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DOES it look as if your Christmas this year would be a grim Christmas? Have you a son, a brother, a husband in the service who will be somewhere, you don't even know where, on Christmas Day? Is it going to be hard for you this year to think of the Babe of Bethlehem as the Prince of Peace?

Well, it will not be a gay season for any of us. Only an extremely light-minded person can be jolly when the entire world is suffering. But Christmas this year can be a triumphant season for us. Yes, and we can heartily rejoice, too.

To understand how 1942's Christmas can be exultant for us, we should begin by going back in thought some two thousand years, back to the time when the star led the Wise Men to Bethlehem.

The story of the Wise Men enshrines one of the great turning points in history. The human race stood, right then, between two worlds: one world was dead, the other was waiting to be born. A few people, and really only a very few, caught the new vision when it was born. Those people understood that it was only on the surface that the problems of that day presented themselves in terms of wars and politics. They knew that what they were really faced with was a crisis in the moral history of the human race.

They faced the issue with great courage and with joyful hearts. "Rejoice in the Lord always, and again I say, Rejoice." Do you realize that those words were written by Paul the Apostle when he was in prison awaiting trial before the courts of a totalitarian state? In the face of persecution, in the midst of suffering, with the whole world against them, those early Christian men and women of vision could actually rejoice.

This same Paul wrote, "The whole world groaneth and travaileth in pain together." And he also wrote, "When these things begin to come to pass, then look up, lift up your heads." "These things" to which he was referring were wars and rumors of wars and nation fighting against nation.

How could that man rejoice and how could he call upon other Christians, in the midst of suffering, to lift up their heads? Was he a blind optimist?

Paul was no blind optimist. Not at all. He possessed a great truth—the great truth

A TRIUMPHANT CHRISTMAS

BY HARRY G. POST

One of the most popular articles ever published in Household was Harry G. Post's "Will You Try Prayer?" in the September issue. Now this thoughtful author brings us a Christmas message. Back of it is wide knowledge of history and religion. But the article is a simple statement of truths which every reader will want to take to heart. Here is guidance, even inspiration, in a troubled time.

that because God is good, evil is self-destructive. He lived in a period of historical catastrophe, and he knew that times of historical catastrophe are the travail pains of a new age. He could rejoice because he knew that when the forces of evil seem most to threaten the order of

God's will, new spiritual energies are called forth.

Why all this talk about Paul and his ideas? Does it mean that we should turn back wistfully toward the primitive age of Christianity or to some imaginary period when faith was clear and strong?

No, indeed. As a matter of fact, there isn't any Christian Golden Age to turn back to. When people make the commonplace remark, "Look at the mess the world is in today after all these years of Christianity," they are misguided in their judgment. We have not had Christianity yet. Since Christ was born in Bethlehem, there have been a few souls in every generation that have understood what Paul and a few others understood in Paul's generation.

No, we are not looking backward, except as we look back, with rejoicing, to the day when Christ came into the world. The call of our time is forward to Christianity.

We are faced, as the people of old in the days of the Magi were faced, with a crisis in the moral history of the human race. All the gains of civilization in its labors of hundreds of years are in danger of being lost. What we must realize is that the great conflict which is going on is not simply between one group of powers and another. That is too simple altogether. The real conflict is in the soul of each one of us.

We are back again in the spiritual climate in which [Continued on Page 27]

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