

"LIGHT FOR THE BURNED OUT"

DEC. 28, '86

THAT IS THE POINT. WE MAY GO THROUGH PERIODS OF DIMINISHED OR ALMOST EXTINGUISHED FAITH BUT IF WE HAVE EVER KNOWN THE LIGHT OF CHRIST WE MUST KNOW THAT, EVEN WHEN THE DARKNESS FALLS WE ARE NOT GOING TO REMAIN IN IT. WHEN MARTIN LUTHER FELT HIMSELF BURNED OUT IN THE REFORMATION STRUGGLE HE USED TO SHOUT: "BAPTIZATUS SUM I HAVE BEEN BAPTIZED" AND LAUNCH HIMSELF AGAIN TOWARDS THE LIGHT OF CHRIST. THE PROMISE IS SURE AND IS GIVEN TO EACH ONE OF US WHO BELIEVES IN CHRIST; WE SHALL NOT REMAIN IN DARKNESS.

ONE CAN BE IN DARKNESS. SOMEONE HERE MAY BE IN DARKNESS RIGHT NOW BURNED OUT, WONDERING IF IT'S ANY USE HANGING ON TO THINGS LIKE PRAYER AND WORSHIP. WHEN I READ AGAIN THE STORY OF THE WISE MEN I WONDERED IF ONE OF THEM MIGHT NOT HAVE BEEN BURNED OUT BY THE TIME HE MADE IT TO BETHLEHEM. BUT HE KEPT GOING HELPED BY HIS FRIENDS TOWARDS THE LIGHT HE COULD NOT SEE. THIS IS THE EPIPHANY PROMISE, OFFERED TO US NOW IN WORD AND SACRAMENT: "I HAVE COME AS LIGHT INTO THE WORLD, THAT WHOEVER BELIEVES IN ME MAY NOT REMAIN IN DARKNESS."