

HOPE OF THE WORLD



Newspaper headlines and the television news are full of the terrible things happening in our country and in the world! And at school, we've been studying civilizations that once were great and powerful — but now are nothing but crumbling ruins!

To persons without Christ, the world must seem quite “hopeless.” That's why the meaning of this hymn, “Hope of the World,” will seem very important to us. The text, written by Georgia Harkness, reminds us that through Christ, God's plans have been working since before the foundations of our world were established and will continue to exist far beyond the measure of our vision.

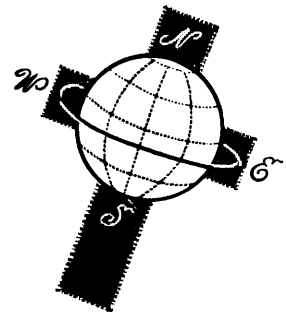
Since it is through all of us that Christ is brought into confrontation with the world's problems, what do you suppose Jesus would do in response to these headlines from today's papers:

“WOMAN SLAIN IN STREET”
“DROP-OUTS INCREASE”
“POVERTY INCREASES”
“DIVORCE RATE RISES”
“WAR IN EAST CONTINUES”
“THREAT OF GASOLINE RATIONING”
“ENERGY CRISIS OVERWHELMING”

Until we are older, we cannot actively cope with some of these problems as Christ would, but we can begin now to prepare ourselves to make the commitment in the words of the 4th stanza:

“Take thou our lives and use them as thou wilt.”

H. B. Phillips in his book, *New Testament Christianity*, tells the story of a little angel looking down at earth, seeing the darkness and destruction and waste everywhere. But in the midst of the darkness, the angel saw little twinkles of light — here and there all over the world — where God's purpose and presence was alive and working inside of a person, illuminating the darkness with its light. You and I can be these twinkles of light . . . until someday, we may help to . . . “heal earth's wounds and end her bitter strife.”



The tune of this text, written by one of our fine present-day Christian musicians, V. Earle Copes, seems to express with its upward movement, the meaning of the text. Listen to the syncopated effect of the quarter rest at the beginning of the 2nd, 3rd and 4th lines. Do you feel this adds even more vitality to the tune? Are any two lines of the hymn tune identical? In what ways is an ABCD tune more interesting than one built upon an AABA or ABAB pattern? In what way might it be more difficult for a congregation to learn?

Why not experiment with syncopation by adding rests and delaying accented beats in some other tunes you know or make up? Even better, why not see if you can think of words as vital as, “Hope of the World!”