Funeral Sermon
Mr. Irving Yost
Died - Dec. 29, 1960
Buried - Jan. 1, 1961

Rev. Carl F. Thrun

IN NOMINE JESU

St. Luke 2: 29-31 Lord, now lettest Thou thy servant depart in peace, according to Thy Word: For mine yees have seen thy salvation, which Thou hast prepared before the face of all people.

Our God, our Help in ages past,
Our Hope for years to come,
Be Thou our Guard while troubles last
And our eternal Home!

What a way to begin a New Year! — in a funeral home beside the casket of a loved one! Happy New Year, they say, but somehow the words sound dull and empty now. Out there the days ahead seem dark, and dismal, and forlorn. Memories of former days and former joys and former dreams cause us to weep. We weep for ourselves, because we loved him and because we will miss him. The words of Solomon come to mind: Vanity of vanities, saith the Preacher, vanity of vanities; all is vanity. Like Job we have come head on with the grim reality of death and loss, and we cry out: Man is born to trouble as the sparks fly upward.

This might have been all that life could offer to us - a few short years of earthly existence, a few dreams, many troubles and then -- death. This casket might have been the end. But you and I know differently. We are still living under the shadow of Bethlehem, and the manger, and the message of the angel: Unto you is born... a Savior! Happy New Year, they say, and down deep in our hearts we know it will be true. God makes it true. This Child of Christmas is Savior, and He is the Lord of Life, and His is the Bringer of real happiness to all who receive Him still. The early Christians caught this spirit of His joy and triumph in the Christ Child. They would not celebrate the birthdays of their friends but the anniversary of their death; for they said the death day of a Christian is really his birthday, since he is born into that life which is true and abiding.

God in His mercy permitted our departed brother to celebrate once more the great festival of Christ's birth. Once more he heard the Story of how God became man for us and for our salvation; and he knew that this Child had come to be the Mediator between the sinner and his God. There IS "peace on earth" now, because this Child is the Bringer of salvation, the Divine Go-Between between the righteous wrath of a Holy God and a lost world of sinful men. Because of this Child the terrible warfare

between the Thrice Holy and the unholy ~~was~~ is ever, and there IS peace. This deep, unfathomable peace Mr. Yost knew, and this peace he had. On Christmas Eve Day it was my privilege to give him the Lord's Supper, where Christ came to him again unde the lowly bread and wine with the great gift of Himself. Once more the peace of the blessed Upper Room was repeated, where, over the words, "This is My body - this is My blood" -- there hung the tones of angel voices singing, "Behold I bring you good tidings of great joy which shall be to all people." "To all people" and, therefore, also to him - now - in a very special sense.

Thank God for it! - Mr Yost knew his Savior, believed that He had come into the World to be his Redeemer, suffer on Calvary's Cross for his sins. He trusted in Christ's promise: I am the Resurrection and the Life; he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live; he clung to the divine declaration: he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved. And so he left this life with perfect peace of mind and heart. His parting prayer might well have been those of aged Simeon, when he saw the Xp. Child for the first time!: Lord, now lettest Thou thy servant depart in peace, according to Thy Word: For mine eyes have seen thy salvation, which Thou hast prepared before the face of all people.

Happy New Year, they say, and for our departed loved one it is true in a very wonderful way. He has entered into the joy of his Lord - forever to be with Christ, forever to live in the celestial mansions of heaven. Is not this the real glory of Christmas - that Christ has come and that He has abolished death & brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel? Surely the sacred writer has said it well: Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth! Think about that, and let this be a comfort to you in your bereavement. For him it is a blessed New Year, a New Year of unending happiness and joy -- eternally to be with Jesus, never to know another agony, never to shed another tear, never to be tortured by another pain, but always to be blessed by Heaven's unspeakable bliss, always to live in radiance and joy with the white-robed saints and all the angel hosts, always to behold the Savior face to face. There is nothing beyond that. There is nothing more important than

that.

As you now go out to face the unknown future, I hope with all my heart that with old Simeon and with Mr. Yost you will take the Christ-Child with you. Take Him with all that He has come to give you - His peace, His forgiveness, His love, His life. Live for Him now, and then die in Him. And then death will be for you, too, only the beginning - a great and wonderful beginning. It will not be very long - only a little while - and we who have lived by this faith of the Son of God will be reunited with our departed brother in heaven. Say it to yourself now with all the joy and confidence and hope that Christ alone can give: What a way to begin a New Year! Pray it to yourself each day, as you look upon the Christ Child as He lies nestled in the cradle of your heart: Lord, now lettest Thou thy servant depart in peace, according to Thy Word: For mine eyes have seen Thy salvation, which Thou hast prepared before the face of all people.

Amen.