Paths of Life

No Room For God?

There is a most disconcerting statement in the story of the Natvitiy. St. Luke says bluntly there was "no room" for God in the village inn at Bethlehem. It does seem a papardox that when He who set the stars in their courses chose to make a visit to his planet. He should be gretted by a sign, "no vacancy."

What is the situation in the twentieth century? Dietrich Bonhoeffer has said that the world has come of age; it has arrived; it no longer needs God. He sights these historical developments. In theology it has been asserted by some that "rea-son is the sufficient instru-ment of religious knowl-edge." In ethics "moral principles" are substitutes for the "ten command-ments." Politics has been ments." Politics has been liberated "from the tute-lage of morality" and in philosophy "there is a growing tendency to assert the autonomy of man and the world . . There is no longer any need of is no longer any need of God as a working hypo-thesis, whether in morals, politics, or science."

And yet God's coming to man today is not un-like the "event" which Christians commemorate at Christmas time. Into the world, which thought it could do business without Him, God came in the Incarnation — The Word became a human being, and did dwell among men. But how unlike a God, born of a human being and residing in a manger! What ignominy, and too profane for one so great! Except for a few He slipped into history unnoticed.

But it didn't take long before His coming was felt, for His method of operation was an irritant. operation was an irritant. He began acting like GOD, (Included in the attributes (Included in the attributes of God are goodness, truth, justice, and love.) He began healing the sick, looking out for the poor, and defending the defenseless. He shared in the stuff of which life is made experiencing pain, tak-ing on suffering, forgiv-ing, loving. And He an-nounced the "good news" of the Kingdom.

And although the common folk responded and "heard Him gladly," He was finally "edged out of the world and on to a cross." There really wasn't room for God in

Today we have progressed (?) Man has finally gotten up the courage to declare his autonomy. As Bonhoeffer has said, the world has come of age and does not need God. There seems to be more room for Him tono more room for Him today than on the eve of the Nativity, True, the world, at least Western culture, gives lip-service to the Lordship of Jesus Christ and a token recognition of His precepts. But by

and large mankind has declared its autonomy.

This does not mean that God does not exist; nor does it mean that humanity does not need Him; nor does it mean that we must necessarily attack this autonomy. But it does mean that we must under-stand that God can and does accomplish His will by quite a different means and approach than we consider workable and effective. "God is weak and tive. "God is weak and powerless in the world, and that is exactly the way, the only way, in which He can be with us and help us. Matt. 8:17 makes it cyrstal clear clear that it is not by His omnipotence that Christ belos us but His weakness. helps us but His weakness and suffering." — Bon-

This season of the year, known in the Christian world as Advent and Christmas, not only de-clares that God did make His entrance once but that He does so again and again to as as many as do receive Him. Matt. 18:3 suggests that the way to receive Christ is to become like little children; the way is that of repentance, which is ultimate honesty. In such hearts God is pleased to

The content of Christmas further suggests that there is actually an alternative force. Wordly powers have over the cen-turies resorted to arms to settle their differences. And today it is believed that we can achieve peace by flexing our nuclear muscles. The megaton is made the symbol of peace. Christians assert that the "manger" is the symbol of peace. God comes to dwell with us in heart and society. "No one may hear His coming, but in this world of sin, where meek souls will receive Him still, the dear Christ enters in." It is a unique way (and strange to most), but it works; for peace is impossible without reconciliation.

Even as God identified Himself in Christ with humanity, so we, as Christians, are invited to align ourselves with God in His sufferings. We are challenged "to participate in the sufferings of God at the hands of a Godless world." (Bonhoeffer)

Christ says, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if any man hear my voice and open the door, I will come in . . . It is finally up to us whether or not we want God (Christ) to dwell among us. Is there room in your life for God?

(Dietrich Bonhoeffer was a Lutheran pastor in Germany who because of his opposition to the Nazi regime was imprisoned, and hanged just five days before the allied forces liberated the area.)

Alvin M. Petersen Campus Pastor, NLC Lutheran Student Foundation

One MANDIN

The University

Season's Greetings

in part from the use of

the idea-evaluation sys-

tem which had been de-

signed by an efficient San-

taland psychologist of the p o s t-Santiclus-Thorn-

dikeus period. The psy-chologist had proposed a system in w h i c h the su-

pervisor was to assign an

evaluation number from

one to nine to each idea

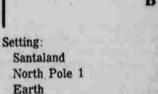
submitted by the elves, with the highest numbers

going to the best ideas. In

this way, the elves could

determine their relative

BY TOM EASON



1961 years after Christ

Compressed by the bristling commercial complex to the south, the Santaland & Far Northern Railroad and the sprawling Santaland Interstate, the Christmas IDEAS department was stuffed into a variety of sedate buildings which had been designed by efficient Santa-land architects of the Santiclus Victorious period. The purpose of the IDEAS department was to originate and develop new ideas designed to spread happiness and enlightenment throughout the world of mortals. In order to facilitate these develop-ments, the department had been divided into subdepartments such as the Engineering S.D., the Business S.D., and Law

However, all was not well in Santaland and as Santa (or Big Red as he was affectionately known in the IDEAS department) sat pondering, several problems entered his kindly reflections. The girl elves who volunteered to work in the IDEAS department often thought too much about the boy elves. The boy elves often thought too much a b o u t the girl elves and promo-tions to higher pay. Union elves spent a great deal of time trying to re-cruit new members and non-union elves spent a great deal of time trying to antagonize the unions. All of these problems were overshadowed by a production problem: The IDEAS department was not producing ideas to solve the problems of men. True, the elves were sometimes lazy and the supervisors often did not stimulate their minds, but Santa knew that the production problem stemmed

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progress in contributing to the efforts of the department. On paper, it was an efficient system.

The problem was, of course, that for many of the elves, the evaluation (Continued on Page 4)

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Letterip

House Officer Objects to BAIN To the Editor:

In regard to the letter submitted by BAINS-ites:

I was quite surprised to ne letter which was signed with the name of my house for two rea-

First, the opinion that s not an official policy of Senton house as was imlied; and the person who abmitted the letter had power to state that it

Secondly, I was not aware that it is the practice of the Daily Nebras-

kan to publish letters which appeared to be statements of house policy but which were not signed by an officer of the house. Sincerely, Rod Marshall

President of Benton House

Thanks to Staff

Dear Mr. Beatty: Many thanks to you and to your staff for letting the students and faculty know about the "Latin American Prize" and the Spanish Fellowship pro-

We hope to continue increasing our work and with your help, I am sure it will be successful.

Sincerely yours, Roberto Esquenazi-Mayo

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