

With this special issue LIFE breaks a precedent,  
combining in one magazine the last issue of 1955  
with the first of 1956. The subject is Christianity.

The basic tenets and history of Christianity (Part

# THE TESTIMONY OF

The President of the U.S., a churchgoing Presbyterian who is shown (right) attending a Memorial Day service last May, speaks with deep fervor and warm conviction on religious matters. More than 50 of his public speeches in the past decade have stressed religion's central significance to all mankind. So the words of Dwight David Eisenhower are particularly apt as an introduction to this special issue of LIFE devoted to Christianity in the U.S. and throughout the world. The following compilation is drawn from seven different addresses which Dwight Eisenhower has delivered since 1946. The President made four of these seven speeches in 1955.

It was part of the privilege into which I was born that my home was a religious home. My father and mother believed that "the fear of God is the beginning of wisdom." The Bible was a daily and vital influence in their lives. They tried their best to instill its truths and its faith into their six sons.

Whence did we come? Why are we here? What is the true reason for our existence? And where are we going? For all of this, in the answers, we have the assistance—we have the faith—of the Christian ethic, or of our own particular religious convictions. In time of test or trial, we instinctively turn to God for new

courage and peace of mind. Faith is our surest strength, our greatest resource.

Application of Christianity to everyday affairs is the only practical hope of the world. The result will be fresh vigor in the international effort to build a firm and just peace within the brotherhood of men under the fatherhood of God. Our forefathers proved that only a people strong in godliness is a people strong enough to overcome tyranny and make themselves and others free. Today it is ours to prove that our own faith, perpetually renewed, is equal to the challenge of today's tyrants. At issue is the true nature of man. Either man is the creature whom the Psalmist described as "a little lower than the angels" or man is a soulless animated machine.

The path we travel is narrow and long—beset with many dangers. Each day we must ask that Almighty God will set and keep his protecting hand over us so that we may pass on to those who come after us the heritage of a free people, secure in their God-given rights and in full control of a government dedicated to the preservation of those rights.

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**LIFE**



**SPECIAL ISSUE: CHRISTIANITY**

**35 CENTS**

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1955  
EVERETT L. MOBERG  
TAYLORS FALLS, MINN.  
60 28581 26 1305 1502  
TAYLOR \$17.95  
1955