when he stated "Nowhere do the Gospels measure a man's religion by how much he pays the preacher or goes to church or serves on a committee. I have only

contempt for Sunday religion."

Church congregations who use such standards as the salary they pay Rev. Whatnot, the new suits and shoes they buy him or the Cadillac they give him for his anniversary, are helping to perpetuate a vicious system that tenders the institutional church totally irrelevant to the real work of the Church.

BY THE SAME token, the minister who both expects such luxuries from his congregation and measures his own success by receiving them is selling the GOSPEL and himself, short and cheap.

"If a preacher has nothing to say to the problems people have, to their frustrations and cares, then he's got nothing to say," so states Rev. Burt. And to that I say, "Amen."

If even 50 per cent of the Negro clergy, for example, said something meaningful on Sunday morning that would enable Negro America to assert itself and work with those forces that will bring about his freedom, the Negro Minister would be joined in his efforts by many other ministers like Rev. Burt and racial discrimination could soon be put to flight.

There's an Altar called Fearless Preaching. More ministers need to find it. More laymen need to point their minister in this direction.

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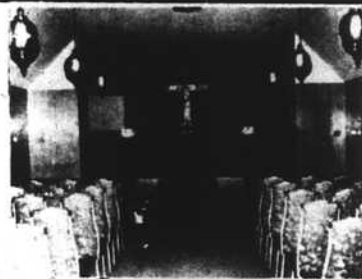
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