

The Assistant Pastor

May, 1944

The Life of Jesus Christ

(by Ronald Anderson)

Jesus Christ's birth was promised after the disobedience of man and the fall into sin in the Garden of Eden. God promised His Son to be the Savior who would be born to die for the sins of the world. This prophecy was fulfilled when a child was born at Bethlehem many years later. The mother, whose name was Mary, was a virgin. This child was then both God and man.

At the time of His birth a bright star shone over the spot where He lay. Wise men and shepherds came from far and near to give praise and gifts to Him.

During His life he went here and there preaching the Gospel. Many times He did miracles to prove He really was the Messiah. These were especially forceful to prove who He was and many were made believers in Him as a result of them. He chose twelve disciples to preach with Him. These men were the best followers He had.

Later, after He had chosen His disciples, He gave an especially powerful sermon on a mountain. It is commonly called the Sermon on the Mount. This does not, however, tell the way to everlasting life, but that a Christian's outward obedience to the law is the result of love to Christ.

He later prophesied His own death and resurrection. His preaching still continued and many people, chief priests, and elders, were jealous of Him. They wished to find some good cause to kill Him and still be inside the law. One of the disciples, Judas by name, was bribed to betray his Master. He did so by a kiss which was to tell the officers which one to arrest. He was brought to trial before Annas where He was denied three times by Peter, one of His best-loved disciples. Then He was tried before another judge, Caiaphas, but was later taken to Pontius Pilate. Because he found no fault with Him, Pilate was going to release Him, but the Jews overwhelmed him. Still later He was taken to another sinister figure, Herod, but was sent back to Pilate, only to be condemned to death. He was forced to carry His cross to Golgotha where He was crucified. He hung on the cross for about six hours before He died. As soon as He died, the earth quaked and trembled, and graves even opened.

A man named Joseph came to Pilate to get permission to bury Christ's body. It was placed in a sepulchre carved out of solid rock. The body was wound in white linen, and spices to preserve it were placed inside. Then a large stone was placed at the opening. A guard was placed at the entrance

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Church Directory

N. S. Tjernagel, Pastor
~~Carl Swenumson, Assistant~~

SAUDE CONGREGATION

Trustees: Carl Swenumson, John Natvig, Martin Borlaug.
Treasurer: Milton Boleng.
Secretary: Fred Steensland.
Cemetery Committee: Oscar Natvig, Henry Borlaug, N. S. Tjernagel.
Ladies' Aid: Mrs. Arthur Anderson, president; Mrs. Omer Ellingson, secretary; Miss Adelia Natvig, treasurer.

JERICO CONGREGATION

Trustees: J. N. Anderson, Tom Roberson, Carl G. Johnson.
Secretary: Alfred N. Anderson.
Treasurer: Ole J. Johnson.
Ladies' Aid: Mrs. Gilman Robinson, president; Mrs. J. C. Johnson, secretary; Mrs. C. Cutsforth, treasurer.
Cemetery Committee: Mrs. Carl A. Knutson, Mrs. M. A. Robinson, Mrs. C. O. Vigdal.

because the men who put Him to death were alarmed at the fact, stated by Christ, that He would arise on the third day. They thought the disciples would come and steal the body and claim He had arisen. They also placed a seal on the stone to tell if it had been moved.

On the first day of the week two women came to the grave with ointment to embalm the body. When they came near they saw the stone that closed the entrance had been rolled away, and an angel sat upon it. The angel told them He was not there and they should tell the disciples. Peter and John were told about it and they went to the grave and found the body missing. The linen which had been wound around the body was not unwound, but lay in a heap. On their way back, Jesus appeared unto them.

That evening the disciples were together and Jesus came and stood in the midst of them. They all believed it was Jesus except one who was not present at the time. He said he would not believe until he could see and feel Him. It was eight days later when Jesus again appeared unto them when this disciple was present. Jesus let him touch His body so he knew He was there. He also ate with them to prove He was really alive.

He appeared unto them many more times and finally ascended into Heaven to rule over us. All this was done for the forgiveness of our sins.

FIVE INSTRUCTION PERIODS

Another school year has just come to a close. It has been a busy one for your pastor. "How so?" you may ask. Have you ever stopped to think, and to realize that a pastor is more than anything else, a teacher?

Every time he ascends the pulpit in your church he does so for the purpose of teaching God's word to the congregation. A text is before him, and it is his earnest effort to apply the message in the text to the present needs of his hearers. It may be that they need admonition for sins in general, and sins

in particular. It may be that they need comfort in the hardships and griefs of this life. It may be that they need to be warned of false doctrines prevalent in the world which tempt Christians to believe what is false instead of believing only what is true. In any case, there is constant need of teaching God's law, and the saving Gospel; the law to teach us that we are sinners and that we need a Savior, and the Gospel to teach us that there is salvation for all in the wounds of Christ.

At meetings of the Ladies Aid your pastor is a teacher again. At recent meetings of the Aid at Jerico the pastor has given instruction in the stories of the Old Testament. At New Hampton instruction has been given as to the purpose and contents of the books of the Bible. At Saude the pastor has completed a course of instruction based on the Acts of the Apostles.

Each Saturday your pastor, with Mrs. Tjernagel, has been at Jerico giving religious instruction to the children of the congregation from the third to seventh grades. There Bible History is taught, and on the basis of the catechism and explanation the children are taught the things that are needful for salvation. The chief parts of the catechism and questions and answers together with passages from Scripture are memorized by the children, and explained by their teachers. With forty children in the combined classes both teachers have had their hands full in their effort to accomplish the most possible in the little time available.

Each Friday morning your pastor has been at Jerico, and again in the role of teacher as He has given instruction to the confirmation class. This has consisted in a further study of the things begun in Saturday School. It has led up to the public examination on confirmation day in the fundamentals of the Christian religion.

Each Wednesday your pastor has been in New Hampton, giving religious instruction to members of our churches attending High School there. This work has been new this year. Each period has required half a day for preparation, and about half a day for correction of the work handed in by the twenty-three pupils. That added to the weekly drive to New Hampton has meant a full day's work added to your pastor's already busy schedule, but I know that the time expended has been wonderfully well worth while. The class took a very fine interest in the study of the Life of Christ which was the subject for this year, and the work done by almost all was excellent. I sincerely hope this work may be continued next year. The subject that will be taken up then will be Old Testament History.

At the close of this year the members were assigned the writing of a composition with the title, "The Life Of Christ". I was so well pleased with these papers that I have printed in this issue of the Assistant Pastor the composition which I consider the best one submitted. Other essays submitted included more details than this one, some were written in a better literary style, but this one contained in the clearest and completest way the fundamental facts of Christ's life, namely that He was the Son of God, that He died for the forgiveness of our sins, that His resurrection from the dead is proved by the testimony of the forty days before His ascension, and that Christ taught that we should do good works not in order to be saved, but because we love Christ, the Savior.

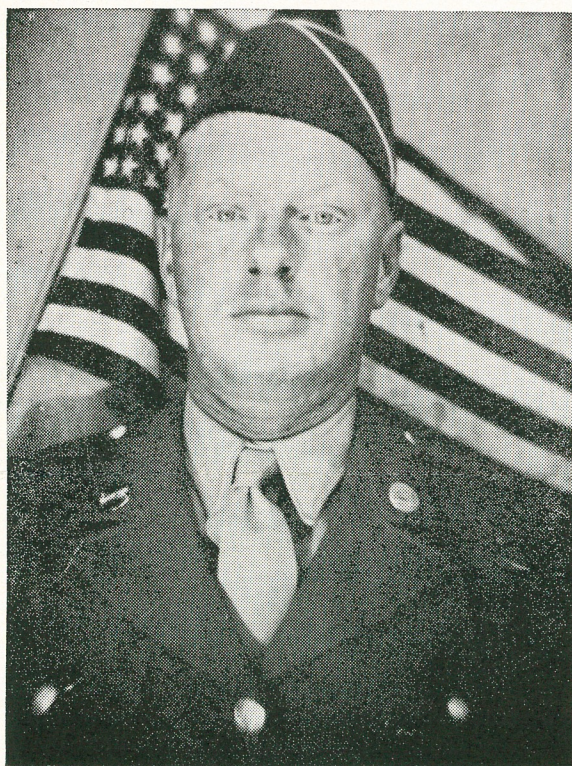
In looking over the grades given during the past year we are tempted to print here our own honor roll, as follows: For outstanding work during the entire year, Elaine Douglas and Merle Aasen; for very superior final compositions, Ronald Anderson and Stella Johnson.

We started out to speak of your pastor's work as a teacher, and seem to be ending up by printing an honor roll. We would like to mention also the fact that, with one exception, the instruction periods that your pastor conducts on an average of five days each week are extremely well attended. That one exception is the instruction that he gives on Sunday mornings. It seldom happens that more than half the congregation is present then, and that is the week's most important hour. Too bad.

MEMORIAL SERVICE

Pfc. Gerald C. Natvig

On Sunday, May 7th, memorial services were held for Pfc. Gerald C. Natvig at Saude Lutheran Church. We shall not reprint the obituary here, as that was included in the order of service distributed at the memorial service. The funeral procession was led by the pastor. There followed the United States Flag, borne by Sgt. Paul Landsverk who was accompanied by three other men in uniform. The honorary pallbearers, Cletus Anderson, Omer El-



lingson, Orin Vaala, Carlyle Natvig, Joseph Vaala, Orval Landsverk, Oscar Vigdal and Tollef Knutson, marched in order next. The immediate family followed. They in turn were followed by a large number of members of the American Legion. The church was filled to overflowing with the many relatives and friends of the deceased who came to do honor to this congregation's first casualty in the present war. An impressive part of the service was

the sounding of taps by Tim Sullivan and Warren E. Kime. The service closed with the congregational singing of the hymn, "God Bless Our Native Land."

The Sermon

"Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." Romans 5, 1.

Grace and Peace from God the Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ: Amen.

Dearlly beloved family and friends of the departed Gerald C. Natvig.

The second World War has come home to us. Until now it has seemed quite distant. It has been something remote, something to be read about, a subject of speculative conversation. In a moment all that has changed. With dreadful suddenness our minds are filled with fleeting glimpses of the smiling face of one of our own boys who will not return to his home. One of our kin, one of our friends, has fallen in battle.

It is not for us here today to discuss the present war in its social and political aspects. It is not for us to complain that this war might have been prevented, or that it is a futile and useless manner of settling the disputes between nations. It is not for us bitterly to denounce those evil forces which brought it on.

Our concern today is rather with the part that our brother played in this war, and the comfort and assurance that Scripture gives to those who mourn.

What he has done is clear from his record as a soldier in the United States Army. His country called him into service. Dutifully, he obeyed the summons. He left home to take the training required. When the time came he obediently left his own country to serve in distant places. On March 4th he was ordered into a combat area, ordered to face enemy fire. He did not turn back. He faced the danger that duty placed him in, and in so doing he lost his life. It is the short and simple story that has been told a thousand times before. Yes, it is an oft-repeated story, but it is not unimportant.

The service record of Gerald Natvig is important to us because it tells us that he did all that God requires of mortal man. No one anywhere has a higher calling than that he do his duty. Who were the great men and women of Scripture? They were those who performed the tasks that God required of them. John the Baptist and Stephen the Martyr both died young. But both had done what God called upon them to do. And both are honored to all eternity by their Maker because they obediently did their duty, even at the cost of their lives. Even so Private Gerald Natvig fulfilled his calling. He made the greatest sacrifice that man can make, he gave his life in the service of his country. But remember, whoever serves his country serves his God. God Himself has ordained governments; good governments to the blessing of the peoples governed, and evil governments to the punishment of their people. Surely we shall be sustained in our grief by the knowledge that he did his duty both before God and man. No mother can ask more of a son than this.

His death is also important to us as citizens of the United States because by it the peace for which we so hopefully long is brought that much nearer.

When the history of this war is written for the textbooks of a coming generation, the name of Gerald Natvig will not be written large. But neither are the names of the privates who died in the Revolutionary war, in the Civil war, in the first World war. What if no one had been willing to risk and sacrifice their lives in these past wars? We should today not be a free people enjoying all the blessings of a prosperous nation. We are a free people just because of the deaths of these nameless heroes. Because of the sacrifice of our sons in this war now we are confident of a bright and peaceful new world in which we and our children may live happily and peacefully. How humbly and thankful we should acknowledge these heroes who are giving themselves for us. Yes, how proud we must be of Gerald Natvig and the many others that are giving their lives for us, their people and their country.

Alas, though, we may think, that these very boys who have won our future peace may not live to reap the reward of the victory they have won. Alas, that they should die so young and in the prime of life. But should this cause us distress. Do we who are Christians not know that the peace which our departed brother has now attained unto is the peace to which all believers aspire? Does not the Bible abound in passages which testify to the blessedness of death in Christ?

Not only mortal men engage in war. The Son of God also waged a war in His time. It was a war against death, a war waged to free sinners from enslavement under Satan. Christ, the son of God, fought that battle alone. Did He lose that war? No, he won it against all the hosts of Hell. He won that conflict. How? He won it by dying. He won it by dying on the cross as our substitute, suffering our punishment, condemned by our guilt. Yes, he won that conflict. He won it once, and for all. He won for us an eternal peace. How fragile is the peace that even brave men win. A generation passes and another war is fought to maintain the peace and freedom so hard won by a preceding generation. But Christ's victory was for all eternity. The Apostle, in our text, can say, "We have peace with God". We who were condemned by God because of our sins, we who by our very nature were enemies of God, who hated Him, are now at peace with Him. Just as we will be able to say in future years that we have peace because brave men died to defend us, so we can say that we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, and that because of His death for us.

We, indeed, have suffered a great loss in the death of this boy from our community. But only we are losers. He has attained, as we firmly believe, to the eternal peace won for him by our Savior, Jesus Christ. He, through faith, has now early attained to that goal toward which all Christians aspire. In life we praise those who reach their goals quickly. We honor those who early reach the fulfillment of their ambitions. How much more should we not rejoice over the good fortune of those who attain to eternal blessedness in their youth.

The obituary of the deceased calls to mind the fact that he was baptized and confirmed in this his home congregation, and that he held membership until his death. What a comfort that is for his friends and family today. We realize to our joy

that in his infancy he was brought to baptism where the Holy Ghost created faith in his heart, and made him who was conceived and born in sin a believer in Christ his Savior. Later during his boyhood he received Christian instruction and learned to know Jesus, his Redeemer.

From his very infancy he learned the Christmas message, "Glory to God in the Highest, and on earth peace, good will to men." He learned to know what that peace is that is brought into the world by the Christ-child. It is not a peace brought, as so commonly is thought, to men of good will, for men are by nature sinful, and do not have a good will toward God or one another. Rather than being a peace which is brought to men of good will, it is a peace that **creates** good will **between** God and men.

From earliest childhood he also learned to know the story of the fulfillment of God's Christmas assurance as it is told in the words of the Easter message, "He is risen!"

God's son, born at Christmas, lived to proclaim a Gospel of peace and power, a Gospel of forgiveness and hope, a Gospel of everlasting life. But mere preaching was not enough. Christ was compelled to face a hostile and sinful world alone, to withstand mockery and abuse, to suffer a crown of thorns and the cruel scourging. Innocently condemned to death He bore the anguish of crucifixion.

And why? He was innocent! Yes, but we were guilty, and God loved us, loved us to the point of giving His only begotten son, that whosoever believeth in Him may not perish, but have everlasting life. He loved us, wretched sinners, so that He was willing to give His son our chastisement, to heal us by His stripes.

Now because of Christ's anguish and suffering we are free, peace is restored between a just God and sinful man, He regards us in Christ as though we had never sinned. We are just in God's sight. God was not merely expressing a futile hope when He said, "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your father in heaven is perfect." He demands such perfect righteousness of all who would enter heaven. And miracle of miracles He, who placed the guilt of the world on Christ's person at Calvary, has now imputed to all men the perfect righteousness of Christ.

We now who have been justified by Christ's death, appropriate unto ourself the blessing of hope and peace in this life, and everlasting blessedness in heaven through our faith which the Holy Ghost, from the day of our baptism, works in us.

What comfort is there not today for us to know that our departed friend, who died fulfilling his duty toward God, has the peace that the Christmas and Easter message so wondrously assures us. What comfort is there not in the words of our text which say that, "Therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ". We are sure that our friend believed God's promises. We are doubly sure that God's promises are fulfilled in the deaths of all who depart in faith. There is a peace that passeth all understanding. A peace between God and men. We who so ardently now pray for peace in the world we live in, thank God for the peace that He has already given Christians, into which we are sure Gerald has now entered.