

On Earth Peace, Good Will Toward Men

At the end of another year, we remember—and we plan!

Whatever your motivation for enduring the trappings of the Christmas Season, it would be a mistake to miss the opportunity for gift-giving. Dickens' Scrooge is an excellent metaphor for the spirit in each of us that illustrates, quite brilliantly, the tendency to withhold more than is meet. Camouflaged behind a disdain for giving people that which they don't deserve is a spirit of supremacy that each one of us strives, often quite desperately, to restrain. By contrast, Dickens' Tiny Tim illustrates beautifully the spirit of wishing upon others that which the well-wisher does not seemingly possess: the blessing of God. Scrooge was able to change things with his goods; Tiny Tim was able to do exactly the same with his few words.

Fame and fortune are fickle friends and often come nowhere near the home of most of us. So we find ourselves doing the best we can with what little we've got. A mother once said to her son, "No one can afford to have children; you just find a way to get by once they arrive." And therein lays the germ of a much bigger truth, that often we simply have more than we need, and, with careful planning, wouldn't be hurt a bit by sharing.

Through the years our ministry has adopted and maintained a spirit of giving. For those of you who know how we function it will come as no surprise to learn that we have given away more publications



than we will ever sell—going on 40 million, now. And, to a very large *realistic* degree, that suits us just fine. Most of the people to whom we minister really have no idea how much danger they are in. Remember the story of the Titanic? It was a fine, crisp evening. Dinner was ready and everyone but the lookout was safely situated somewhere warm. Well, you know the rest of the story; within two hours, the whole pile of metal was two miles below the surface. And that's the way most of us navigate through life. We carefully avoid the known dangers, while always en route to the disaster lurking just around the corner.

Our jobs here in the office take on a two-fold measure. On the one hand we go out and minister to the people who live in the real world; those who perhaps deal with very real hopelessness on a daily basis. And on the other hand we attempt to minister to those who *come to us*. Never a day goes by without a call from more than one person dealing with a crisis of some kind; a life-threatening illness; a family grief; perhaps a crisis of faith.

Right here, imagine the worst thing that's happening in *your* life, and realize that this is the kind of real-life tragedy we try to help people through—every day.

Often on the other end of the line is someone dealing with a question of Bible understanding, and we may be a temporary sounding board for an idea to be bounced off of. The occasional Conspiracy Theory floats in and we might help a person determine if this idea is worth holding on to, or if they should dig a little deeper. We don't know everything, but we do hear stuff that's floating around out there, and we can often politely point people in a direction where they can find out more.

This year has seen many trials and troubles of every kind and to every people. We can't be *everywhere*, for *everyone*, but those of you who have called or written in can be assured that we are here *for you*, and we *have* called your name in prayer; we have wept with and for you. Again and again we have uttered those words on your behalf, "God bless us, everyone."

Your Mission World Family

My gift enclosed—Keep it up!

IBE Inc. • PO Box 352 • Jemison, AL 35085 • USA

Please make checks
payable to **Mission World**.
All gifts are tax-deductible.

Accept my gift of

\$

Keep up the good work!

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone Cell Home Work Email Address _____

Sign me up for the *free* Enews Service (email address required).

Card # Expires: ____/____/____ Security Code: _____

