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Homiletics: Outlines on the Swedish Gospels (Alternate Series)

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HOMILETICS

Outlines on the Swedish Gospels (Alternate Series)

FIRST SUNDAY IN ADVENT

JOHN 18:36,37

"To this end was I born. . . ." Contrast the wail of self-pity "Why was I ever born?" Jesus knew. Even in judgment and death He affirms His reason for being—His kingship of truth. Though from Passion history, a precious Advent text. Holy Spirit, help us, like Christ, to find our reason for being, not in this world but in

The Reign of Truth

I. *The origin of the reign of truth is God*

A. Contrast, ". . . not of this world"

1. World has its measure of truth. Science. Crimes solved. Outward respect for truth, justice, equality.
2. But the world will not *be ruled* by truth! Truth loved when it serves personal advantage, admired and championed when it has no personal relevance; but hated when it threatens to hurt. Justice and equality much desired by those who are suppressed; self-righteously endorsed by those unaffected; but violently resisted by those who find personal advantage in the *status quo*. Pilate judges by advantage, not by truth.
3. Hence not truth but power has ultimate relevance. World fears, loves, and trusts in power, above all things. Not as a question but in sarcastic contempt the world says with Pilate, "What is truth?" A reign of truth cannot originate in so corrupt a world.

B. The reign of truth originates in God

1. "To this end . . . for this cause. . . ." God's eternal purpose of grace, both in creation and in redemption. This truth alone shall *rule* men's hearts.
2. ". . . was I born . . . came I into the world." The Savior's consciousness of His purpose. Unconcerned for advantage. Kingdom of truth must be established in a world of deceit, regardless of consequences. His reason for being.

3. Whose image are you? "Of this world" (v.36) or "of the truth" (v.37)?

II. *Christ shows the nature and method of the reign of truth*

A. Contrast, ". . . not of this world"

1. Loving advantage above all, we exert force to attain it. A child hits and bites. Man set against man. Pilate expresses the only kingdom he understands: "You can have your truth! I have *power*, and power is what really counts!" (John 19:10). The Jews, successful in overpowering Christ, could by-pass truth.
2. God harnesses sin. With man set against man, He produces the precarious balance of power, the high-tensioned stability we call "civilization." Thus government and social pressures secure a certain moral conformity by force. But this is not the nature and method of the kingdom God intended.

B. Christ demonstrates the reign of truth

1. The truth is never established by power. V.37: ". . . then would My servants fight. . . ." Cf. Peter's sword. Power can neither deny the truth that is nor establish as true what is not, nor can power assist truth to victory. Truth is its own weapon.

2. Truth is established, and wins its victories, by

Witness. ". . . that I should bear witness . . . heareth My voice." Truth need only be told and heard.

Suffering. To be ruled by truth is to renounce advantage. So Christ did (John 18:11) and taught (John 12:25). Christ needs no armor to defend Him; only witnesses willing to suffer with Him.

Faith. Human experience judges that the victory of right over might does not occur often enough, decisively enough, soon enough, or predictably enough to merit confidence. But faith sees that truth is God's. Though men hate and resist it, the gates of hell cannot prevail against it. Men could kill Christ, but they could not dent the truth of who He was and why He had come, nor could they prevent His resurrection. Truth is life (John 14:6), both in Him and in us.

3. Of which kingdom are you? Of "this world" or of the "truth"?

III. *The end and goal of the reign of truth is salvation*

A. Contrast, ". . . not of this world"

1. World's goal is to achieve ambitions, fulfill lusts, and avoid pain. When truth stands in the way, it is ignored. When truth speaks up, it is hated.

2. The world's end is

Fear and strife. Every man for himself.

Slavery. German officer in occupied Norway cries in delirium, "The fly captures the flypaper!" (Steinbeck, *The Moon Is Down.*) So sin captures the man who harbors it. Pilate *wanted* to free Christ, but *could not!* Victim, not of Jews but of the kingdom to which he belonged—his advantage supreme over all else! Prisoner of himself! (Rom. 6:16)

Death. Pilate falls. Jewish nation dies. Rome fades away. Universal truth, "If ye live after the flesh [advantage], ye shall die" (Rom. 8:13).

B. The reign of truth brings salvation

1. Surely, truth hurts! Nothing more painful than repentance, seeing what you really are. The necessary pain of a shot, dentist, or operation. Christ hurts, not to destroy but to save. No vengeance, no glorying over enemies after resurrection. Left them as a field for the Gospel harvest.

2. How wonderfully truth saves!

Peace with God, man, and self, instead of strife.

Freedom instead of slavery. To live by conviction, not compulsion (John 8:32).

Life eternal instead of death. His vindication and resurrection guarantees ours (John 12:26; 14:19; 17:3).

"Everyone that is of the truth heareth My voice." You belong to the one kingdom or the other. The test is simple: ". . . heareth My voice." The Jews would not hear, nor would Pilate. You have heard. This new church year hear His voice all the more. May truth become more and more the power, motive, method, and goal of your life—your God-given reason for being!

New Orleans, La.

PAUL G. BRETSCHER

SECOND SUNDAY IN ADVENT

LUKE 17:20-30

We are a people accustomed to living with uncertainties. Numerous international incidents and small-scale wars which could be limited or global in scope. Bombs and missiles which could mean total annihilation. Creeping inflation. Some are asking searching questions, but most of us have learned to enjoy prosperity and to live with fear of war. And a few people are asking, "When will the kingdom of God come?" "When will Jesus return?" But most of us have learned to live with this constant possibility also with considerable lack of concern. We dismiss those who seriously challenge us with the Lord's imminent return as sectarians, extremists, religious fanatics. And many of them may well fit any of those descriptions. But the fact remains that, like the people in the days of Noah and Lot, most of us ignore the issue and concentrate more on the eating, drinking, buying, selling, planting, and building of daily life. Our text and the season of Advent call us to reconsider the question of the Lord's coming as vital to our continuing existence as Christians.

Already—Not Yet

I. *The Kingdom of God is here already*

A. Some ask when the Kingdom is coming in order to know when to get ready. Pharisees (v. 20). Adventists, Jehovah's Witnesses. Prediction of date of Lord's return.

B. Others use the imminent coming of the Lord as a means of encouraging morality. Threat of punishment to evildoers. True, of course, that the Day of the Lord will be the final Day of Judgment for the impenitent and unregenerate. But—

C. The message of our Lord and of His church is that the kingdom of God is already here, "among you" (v. 21). Jesus announced that "the kingdom of God is at hand" (Matt. 4:17; cf. also Luke 11:20). In Jesus Christ, God broke in upon the world with His redeeming power and defeated the rule of Satan, death, law, flesh, sin. The rule of God is established in Christ's life, death, resurrection. Cf. Rom. 4:25.

D. The entry of God into the world of man's captivity was not with the usually accepted or expected signs (vv. 20, 21). Bethlehem. Golgotha. Nevertheless in Jesus Christ the power of God to save His people was manifested. This is the foolishness of our preaching (1 Cor. 1:18).

II. *The kingdom of God is not yet manifested in the fullness of its glory*

A. Although the victory is won, Satan and his evil forces still fight on. Example: World War II. Even after victory was really won, the Allies still had to fight the Battle of the Bulge. (Cf. 1 Peter 1:6, 7; Matt. 24:9 ff.)

B. These days of "tribulation" and "testing" are the days in which we live. The church as such and individuals within often reach extremities of suffering for the Lord's name or of temptation which beget the "desire to see one of the days of the Son of Man" (v. 22). Church in Europe and Asia under communistic testing.

C. "And you will not see it" (vv. 22, 25). There is the cheer of future glory to give strength for present suffering, but—until it pleases God—the end is not yet. Example: Eschatological preaching and hope of church under Nazi and communist persecution.

D. Christian people are often given to the reading of signs, the setting of dates for the Lord's coming in times of trial. False prophets say "lo here" and "lo there" (v. 23). The lonely, the poor, the rootless people grasp such preaching and make it their hope.

III. *Between the "already here" of Christ's redemption and the "not yet" of Christ's second coming the Christian waits*

A. This waiting is one not of fear or desperation but of patient hope and faithful service. We do not leave ordinary occupations to enter monasteries or follow those who offer to lead to the place of Jesus' return. Rather our hope in the Lord's coming adds urgency to our normal Christian tasks of worship and witness.

B. We worship to keep alive and strengthened lest we become completely like the people in Noah's and Lot's day (vv. 26-29). They were not merely living ordinary lives; they were wholly given to external things.

C. We witness to one another, and to those outside the church, of the Lord's mercy and forgiveness, sharing our hope with all people. For at any moment the "not yet" may again become the "already here" (v. 30).

We therefore join the saints of old in their prayers: "Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ, our Lord!" (Rom. 7:25). "Our Lord, come!" (1 Cor. 16:22)

Alton, III.

REUBEN C. BAERWALD

THIRD SUNDAY IN ADVENT

LUKE 3:1-14 (Read vv. 3,4)

The air is becoming charged with the excitement of Christmas. Since the beginning of this Advent season we have been hearing about the Christ who is to come. He is and must remain the all-important One. But in His plan of salvation He uses men to prepare His way into the hearts of others. Thus He used John the Baptist. In this sense, men do become important to Him. This truth is reflected in the ancient Gospel and Epistle selections for today as well as in our text. Therefore we consider:

The Forerunner of the Lord

I. *We see what type of man John the Baptist was*

A. John the Baptist was a man of faith

1. He knew the Scriptures (vv. 3-6; cf. also John 1:23). This is essential to every witness of the Lord.
2. He knew his Lord (vv. 3-6; John 1:26-31). The importance of knowing Christ (John 17:3).
3. He had utmost confidence in the promises of his Savior (vv. 3-6) and God's power to convert (v. 8 b).

B. John was a man of consecration

1. In his thinking Christ always came first. The whole tendency of his preaching, according to this text, is to point men to Christ. "Behold the Lamb of God" (John 1:29).
2. As a result he became a man of *great humility*. "I am not the Christ" (John 1:20); "preferred before me" (John 1:30; 3:30).
3. His consecration is shown in his *tireless energy* (v.3: "came into *all the country* about the Jordan"). This includes *persistence* (v.3: "preaching" or "kept right on preaching"). He hoped for success, but if he did not see it, he would go on working anyway.
4. His consecration made him *courageous* and *uncompromising*. With him there were no "special-privilege classes"; "no respect of persons"; he "pulled no punches"; he spoke "without fear or favor" (vv. 7, 8, 10-14).
5. Because of his consecration John was less concerned about his personal needs than about being faithful to Christ; more interested in essentials than externals. In the good

sense of the term he became a "rugged individualist." Lived in the wilderness. The Jordan Valley is described as "a hot, uninhabited depression, wild in every way, away from all civilization." He wore a coat of camel's hair; ate locusts and wild honey (Matt. 3:1,4). His first concern was to be a faithful witness and thus to make known the way of the Lord.

C. John was a man of importance

1. Important, not in the eyes of the world but in the eyes of the Lord. He caught the attention of some people of his day, but it is likely that they regarded him as just a queer personality. Since then the world has forgotten him. But in God's eyes he was important. See how the Lord carefully identifies his place in history (vv. 1,2). "Among them that are born of women there hath not arisen a greater than John the Baptist" (Matt. 11:7-11).
2. We become greatest when we think least of our own importance.

II. *We consider the contents of his message*

It may be summarized as repentance, remission (v.3).

A. Repentance

1. Its essence: change of heart and mind (vv.3-5; 7-14).
 - a. What the picture language of Isaiah demanded: leveling off the high places, filling in the valleys, straightening the crooked, and smoothing the rough (vv.4,5). The need: impenitence obstructs Christ's way into the heart.
 - b. In answer to the people who inquire, John gave specific examples of what he meant as they applied to everyday life (the fruits of faith or repentance). They would have to repent of pride (racial, national, denominational, personal; there are no indispensable men); opportunism (vv. 7, 8); selfishness and lovelessness (v. 11); dishonesty and extortion (v.12); brutality, blackmailing, and greed (v.14). See how modern these sins are! "We see that each station in life has its peculiar temptations and sins. These the Christian should avoid as an evidence of his repentance." (Lenski)
2. Its condemnation: the ax laid to the tree, hewn down, and

burned (v.9). Cf. the Destruction of Jerusalem and the final Judgment (2 Peter 3:10).

B. Remission

1. In his preaching of repentance John did not confine himself to an exclusive presentation of the Law, which would have meant regret not only for sin but also at lost opportunity, that is, despair. He preached a "repentance for the remission of sins"; thus not a mere contrition, but also faith in Christ's merits and His promise of forgiveness (v. 3; Cat. Qu. 272). Forgiveness is the very core of Christ's Gospel promise. It changes our entire outlook on the future; it spells the difference between despair and hope. We can do no greater preaching than to proclaim forgiveness (2 Cor. 5:20, 21). John preached that God would come to man (Gospel, v. 4), not that man must come to God—something that man could not do and that would have caused despair.
2. "All flesh shall see the salvation of God" (v. 6). No greater joy; the "beatific vision"; we appreciate it by contrast with the condemnation threatened (v. 9). It means rescue from sin, Satan, eternal death. Our full appreciation of this remains for eternity (1 Cor. 13:12).

This should prepare us not only for a proper appreciation of Christmas but also for a proper witnessing, like that of the shepherds who returned glorifying and praising God (Luke 2:20).

Milwaukee, Wis.

HERBERT BERNER

FOURTH SUNDAY IN ADVENT

JOHN 3:22-36

These are good words to ponder just before Christmas. For they tell us some wonderful things about the coming Christ. Let's listen, then, as we remind ourselves

He Comes!

I. *By God's authority and appointment* (v.27; cf. John 1:18; 3:13)

- A. The point here is, Jesus is not operating on His own. God's authority and appointment are behind Him (Heb. 5:4). This coming One is on His way because God called and appointed Him. Notice, *God*, not a congregation, the people whom He serves. Jesus is just the right Man to meet our needs. Don't

have to wonder like a Christian congregation: "Is he the right man for us?" We know Christ is. For two reasons: 1. He is beset with the same weakness as we are (Heb. 5:2). 2. He is able to offer the necessary sacrifice for sin (Heb. 5:1).

- B. A second application from this verse (John 3:27) might be this. Do you want a stronger faith? You can't will it or work it. God must give it. Do you want to be more steady and stronger in your Christian life? You can't will it or work it. God must give it (James 1:17). It is from above, not below, that is, your weak will power, your feeble efforts at being faithful, that you have the power to grow in saintliness. This power is from above. Yet it is found in the Word, which is below—the Word as it comes to us in worship, Holy Supper, Scripture search and study.

II. *As a Bridegroom* (v. 29)

A. The Old Testament background

1. Ezekiel 16. This is the general background. See especially verses 8-59, in which four points are brought out. 1. God's grace in wedding such an ugly, unwanted bride (vv. 6-8). Application: God didn't marry us because we are pretty, but because we aren't. In our sinful ugliness we needed His love. 2. The bride's foolish unfaithfulness (vv. 15-34). Plenty of good, present-day applications here: v. 15 ("you trusted in your beauty"); v. 22 ("you did not remember the days of your youth"). Whole idea of sin as adultery common in O.T. (cf. also James 4:1-5; 1 John 2:15). 3. God's punishment of His unfaithful bride (vv. 35-43). 4. God's faithfulness to forgive (vv. 60-63).

2. Hosea 2:19

- a. An eternal marriage. Not even the greedy grave can dissolve this union.
- b. The wedding gifts
 - aa. Righteousness. Best gift of all. He marries us, giving us what He demands—righteousness.
 - bb. Steadfast love. Not love like the dew, love that vanishes as soon as daily sun of our unfaithfulness shines upon it. Not love like a cloud, love that is quickly driven away by the winds of our wicked

words and ways. But steadfast love, a love like the mountains.

- cc. Faithfulness. Our heavenly Husband will never divorce us, not even though we day in and day out treat Him so shamefully in our sinful ways. The Lord is a one-woman Husband.

B. The New Testament picture (Eph. 5:23-33)

1. Suggested points to be stressed

- a. The Bridegroom is the bride's Head and Lord. Christ will not be a "hen-pecked" Husband (v. 23).
- b. The Bridegroom's love is not in cards or candy, not in wooing words, but in His laid-down life.
- c. The purpose of this love — to change the bride's spots, wrinkles, and blemishes into radiant beauty. He married us not only to make us happy but also to make us holy.

2. Applications

- a. Wives (22-24)
- b. Husbands (25-28)

III. From above (v. 31)

This coming Child is not merely a product of this planet. The "wheat" that went into making the Bread of Life not grown in the fields of this earth. This Bread is from above. This Child is heaven-born. Therefore:

- A. He is above all. Reference here to all other teachers and prophets sent by God. Cf. Heb. 1:1. Christ is God's last and greatest Word to men. Why? Because He is the Word in flesh, not on a scroll or in a prophet's mouth. Therefore *hear Him!*
- B. He interprets God and heaven to men (v. 32). Cf. John 1:18. Notice, this coming Child witnesses to what He has heard and seen. No doubt about His words and revelation. He has seen it, heard it. We couldn't go up and find out: so God sent someone down to tell us — His Son.
- C. Our response to this testimony
 1. Faith (v. 36). Cf. John 3:14, where Jesus defines faith as a life or death look on the uplifted Son. Notice, this trust is not just in the words of Jesus, but in the Christ who

speaks them. Saving faith is faith in the Christ who speaks in the Gospel.

2. The blessing of this response—life (v. 36). Notice, the believer *has* life now. Eternal life is not a post-death affair but a present possession.
3. And if we don't respond with faith—
 - a. God's wrath (v. 36). With whom is God angry? People who are bad, who lose their temper, patience, self-control? People who promise to be holy but aren't? People who are weak and wayward? No, with people who will not believe, people who will not accept what God gives them, people who try to do their way into heaven rather than believe their way.
 - b. No life (v. 36)

IV. *As a King* (v. 35: "All things in His hands")

- A. King over all things. Not just in your little life, but the whole universe—animate and inanimate. A floating cloud, a hopping bird, a humming mosquito—all are under His control. Everything, from a stubbed toe to a buried dear one.
- B. For your good and profit. No greater comfort than this.
- C. A King whose throne is a cross. Why? That you might reign with Him.
- D. A King who rules over you. Not just over certain organs of your body, but all of you. Cf. Matt. 6:22. This is the first and most important organ over which He must rule. Cf. also Matt. 5:29 ff. This royal rule over you is absolute.

He comes, our Bridegroom and King. And because He comes, all evil goes.

Richmond Heights, Mo.

HERBERT E. HOHENSTEIN

CHRISTMAS DAY

JOHN 1:1-14

Before you can have life, you must have light. The two almost always go together. You don't find a garden growing in a basement. You don't see great civilizations rising up inside unlighted caverns. Nor, we must add, do you find real faith and hope and love growing up in spiritual darkness. To have life of any kind, you must first

have light. It is this basic fact that makes Christmas so important to everyone of us. For, when Jesus was born in Bethlehem, the great Light began to shine which can give life to our souls. At the birth of Jesus Christ, God came into the world to overcome spiritual death by the giving of Himself. Christmas is the festival of

Life-Giving Light

I. *God is the true Light*

A. There is only one true light. This is as true in the spiritual realm as it is in the world of nature. The true light in the natural world is the sun. It alone gives the light and warmth that we need for life. No other light—candlelight, gaslight, incandescent or fluorescent light—can really take the sun's place. They have only a few of the important, life-giving elements of the sun. They are only copies, but the sun is the true light.

B. In the spiritual realm God is the true Light. What the sun is to the natural world, God Himself is to our souls. Only when He is present in our inner being are we alive spiritually. There are substitutes, of course, lesser lights that often attract us and try to take His place—brilliant people, breath-taking sights in nature, works of art, etc. They are lights of a sort. They are good. They brighten up our lives to a certain extent, but they can never reach our souls with spiritual life. They are only imitations or, at best, distant reflections of the true Light, which is God (vv. 4, 5, 9).

II. *At Christmas, God appeared to drive away our spiritual darkness*

A. At Christmas, God appeared in human flesh (v. 14). The Babe of Bethlehem is God. In Christ, the Creator Himself (v. 3) speaks to us and makes Himself known. That's the idea St. John wants to put across when he refers to Jesus as "the Word." The God whom we cannot see and whom because of our sin we cannot know, became like us that we might see Him and know Him. We can't understand God, but we can understand a man; so God became a man in the person of Jesus Christ. He expressed Himself to us in human terms. A little boy is afraid to go to sleep in a dark room. His mother says: "You must not be afraid. Don't you know that God is here?" The boy said: "Yes, but I want a face to see." In Christ, God gives us a face to see.

B. "The light shineth in darkness" (v. 5). This is the kind of world we live in. This is the kind of world in which God appeared on that first Christmas—a world of spiritual darkness. There is a strong and evil intelligence here that tries to close us off from God. It's a living,

active, penetrating kind of darkness. It not only surrounds us on the outside; it even works within us, trying to squelch and smother the rays of divine light. "The world knew Him not. . . . His own people received Him not" (vv. 10, 11). This is what made so many people in His day ignore Jesus and reject Him. The darkness has the same effect on us today.

C. Christ overcame the darkness. "The Light shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not" (v. 5). In Christ, God has struggled with the darkness and has conquered it with His own power and glory. At His birth we see the first flickering of a light, a light that grew stronger and more radiant until it burned with white-hot brilliance on the cross. It was finally, at His death, that the decisive battle was fought and light was guaranteed for all time.

III. *In faith we get life from this light*

A. In this light we can have life. Christ gave people power to become children of God (v. 12). Through their contact with Jesus Christ people experienced a second birth. A new kind of life—spiritual life—took hold within them. They were born of God (v. 13). Christ was born of human flesh so that we might be born of God. He was born physically so that we might be born spiritually. When the light of Christ shines, God draws near to us and begins to merge our lives with His. When His Spirit enters our hearts, we begin to enjoy life on an entirely new level, in a brand-new dimension.

B. This will happen only as we accept Him by faith. "As many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe" (v. 12). The light of day will not shine into your home until you open the blinds. Christ will not illuminate your soul and make you live until He opens you up to Him in faith. You've got to believe and keep on believing. Not the faith you once had but the faith you have right now is what takes the light of Christ into your heart. Let's not be confused about what faith is. It's not that dreamy, sentimental feeling that comes over us all at Christmas time. Don't think that you have faith just because you respect Christ or because your name is found on the membership list of our congregation. Faith is the determination to keep the way clear and open to Christ, even though the darkness is pressing in hard. Christmas is a good time to check up on your faith and to use Christ's own power to set it right. For even the darkness of unbelief can be dispelled by His great light.

St. Louis, Mo.

MILTON L. RUDNICK

SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS

LUKE 12:32

Christmas is a time of many gifts. Important to keep our eyes fixed on Jesus Christ, God's greatest Gift and on those other gifts which God gives us in and with His Son. Today we consider His gift of the Kingdom.

A Priceless Christmas Gift—the Kingdom

I. *What is meant by the Kingdom?*

A. The context requires that we understand "Kingdom" as referring to both here (1-31) and hereafter (33-59, with emphasis upon the return of the Lord Jesus).

Definition of "Kingdom": God's gracious interest (and activity) in the hearts and lives of people, through which more of what they think, say, and do is dedicated to God the Father and more of their needs are filled by God the Father.

B. The Kingdom rests upon Jesus' gracious self-sacrifice, and a man's first experience with the reality of the Kingdom comes when the Holy Spirit convicts him of his sinfulness and gently persuades him to hold on to the Cross of Christ for forgiveness, life, and peace (Psalm 51). "He that spared not His own Son but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?"

The Kingdom climaxes in the crown of glory which has been reserved for us (1 Peter 5:4).

II. *Membership in the Kingdom*

A. It is the Father's good pleasure to give us the Kingdom, not of debt but of free grace. Parable of the Laborers in the Vineyard. His assurance that nothing can come between you and the Kingdom. Having provided for your greatest need, will He neglect any other needs?

B. Places serious responsibility upon kingdom members. "In the church the kingdom is already in some measure present. The church is the church only in so far as it belongs not to this age only, but to the age which is to come and in Christ has already begun. There is a sense in which God has already given us the kingdom. How able and ready have we been to receive it? How adequately are we representing it?" (*The Interpreter's Bible*)

III. *Kingdom membership and the cares of this world*

A. Worry and care stand as judgments upon our faith. Their

existence in our lives should drive us to the means of grace and prayer in order to strengthen our faith.

B. "Fear not, little flock" (Is. 40:11; Ezek. 34:12). Sweetest comfort. "Inherit the Kingdom." Context leaves no shadow of a doubt that Jesus was speaking about cares of the body and of this life.

C. Jesus meant this literally. Can one completely overcome fear and worry in this life? Jesus invites us to do so. He shows us the way. (Luke 12:31)

Active, growing kingdom membership carries such wonderful promises. Let us properly evaluate our kingdom membership as our greatest gift—through Jesus Christ, our Savior and King.

Milwaukee, Wis.

HERBERT T. MAYER