

THE MESSAGE TO THE SHEPHERDS.

Beside their flocks the shepherds watched
That holy Christmas night,
When lo! the angel of the Lord
Shone on their dazzled sight.

"Fear not," he cried, "of joy and peace
Glad tidings do I bring,
In Bethlehem, a new-born babe,
Lies Christ, your heavenly King.

And this shall be a guiding sign
To you and nations all,
The holy Babe you there shall find,
Laid in a humble stall."

And suddenly the hosts of heaven
Shone on their wondering eyes,
And raised a song of holy praise
That echoed through the skies.

Then marvelled all the shepherds sore,
What was this wondrous thing,
To Bethlehem they took their way
And there they found their King.

THE CHRIST OF CHRISTMAS.

The Christ of Christmas came to earth
In simple, human guise;
'Twas but a Babe who from afar
Was sought by men most wise.
A star led them to where he lay,
In slumber deep and sweet;
Their royal gifts with deepest awe,
They laid before his feet.

The Christ of Christmas came to bring
Sweet peace to every heart;
Good will should reign where he is King,
While bitter thoughts depart.
New hope and joy he brought to earth,
That all by faith might know
His perfect way of truth and love,
And in his likeness grow.

O Christ of Christmas, fill our hearts
With faith and trust this day,
For we would follow where thy feet
Lead up the narrow way.
Oh! Grant us strength to bravely bear
The trials sent by thee,
To make us worthy of thy love
Through all eternity.

LITTLE LIGHTS.

(A recitation for eight little girls, each having a small unlighted colored candle in her hand. Have a large candle lighted on a table near by.)

Eight little candles all in a row,
Red, green, pink, yellow, blue and white,
Of what use are they I'd like to know,
'Till some one their wicks shall light.

They show how the world in darkness lay,
'Till Christ was born on Christmas day.
They show how our hearts will ever be,
'Till the light of life shines in you and me.

If we bring our souls to Jesus,
He will light them with his love,
That our little candles shining
May lead others up above.

(Here let each girl light her candle from the large one. All sing together, "Jesus loves me, this I know.")

Little lights we all would be,
Shining brightly, Lord, for thee,
May we ever show thy love,
Leading souls to heaven above.

There are thousands of dear little children
In heathen lands far, far away,
We'll lift up our shining candles,
That they may see Jesus today.

We'll clasp hands, a living link, forming
A chain of light, then they will see,
Leading out from the gloom and darkness,
O light of the world, unto thee.

"The light of the world is Jesus."

(All sing, "Jesus bids us shine.")

Children's Sermon**PUTTING GOD ALWAYS FIRST.**

By Rev. Stuart Nye Hutchison, D. D.

That in all things he might have the pre-eminence.—Colossians 1:18.

When God gave the children of Israel the laws by which they were to live He commanded them that they were to give Him the first of everything. The first bushel of wheat that came from the fields was to be given to Him. The first basket of apples or figs, the first ripe vegetables from the garden, the first lambs from the flock, the first flowers from their pretty gardens were to be His. He did this to teach them always to put Him first. There was nothing in all the world that they were to love and honor so much as God.

There was a little boy who had a puppy of which he was very fond. He loved this puppy more than anything else that he had. One day his mother was taken very ill. The barking of the little dog disturbed her, so he took him and shut him up in the barn. But he whined and cried worse than ever, and at last the little boy gave him away. When his mother heard about it she said to him, "I thought that you loved the puppy." The little boy said, "Yes, I do love him, but I love you more, and I thought that I had better get rid of him."

That little boy had learned a lesson that every boy ought to learn, to put mother before himself. But there is one thing that must always come first, and that is God. If there is something that we have, or that we are doing, that is disturbing God and making Him sad, we ought to get rid of it at once.

We ought to do this because God has given up so much for us.

One of the great heroes of the Revolutionary War was the Frenchman, General Lafayette. When he and General Washington parted at the close of the war Lafayette promised Washington that sometime he would come back and visit America. It was forty years after, when

he was more than seventy years old, when he came.

A fine reception was given in his honor, and a great many of the most prominent people of America were there. Among them came an old soldier in a worn Continental uniform. In his hand there was an old musket and over his shoulder was a small blanket, or a piece of a blanket.

When the old soldier reached the place where General Lafayette was standing he drew himself up and saluted like they used to do in the Revolutionary War. As Lafayette made the salute in return the tears came in his eyes. The old uniform, the musket, and the gray-haired soldier, made him think of many things that were dear to him in the past.

"Do you know me?" asked the soldier. He had thought that Lafayette would perhaps remember him.

"I cannot say that I do," was the reply of the general.

"Do you remember Valley Forge, General?"

"I shall never forget it," was the answer.

"One bitter cold night you were going the rounds at Valley Forge. You came on a sentinel without stockings, and with very thin clothing. He was slowly freezing to death. You took his gun and said to him, 'Go to my hut. There you will find stockings, a blanket and a fire. After warming yourself, bring the blanket to me. I will stand on guard while you are gone.'"

"The soldier obeyed. When he came back to his post you took the blanket and cut it in two and gave half to him and the other half you kept yourself. Here, General, is one half of that blanket, for I was the sentinel whose life you saved that night."

It was no wonder that he loved Lafayette. He had saved his life. That is why we love Jesus and ought always to put him first in our thoughts and life. He gave his life to save us from sin and death.

Norfolk, Va.

THE WORSHIPPERS.

When Jesus came to Bethlehem,
To Judah's captive land,
There came to worship at his bed
A wondering shepherd band.
I wish I'd been a shepherd then;
How swiftly had I sped,
Through Bethlehem's dark and silent street
Unto the cattle shed.
And then, when many waited by,
And stars were bright above,
I'd kneel by the infant Jesus then
And tell him of my love.

When Jesus came to Bethlehem
So many years ago,
The wise men journeyed from afar
To bow before him low.
Rich gifts they brought the new-born King
Of gold and spices rare.
I wish that I'd been one of them,
To kneel before him there.
Then all the treasures that I had
All gladly had I brought
To lay them down before the feet
Of Jesus whom I sought.

We cannot find in Bethlehem
Our new-born Saviour King,
Nor yet unto the manger bed
Can we our tribute bring.
But better gifts than frankincense,
Or myrrh, or even gold,
Can we unto the Saviour yield,
Messiah long foretold.
So unto him, who years ago
In manger cradle lay,
We'll give with joy our loving hearts
This happy Christmas day.

A CHRISTMAS SONG TO A GOOD OLD TUNE.

(Tune "Webb.")

I love the Christmas story,
Because I know 'tis true,
And though I've often heard it,
Yet it is always new.
It is a precious story,
It shows God's love to me,
The more I think about it
The more his love I see.

Then tell the Christmas story,
Oh! tell it now, tonight,
How Jesus came in glory
To fill the world with light.
Oh! let us sing about him,
With voices glad and free,
How on that blessed Christmas
He came to you and me.

A LITTLE BOY'S GIFT.

"I'm such a little boy," he said,
And heaven seems so high,
I wonder if the Lord can hear
My voice up in the sky!

I'd like to thank Him for the Gift
He sent on Christmas day,
That no one in the whole world
Can ever take away.

And I have something, too, for Him,
Our Father up above,
It is my heart—on Christmas day
I'll give it with my love.