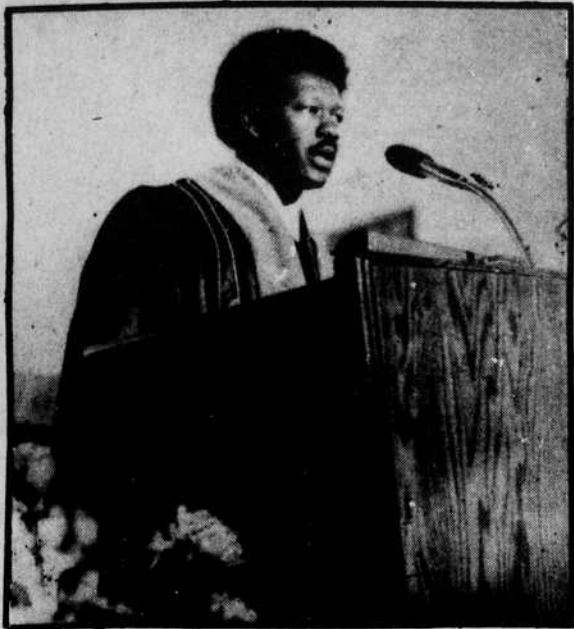


RELIGION



By: Rev. Sam Roberson

The Everlasting Arms Deut. 33:27

The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the

everlasting arms; and he shall thrust out the enemy from before thee; and shall say, Destroy them.

I. What does this life of ours mean? Is there a purpose in history? What can we make of this universe? Are we just drifting along on a tide that breaks on no shore and ends in nothingness or are we moving toward a destination — some far-off divine event? The deepest need of man's nature is to sense some worthwhile meaning to his life. Some light that sheds its ray of hope upon his path. Some star of guidance above the dark abyss.

II. When we look at the world about us and think of the horror, the hatred, the selfishness, the suffering, the misery, and man's inhumanity to man, aren't we left to wonder whether the creator of all does really care and is at all interested in our human agony?

a. It is a choice of faith against despair, of trust against doubt, and of hope against pessimism. Christians believe that love is stronger than hate, that goodness will conquer evil, and that the cross will outlive the sword.

b. Something happened on the hill called Calvary, where a man died with love in his heart and forgiveness on his lips, that shatters to dust all kingdoms founded on blood and fear and hate. In the face of the darkness and suffering and tragedy of life, Jesus stood and uttered his beatitudes. Such words fling their rainbow colors across earth's darkest cloud, lighten our heaviest load, and take the sting out of our severest pain.

III. We, as Christians, believe that God, who is the ruler of nations and the sovereign Lord of life and death, has created us for fellowship with himself, and to live in harmony with His will. That is our high calling and our true destiny. God's high purpose gives meaning to our lives. We live our lives within the framework of His love

and power.

a. Jesus taught that our lives are under the surveillance of the heavenly Father who is eternally concerned for the welfare of His children. Suffering with them in their struggles, sharing their agonies, and rejoicing in their victories. It is such a faith that "sets up a shaft of everlasting light above the howling sense ebb and and flow."

b. After the deliverance from Egypt and the perils of the wilderness wanderings, the children of Israel stand at last on the borders of the promised land. About to renounce his leadership, Moses gives them his parting message. He concludes: "The eternal God is your dwelling place, and underneath are the everlasting arms." Such words surely point to the heart of our faith, a faith that makes us more than conquerors over our fears and anxieties, linking us to the infinite resources of the living God.

IV. We know that God is love — a love that will not forsake us nor let us go. The Universe is friendly to the best in us, friendly to the hero in our souls, and sympathetic with our hopes and agonies.

a. Our Christian faith declares that we are of infinite worth in the sight of God and that our little lives have a place in the framework of His purpose. His faith gives dignity to our lives and meaning to our days. Such a faith sustained the brave souls who lived as seeing Him who is invisible (Hebrew 11:36-38).

What a fellowship! What a joy divine! Leaning on the Everlasting Arms. You'll never fall as long as you lean on the Everlasting Arms. **STAY IN THE RACE!**



EACH WEDNESDAY at 12:15 p.m. the Cox Upper Room Church of God in Christ, 1117 North "F" St., provides a free feeding and clothing program for the needy. Those in need come to the church, pastored by Bishop E. N. Webb, and partake in the provisions offered, at no charge. Top photo shows some of the needy entering the church's dining hall. Next



photo shows Bishop Webb (left) leading a group of members from the church, conducting a brief service before the lunch. The bottom photo shows Bertha Toney (left) and Sandra Smith who handle the project of offering free clothing to the needy. It is all part of the church's Outreach Program.



Photos By Ed Brown

PRAISES FROM VICTORY MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH

.. In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. John 1:1

Author's Note: The title for this series of writings from Victory Missionary Baptist Church was inspired by our Pastor, Rev. A.J. Thompson. Recognized in the religious community for his Divine Gift of teaching, Rev. Thompson once described Praises (to God) as "the greatest weapon in the Christian arsenal." We offer this introduction to the series in praise and thanksgiving to the Glory of God.

Thompson shares: "We're building for the kingdom — and praising and thanking God every step of the way."



This is a very special time in the life of Victory Missionary Baptist Church. In its twenty-two years of Christian mission in the Clark County community, Victory has "sought to be a recycling plant for humanity." With the erection of our new edifice, the current facility will be transformed into an education and multi-purpose complex to include a new sanctuary, classrooms, a modern day care cen-

ter, playground, auditorium and business offices.

Our building program not only represents an expansion of the church's mission, but in many ways it has become still another ministry for Victory in serving the diverse needs of its congregation and community. The number of congregation members who are bearing witness continue to grow, as seen in the pool of workers (laborers on the building site and

others providing supporting services) who give time after their normal working hours and on Saturdays. We believe that when the community blends its resources in a major effort, all areas of community life undergo a renewal.

In a deeper sense, our building program represents an anointing — for it was first the vision of one who is a Master Teacher, Preacher and Builder — Pastor A.J. Thompson.

★★★★

Paramount in the life of Victory Missionary Baptist Church is an abiding sense of the church's mission. Hence, the signs of a "Teaching and Growing" church become more and more apparent with each cycle of Victory's history.

Of Victory's current building expansion program, Pastor

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