

Reminiscence on "PROMISES" - Bruce Lister

Both my parents came from strong Methodist families – my Mother's from New York, and my Father's also from New York, but by way of Iowa. As a result, my sister and I were well exposed early on to Methodist thinking, including keeping promises.

After I became 10 years old, my folks had a discussion with our very popular, Pastor, Rev. William Stewart, on the possibility of my becoming a Church member. He thought it was a good idea, but stressed that as a member of the Confirmation Class, I would be required to attend ALL regular Church services, as well as ALL class meetings. I promised.

In those days (ca. 1930's), the class met weekly from early fall until Confirmation Day on Palm Sunday, six months later. Up until Christmas time, I was able to keep my attendance promise with no trouble. However, there was a Christmas Dawn service at 6:00 am. When 5:00 am came around I looked out the window. Over a foot of snow had fallen overnight and no plows had started to clear the roads. My first reaction was "Great, I can stay home and open all my gifts." My Father's reaction was immediate: "You are not sick and you promised to attend! We can walk and I'll be with you." So off we went, a mile each way, through the snow drifts. A promise is a promise.