

Topic: With Christ Around the World.

Text: Mark 14:26 --"and when they had sung a hymn, they went out."

Proposition: One can go around the world with Christ in that he finds Christians worshipping everywhere and in that there is human need everywhere to which he can joyously give service in Christ's name.

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Places and dates used:

Shenandoah, Wyo., Oct. 2, 1960 (9:30 & 11 a.m.)
Montrose, Colo., Oct. 1, 1960.

FIRST METHODIST CHURCH
SUNDAY SCHOOL
ATTENDANCE RECORD

DATE _____

CLASS NAME _____

TEACHER _____
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NUMBER OF PUPILS PRESENT _____

AMOUNT OF COLLECTION _____

NUMBER OF VISITORS PRESENT _____

NAMES OF NEW MEMBERS

Introduction:

1. Some of you have travelled a good deal. Perhaps you have even been around the world and can tell stories of interesting countries and peoples. The experiences of long trips away from home seem to stick with us vividly.

If on such trips we find at each place a guide to show us the points of interest and to explain local customs we get much more from such a trip. A native guide who can speak your language well enough to communicate effectively with you can enrich a trip tremendously.

2. As we think in terms of ^{the} today's ^{as any communication medium} topic, "With Christ Around the World," we are not trying to make Christ a traveller when he wasn't. In his earthly life he stayed pretty much in one small part of the world. He can not be described ~~xxxxx~~ as having been a world traveller.

4. Even so, he is an excellent guide

FIRST METHODIST CHURCH
SUNDAY SCHOOL
ATTENDANCE RECORD

DATE _____

CLASS NAME _____

TEACHER _____
Present Absent

NUMBER OF PUPILS PRESENT _____

AMOUNT OF COLLECTION _____

NUMBER OF VISITORS PRESENT _____

NAMES OF NEW MEMBERS

For the world traveller. He shows how to respect and love people everywhere, how to gain their respect and friendship, how to receive from them that which they can give and teach.

5. As we travel we find that there are people in all parts of the world who love and respect Christ, and who are Christians.

6. There are, then, many ways in which with accuracy we can use the phrase "with Christ around the world."

I. We find that Christ is worshipped around the world, as this ^{way} communion day suggests

1. We are aware of the Roman Catholic form of Christian worship. Centering in Italy, it is found in most countries of the world. Belgium, France, Spain are strong Roman Catholic countries of Europe. We think of almost all of the Latin American countries as being strongly Roman Catholic, so that when Brasilia, the new capitol of Brazil, was opened a few months ago

FIRST METHODIST CHURCH
SUNDAY SCHOOL
ATTENDANCE RECORD

DATE _____

CLASS NAME _____

TEACHER _____
Present Absent

NUMBER OF PUPILS PRESENT _____

AMOUNT OF COLLECTION _____

NUMBER OF VISITORS PRESENT _____

NAMES OF NEW MEMBERS

large outdoor night mass was said as part of the official ceremonies. In the Phillipines the catholics are numerous. In almost every part of the world there is at least a smattering of Roman Catholicism, (a testimony to a great missionary zeal, which we can not help but admire even though we may disagree with their beliefs in many ways.)

2. Protestantism is less than 1/3 of the size of Catholicism, when you count total numbers of believers. ~~xxxx~~ The stronghold of the Protestant Christian outlook, numerically, probably is the United States. Yet ^{England} Germany, the Scandian countries, ~~xxxxxx~~ and others of the European countries of course have strong Protestant groups, and are often the leaders in sound theological thinking. Our own Methodist Church has missions in many countries in all parts of the globe. By agreement with other denominations we are not in mission work in some countries and they ~~work~~ in turn do not work in the countries where we have missions. But all Protestant work is not just the

FIRST METHODIST CHURCH
SUNDAY SCHOOL
ATTENDANCE RECORD

DATE _____

CLASS NAME _____

TEACHER _____
Present Absent

NUMBER OF PUPILS PRESENT _____

AMOUNT OF COLLECTION _____

NUMBER OF VISITORS PRESENT _____

NAMES OF NEW MEMBERS

result of on-the-spot mission workers. In many countries the Protestant churches are truly indigenous, or composed of and run by the native peoples.

3. Besides traditional Roman Catholicism and independent Protestantism, there are in parts of the world other forms of Christianity. We think of the Mar-Thoma church of northern India. It is a truly christian church, the origins of which are shrouded in history but which the natives say was founded by Thomas, the disciple of Jesus. In parts of Asia minor, such as in Ethiopia, there are various "old Catholic" churches, also claiming to have been founded by Paul or one of the disciples. Most of us are familiar with the Russian Orthodox church, perhaps now having been degraded to the point of being a tool of the Communist state. The Greek Orthodox church is familiar to us, ~~because even in our own community monthly services are held.~~ *In many communities here as communion in oil, well as in Greece.*

4. The point we are making is that

FIRST METHODIST CHURCH
SUNDAY SCHOOL
ATTENDANCE RECORD

DATE _____

CLASS NAME _____

TEACHER _____

Present

Absent

NUMBER OF PUPILS PRESENT _____

AMOUNT OF COLLECTION _____

NUMBER OF VISITORS PRESENT _____

NAMES OF NEW MEMBERS

There is some sort of Christian worship almost wherever you go. If you will seek to understand the spirit of such worship you will find at the core of each form, of each church, a love of and respect for Jesus Christ. Truly in this sense you can be with Christ Around the World.

5. Not always is it safe to be a Christian. In the old days, ~~for~~ ~~the~~ immediately after Christ's ascension, and often for several hundred years afterwards, it was difficult and dangerous to worship Christ. The symbol of the fish, representing the first letters of the Greek words standing for the phrase "Jesus Christ, Son of God, Savior", was the secret symbol by which Christians identified themselves one to another. The term catacombs has come to signify a place of hiding. It actually refers to underground caves and tombs in Rome where Christians gathered secretly to worship. But all danger in being a Christian has not passed away. In Red China and other Communist and dictatorial countries it is still

FIRST METHODIST CHURCH
SUNDAY SCHOOL
ATTENDANCE RECORD

DATE _____

CLASS NAME _____

TEACHER _____

Present

Absent

NUMBER OF PUPILS PRESENT _____

AMOUNT OF COLLECTION _____

NUMBER OF VISITORS PRESENT _____

NAMES OF NEW MEMBERS

dangerous to be a Christian. Freedom of worship and thought can not be tolerated when it leads one to question the government that is denying to people their basic rights to life, liberty, and happiness; so the governments of some countries persecute Christians still. (A recent news article from Berlin telling of an east-German protest against the sounds from a Billy Graham tent meeting some hundred yards away in west Berlin illustrates the fear in which dictatorial government holds for freedom-exciting Christian thought.)

6. As we go around the world with Christ it is good to see that this suppression of and danger for Christian worship is not everywhere. Some of the most beautiful and greatest buildings in the world are ones for Christian worship. Notre Dame in Paris and other great cathedrals can be cited.

7. But not only can the traveller find Christians worshipping under conditions of beauty. They also worship

FIRST METHODIST CHURCH
SUNDAY SCHOOL
ATTENDANCE RECORD

DATE _____

CLASS NAME _____

TEACHER _____

Present

Absent

NUMBER OF PUPILS PRESENT _____

AMOUNT OF COLLECTION _____

NUMBER OF VISITORS PRESENT _____

NAMES OF NEW MEMBERS

in places of filth and squalor at times. This ~~often~~ is because as we travel we find that

I. There are peoples in need around the world whom more fortunate Christians can and should help.

1. ~~Our leaflet-envelope for today (World-Wide Communion Sunday, 1960) tells of a need which was met by Christian giving. The story is of a Methodist Boys Town housing 200 homeless boys on Chinoo-Do (True Friend Island), Korea. A typhoon came along and destroyed the home, but safety for the boys was found in an escape tower which had been built against just such an emergency, with funds supplied by Methodist Commission on Overseas Relief Funds from world-wide communion offerings.~~

WE REMEMBER

2. ~~In recent mail were mimeographed sheets telling in more detail some of the stories of the earthquake ~~in~~ ~~Chile~~ ~~of~~ ~~May~~ of May 1960 in Chile. Cities sinking, islands being broken in two with huge ravines across them,~~

FIRST METHODIST CHURCH
SUNDAY SCHOOL
ATTENDANCE RECORD

DATE _____

CLASS NAME _____

TEACHER _____

Present

Absent

NUMBER OF PUPILS PRESENT _____

AMOUNT OF COLLECTION _____

NUMBER OF VISITORS PRESENT _____

NAMES OF NEW MEMBERS

tidal waves that destroyed ~~xxxxxx~~ homes and life up to 2 miles inland from the beaches; New earthquake-proof homes sliding down hills ~~xxxxxxx~~ with the hills on which they were built; new volcanoes raining destructive ash on nearby cities; the destruction of factories and other job centers; cold driving winter rains and other bad weather following the quakes, making life more miserable for the people. All this was part of the Chilean scene. But help came from all around the world! Gigantic American Globemaster planes with helpful and friendly crews, carrying large loads of needed supplies; ~~have~~ been among the help. American churches sending blankets, food, money, ~~were~~ there. Among ~~xxxxxxx~~ this help was food from Christian Rural Overseas Program, CROP, supported by our own Methodist MCOR and the interdenominational Church World Service organization. ~~Therexisxxndx~~

3. We need not think that the only
need

FIRST METHODIST CHURCH
SUNDAY SCHOOL
ATTENDANCE RECORD

DATE _____

CLASS NAME _____

TEACHER _____
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NUMBER OF PUPILS PRESENT _____

AMOUNT OF COLLECTION _____

NUMBER OF VISITORS PRESENT _____

NAMES OF NEW MEMBERS

is among people we don't know. Our own boys and girls going into the military services find themselves in communities in this country and in ^{other} parts of the world where temptations to which they are unaccustomed are great. The government, the Red Cross and other agencies do what they can to provide recreation, hobbies, travel, and other help for spare time hours. The service chaplains do a good job of reaching the men, or at least try to, but there are not enough chaplains. In areas where military installations exist the churches need to provide much more adequate special attention for the religious and moral needs of the serviceman. We have a chance to help through such things as our regular mission giving, and through 1/2 of our special offering today, which will go to help churches near military installations and to help our commission on chaplains.

4. We need not wonder what Christ would do for these people, both those in need overseas and here at home, if they are in need. The Scriptures

FIRST METHODIST CHURCH
SUNDAY SCHOOL
ATTENDANCE RECORD

DATE _____

CLASS NAME _____

TEACHER _____
Present Absent

NUMBER OF PUPILS PRESENT _____

AMOUNT OF COLLECTION _____

NUMBER OF VISITORS PRESENT _____

NAMES OF NEW MEMBERS

are full of incidents which reveal Christ's love, compassion and help for the unfortunate. He is not here with us now, in the flesh, though, and so He depends on you and me to ~~do~~ his tasks here. Can there be any doubt as to our response with our prayers, food, clothing and money?

IIIT This World-Wide Communion special day helps point out strongly the world-wide nature of Christ.

1. The famous German pastor, Martin Niemoller was long a pastor in German concentration camps in the World War II period. He tells of an experience near the end of that time. He writes that "A Dutch cabinet minister, two Norwegian shippers, a British major from the Indian army, a Yugoslavian diplomat, and a Macedonian journalist constituted the small congregation for which, for the first time after ~~seven~~ and a half years, I conducted a religious service. It was on Christmas Eve in 1944, during post arrest in the Dachau concentration camp. Since all six ~~of~~ members of the congregation spoke

FIRST METHODIST CHURCH
SUNDAY SCHOOL
ATTENDANCE RECORD

DATE _____

CLASS NAME _____

TEACHER _____
Present Absent

NUMBER OF PUPILS PRESENT _____

AMOUNT OF COLLECTION _____

NUMBER OF VISITORS PRESENT _____

NAMES OF NEW MEMBERS

tolerably good German, their understanding did not present great difficulties. Indeed, we sang our German chorals with a **zest** and joy to be found in few congregations of our homeland. Our congregation, moreover, was almost as rich in denominations ~~and~~ as in nationalities; Calvinists, Lutherans, Anglicans, and Greek Orthodox found themselves together here -- nearly all isolated individuals who were cut off and separated from their religious communities as much as from their families and friends. What else was left to us than to put into practice now, as well as we understood it, the una sancta, the one Holy Church, and to gather together around God's word? Nay, what else was left to us than also to celebrate our Lord's Supper? Indeed we did it, and all of us rejoiced with all our hearts in the communion that united us as disciples of the same Teacher and Savior. "

2. This discovery of a group of political prisoners is what World Communion Sunday is all about. Harold E. Fey writes "The observance

FIRST METHODIST CHURCH
SUNDAY SCHOOL
ATTENDANCE RECORD

DATE _____

CLASS NAME _____

TEACHER _____

Present

Absent

NUMBER OF PUPILS PRESENT _____

AMOUNT OF COLLECTION _____

NUMBER OF VISITORS PRESENT _____

NAMES OF NEW MEMBERS

of World Communion Sunday is the first and as yet the only action in which a considerable share of the 137,000,000 Protestants on earth consciously and simultaneously affirm their unity. They do so in thankful recognition that everywhere, as the earth turns on its axis to bring one land after another to face the sun, Christians lift their eyes to the Son of God in acknowledgement of a fellowship which includes all who take the name of Christ. ... This should be the most meaningful communion of the year. On this day the walls of the upper room melt away and we all sit at table with the Master. "World Communion Sunday takes a step in the direction toward which every observance of the Lord's Supper points. Its affirmation of Christian solidarity is certain to strengthen in Protestants a sense of common life, of mutuality, of holy fellowship in the church of Christ. Its wide extension will be rich in the fruits of the Spirit."

Conclusion:

1. Christ indeded is all over the world.

FIRST METHODIST CHURCH
SUNDAY SCHOOL
ATTENDANCE RECORD

DATE _____

CLASS NAME _____

TEACHER _____
Present Absent

NUMBER OF PUPILS PRESENT _____

AMOUNT OF COLLECTION _____

NUMBER OF VISITORS PRESENT _____

NAMES OF NEW MEMBERS

2. So is human need. As Christ sees this need he asks his legs, arms and hands -- you and me -- to help those in need. To the degree that we know His presence in our hearts so we give of ourselves and our possessions.

3. In Mark, from which we read today, the account of the last supper ends with the words "and when they had sung a hymn they went out to the Mount of Olives." "When they had sung a hymn they went out." This has suggested to Christians through the ages that to commune with Christ is such a joyful thing that you want to sing about it. Christians have communed together and then gone singing to deaths as martyrs. Christians have communed together, and then gone singing to serve on mission fields the world over. Christians have communed together and then gone singing in their hearts into their everyday lives.

4. When we have communed today let us sing because we feel like singing. We can have the joyous feeling that we are indeed going out from

FIRST METHODIST CHURCH
SUNDAY SCHOOL
ATTENDANCE RECORD

DATE _____

CLASS NAME _____

TEACHER _____

Present

Absent

NUMBER OF PUPILS PRESENT _____

AMOUNT OF COLLECTION _____

NUMBER OF VISITORS PRESENT _____

NAMES OF NEW MEMBERS

this Lord's house and His table to go around the world with Christ. Some of us~~x~~ may go in person, but most of us will have to go through our gifts. But we can go with Christ around the world.

FIRST METHODIST CHURCH
SUNDAY SCHOOL
ATTENDANCE RECORD

DATE _____

CLASS NAME _____

TEACHER _____

Present

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AMOUNT OF COLLECTION _____

NUMBER OF VISITORS PRESENT _____

NAMES OF NEW MEMBERS
