

What Is The Meaning Of Your Life to You?

By The Rev. William C. Norvell
Christ Church Cranbrook

If you were confronted with the question—"What is the meaning of your life?"—you might well have one of several reactions.

If the person who raised the question had no right to ask you this (as may be the situation here), you might well and honestly say—"none of your business."

Perhaps a very cautious person would put the question aside for further thought. An emotional person might reveal how he felt at the moment, but the answer might vary with his mood; and be quite different tomorrow. But we do hear expressions every day which reveal how people feel about the meaning of their lives.

"What a ratrace I live in," said a friend the other day. We hear others say that life is a "pain in the neck," a "treadmill," a "shadow of something else," like a "great race," and many other expressions which attempt to sum up the meaning in a word picture. Yet, if one were to tabulate and list these ideas, three central terms would cover them all—(1) the squirrel cage, (2) the hero's tale and (3) the pilgrimage.

"Life is a squirrel cage," W. H. Auden summed this up in his "Christmas Oratorio," when he had the squirrel say—"Come to our well-run desert."

THE PAINTER, Dahl, often expresses this mood as he depicts a barren wasteland, cluttered only by the rains and fragments of a man's handwork. The central feeling is that of monotony and meaninglessness. Every now and then an exciting event may break the monotony, but such excitement covers them all in the glow of a temporary thrill, and afterwards, the mood shifts back to the monotony of the squirrel cage. This idea of life, for it may be only a subconscious feeling) is very prominent in our time.

THE GREENS understood this and it was the essence of their tragedies. In these tragedies the hero puts up a magnificent fight, but in the end, in some way rises above it. But we are apt to forget that this is but a temporary victory.

However, the view that we may look at the life of a man who is out of the "squirrel cage." For it idealizes our human traits and lifts our lives to a level where we may find something of ourselves.

This sort of hero is still within the "self-made man," as the man who doesn't let life "get him down," in the exercise of his own will power. But the hero's tale never gets beyond man.

It does get him out of the treadmill, but at what cost? He may overlook the consequences of his heroism. Has he lifted himself up at the expense of others? Has he lifted other people up as well as himself—or has he merely used them?

But regardless of our answers, he has made the distinction of dying to the accompaniment of the "Ereos Symposium" instead of the monotony where of the squirrel cage.

"Life is a pilgrimage." The particular word "pilgrimage" moves, of course, that the pilgrim has come away from his usual surroundings in quest of something new.



THESE YOUNGSTERS don't really want to wait until Dec. 5 to get at the tree, but the ladies of Our Lady Queen of Martyrs church insist on having it for their bazaar at the Community House. Gazing longingly at the many things of interest to little folks which decorate the Sugar Plum Tree are (standing) Lois McMullen, Andrea Marsh, William Marsh and (seated) Jim McMullen and Kathy Marsh. The mysteries of the many small packages will be revealed to the youngsters between the hours of 2 and 5 p.m., tomorrow.

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Ascension Church Advent Programs

The Rev. Paul Shippert, pastor of Ascension Lutheran church, West 14 Mile, has completed plans for a series of Advent services which began Dec. 5. His topic that evening was "The Problem of Security and Christ."

Subsequent services, all scheduled for 8 p.m., Wednesdays, will be on "Faith and the Desire for Adoration," Dec. 12; "Rejoicing and New Experiences in Christ," Dec. 17.

The annual bazaar of the Women's Auxiliary, Christ Church Cranbrook, is scheduled for tomorrow evening.

The bazaar will emphasize Christmas preparations, including wrappings and gifts. One booth will be reserved solely for the young shoppers, with no adults permitted to buy there.

Mrs. Irma McKonaw, Auxiliary president, announced committee chairman to be Mrs. Barbara Morrison and Mrs. Elizabeth general chairman and Mrs. Howard Stencel, sale chairman.

The parish dinner tickets, have been sold by Mrs. Mabel Toney and Mrs. Fred W. Sanders, with dinner arrangements planned by Mrs. William Foster and Mrs. Lynn Craig, S.

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The Rev. Merrill O. Bates, newly appointed minister to the Birmingham Unitarian Fellowship, with Mrs. Bates, will be guests Dec. 7 for devotion at the Community House from 4 to 5 p.m.

Mrs. Peter Loomis, Mrs. Eugene Huse and Mrs. Odette W. Vaget are in charge and announce that the guest list will include ministers from the churches of Birmingham and nearby communities.

SUNDAY SERMON TOPICS

SUNDAY, DEC. 7

Redeemer Lutheran

"Your Religion Must Work" is the topic chosen by the Rev. Theodore Wugazer for both the 9 and 11 a.m. services.

First Baptist

The monthly observance of Communion will be noted Sunday, when the sermon of the Rev. Emil Kertz will be on "Dear Thy Peaceful Means." The Wednesday evening service will be on "The Preacher of True Reform."

Unity Center

Meeting in the Unity Reading room, Theater building, this group will hear Frank Glabach speak on "Reincarnation."

Christian Science

That man is the highest creation of God is shown in "God the Only Cause and Creator" which will be Sunday's sermon subject. Text will be Psalm 80: 9-10, "All nations whom Thou hast made shall come and worship before Thee, O Lord; and shall glorify Thy name. For Thou are great, and doest wondrous things; Thou are God alone."

First Methodist Society To Have Christmas Tea

The executive board of First Methodist church Women's society, will meet at 10 a.m., Dec. 10.

Taking Part in Annual Festival of Christmas

The 16th annual Christmas Carol Festival will be held Dec. 7 at Metropolitan Methodist church, Detroit, under the auspices of the Detroit Council of Churches.

Bloomfield Church Body

Received into membership at Redeemer Lutheran church last Sunday were Mr. and Mrs. George Hutchinson, Mr. and Mrs. Carl Schroeder, Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth Thompson, Tim Thompson, Mr. and Mrs. Robert Baker, Mr. and Mrs. J. P. Judd, Karl Rhodes and Mrs. R. J. Naughton.

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Church Organizations Plan Sunday Meetings

Two Redeemer Lutheran church groups have scheduled meetings for Sunday.

The Walther league is meeting at 3:30 in the youth room with Russ Hibbard in charge.

Hosts at the 6 o'clock meeting of the Couple's club will be Mr. and Mrs. Robert Jay and Mr. and Mrs. Herman Pravel, Jr.

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