

The Presbyterian
GUARDIAN

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By EDWARD WYBENGA

The Birth of John Foretold
Luke 1:5-25

Luke's narrative begins with a report of the prediction of the birth of John the Baptist. It happened in this way. While Zacharias, the priest, was serving his turn at the temple, burning incense and offering prayers for the people, an angel of the Lord appeared to him with the glad announcement that a son would be born to him and his wife, Elisabeth.

This son was to be a remarkable person. His name was to be called John, meaning "Jehovah's gracious gift." He was to be a Nazarite or "separated one," completely dedicated to the service of God and filled with the Divine Spirit. To symbolize this complete dedication he was to take the vow of total abstinence from wine or strong drink (cp. Num. 6:1-3). He was to come "in the spirit and power of Elijah," with the same fearless proclamation of the claims of God. He was to turn the people to God by the way of repentance. He was to prepare the people of Israel for the coming of the Messiah, long foretold.

Such was the message of the angel to Zacharias as he served in the temple at the altar of incense. The presence of the angel startled the old man; the news stunned him. He could not bring himself to believe it. After all, both he and his wife were advanced in age far beyond the point where the prospect of children was possible. All through their productive years they had hoped and prayed for the birth of a son. Among the Jews a childless marriage was considered a mark of the Divine displeasure; and furthermore, every Jewish woman hoped that in the providence of God she might become the mother of the promised Messiah. Especially for these two reasons, and also for the joy that children bring to the home, Elisabeth and Zacharias had prayed earnestly to

God for the fulfillment of their hopes.

However, it seemed that God had other intentions. The time now was long past when such hopes could be realized. Yet it was just at this time that the angel came with the glad announcement of the birth of John! God often has glad surprises for his people at unexpected times and in unlikely places.

We can understand that it was difficult for the priest to believe the angel's message, but God does not approve of our unbelief no matter how impossible a thing may seem. God expects and demands an unreserved faith in his almighty power and in the truth of his promises. Therefore, as a chastisement for his unbelief, and as a sign of the sure fulfillment of the angel's announcement, the priest was smitten with dumbness until the birth of the promised son. Zacharias *would not* at once thank and praise the Lord for the promise; *now he could not* praise the Lord until the fulfillment of the promise. Faith alone causes the heart to sing, for faith gives rise to hope, and hope to assurance.

The Annunciation to Mary
Luke 1:26-38

If the old priest in the temple had reasons to be surprised and perplexed at the appearance of an angel of the Lord, and at his announcement of the birth of what may be considered a miracle-child, Mary had even greater cause for surprise and perplexity when that same angel came to her with an even more astounding announcement. She, an unmarried woman and a virgin, was to be a mother; and her son was to be greater than the greatest of men. He was to be the Saviour of the world. He was to be a sovereign king over an eternal kingdom. He was to be the very Son of God, come in human flesh! Is it any wonder that Mary was greatly troubled and perplexed in her mind?

The angel began by saying: "Hail,

thou that art highly favored; the Lord is with thee!" Indeed, Mary was favored above all women in that God had chosen her to give birth to the promised Messiah so long foretold. This salutation has been wrongly translated in the Latin Vulgate to read: "thou that art full of grace." Mary was thus said to be a reservoir of Divine grace which she had the power to dispense upon others. This is the basis of the worship of Mary, seeking her blessing, and offering prayers to her. This has led to the exaltation of Mary as "Queen of Heaven," and has resulted in all the evils of Mariolatry, causing the very Saviour of the world to be eclipsed in importance by a mortal human being, who herself needed to be saved by this only Saviour of sinners. The correct rendering is: "thou that art highly favored." Mary was not the source but the recipient of grace. She had no power to give grace to others but she was to receive an abundance of grace from God, which would fit her to be the mother of the Saviour.

Going on with the narrative before us, we are not surprised at Mary's question: "How shall this be?" In explanation of it the angel declared that this would be a work of God unlike any other work, "for with God nothing shall be impossible." This was explanation enough for Mary. Her answer is one of the most sublime expressions of submission and faith: "Behold, the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word." This is the secret of a happy life, and a quiet and restful spirit — complete submission to the will of God, and absolute trust in the love and power of God!

Having heard the glad announcement of the angel that she would be honored as the mother of Jesus, and having received the information that Elisabeth was also to be a mother, Mary can contain herself no longer. She must break the news about her-

self, and she must share the gladness of Elisabeth. Accordingly, alone and with great haste she covers the distance between Nazareth and Hebron, to the south, a journey of more than a hundred miles; and abruptly she enters the home of Elisabeth. It was a time of glad surprises and high feelings when the two cousins met. Elisabeth, though joyous about her own happy condition, humbly depreciates herself in the presence of one upon whom the Lord would confer even greater honors.

The Magnificat
Luke 1:39-56

And now Mary pours out her soul in praise and thanksgiving to God. She begins by saying: "My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour!" Note that Mary acknowledged the fact that she herself needed a Saviour. Mary did not believe in her own immaculate conception as attributed to her by an erring Church. Had she been conceived and born without sin, she would have had no need of a Saviour.

Mary's Song throughout has the ring of gladness in it. She praises God for his marvelous works. She thanks God for bestowing upon her, a poor and obscure maiden, the highest of honors. She takes note of the fact that it is God's way to exalt the lowly and to humble the proud. She rejoices that through her, salvation will be brought to the world. Her song closes with a reference to the faithfulness of God in keeping his ancient promises to the Hebrew fathers.

Should not we upon whom the blessings of salvation have come, should not we join with Mary in an ascription of praise to our God? Glory to his name!

And Mary said, My soul doth magnify
the Lord,
And my spirit hath rejoiced in God
my Saviour.
For he hath regarded the low estate
of his handmaiden:
For, behold, from henceforth all gen-
erations shall call me blessed.
For he that is mighty hath done to
me great things;
And holy is his name.
And his mercy is on them that fear
him from generation to generation.
(from Luke 1)

God's Scale of Values

By JOHN C. RANKIN

Human beings have a way of putting price-tags on things. We are ever at the business of making evaluations. We appraise the worth both of persons and things. Values are important to us. Furthermore it must be said that what we *are* in our hearts has everything to do with our judgments of quality and worth.

Persons are said to be good or bad, likable or unlikable. Human thoughts and ways are said to be true or false, right or wrong and good or evil. These evaluations, however, may in themselves be true or false, right or wrong and good or evil. It all depends on the individual capacity for the formation of such judgments. But all the time the actual values are there — irrespective of our recognition or non-recognition, appreciation or non-appreciation of them.

Now God himself, in a way of speaking, is the great Evaluator. God, it may be said, knows his own worth, his own greatness and glory. He fully appreciates the worth of his own matchless grace in the accomplishment of our salvation unto life through Jesus Christ.

God also knows the worth of all his works of creation. He knows what all persons and things are worth. He knows the value of persons in comparison to that of things; what one person and one kind of person is worth in comparison with another; and what one thing is worth as compared with another. And to his praise it should be said that in and through and by his Word he once and for all has established all the facts as to the inherent value, the intrinsic worth, of all persons and things.

The Bible the Norm

We see this in the teaching of the Bible as a whole, and especially in the teachings of Jesus as recorded in the Scriptures. Let us attend to some of God's own value-judgments as set forth in his own holy Word.

All evaluation involves a scale of values. One thing is better, worth more than another; one person dearer than another. And the Bible teaches that God himself is the highest good.

David in speaking of the Lord, says, "Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee" (Ps. 73:25, 26); "Thy loving kindness is better than life" (Ps. 63:3).

We also read: "One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord, and to inquire in his temple" (Ps. 27:4). And again: "A day in thy courts is better than a thousand. I had rather be a door-keeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness" (Ps. 84:10).

Other Old Testament references that may be cited have to do with Jacob and Esau and their respective estimates of the birthright (Gen. 25:27-34); Samuel versus Saul on obedience over against sacrifice (I Sam. 15:22, 23); David's evaluation of the law of the Lord (Ps. 19:10); and Solomon's judgment concerning wisdom (Prov. 4:7 and 3:15).

Paul's Perspective

Now let us turn to the writings of Paul. "But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea, doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ . . ." (Phil. 3:7-11). And again: "Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal" (II Cor. 4:16-18).

Paul, like Moses, "lived as seeing him who is invisible," and as being once for all committed to the invisible things of the Spirit. Things and persons have their values, but the highest values pertain to the one supreme, the infinite and perfect Being, the one only living and real God.

Finally let us attend to some of Jesus' own evaluations in the exercise

"Ye are of more value than many sparrows."

of his judgment and the application of his standards of worth.

Jesus' Pointed Appraisals

"How much better is a man than a sheep" (Mt. 12:12), he said. "Ye are of more value than many sparrows" (Mt. 10:31). "Behold the fowls of the air . . . Are ye not much better than they?" (Mt. 6:26). Note his teaching about "treasures in heaven" as compared with "treasures on earth" (Mt. 6:19-21); and his words about the importance of the well-being of the soul as compared with that of the body (Mt. 10:28-31).

Again we read, Is not the life more than meat even as the body is more than raiment (Mt. 6:25, paraphrased)? And this quotation from Deuteronomy: "Man shall not live by bread alone but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God" (Mt. 4:4). "Take heed and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth" (Luke 12:15); "It is more blessed to give than to receive" (Act 20:35).

And, "What is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" (Mt. 16:26). And yet again his word concerning God's evaluations versus ours: "That which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God" (Luke 16:13-15).

In Matthew 16:26 we have his evaluation of the salvation of the individual soul of man in contrast with his damnation. In this connection we have his pronouncements on the worthlessness of the impenitent. In three out of twenty-four chapters of just one of the four Gospels we have the following: The impenitent are to be cast into hell, denied in the presence of the angels, brought into account and found wanting (Luke 12:5, 9 and 16-21). They are to be cut off from the presence of the Lord, beaten or scourged according to their true deserts, and made to answer to the strictest demands of the law and the justice of God for their misspent and wasted lives (Luke 12:46, 47, 48, 58 and 59).

Luke 13:3 and 5 tell how they are brought to sudden, unexpected and irreparable doom; 6-9, denied admit-

tance to and driven away from the house of God; Luke 14:24, forever barred from the rich bounties of God's table; and verse 35, cast out as things of no worth. Compare Matthew 5:13: "It is thenceforth *good for nothing* but to be cast out and trodden under foot of men."

Doom of the Impenitent

Here we see God's own adverse appraisal of the souls of the wicked as expressed in the light of his final disposition of them. Their end, in brief, is "Gehenna"; their future state is compared to the city's reeking dump — Jesus' word for the final refuse heap of the impenitent, unbelieving souls of men.

Other notable evaluations of the

Lord are as follows: "Seek ye first the kingdom of God," "Mary hath chosen that good part," and "Rather rejoice because your names are written in heaven" (Mt. 6:33; Luke 10:38-42; Luke 10:17). Expressive of his supreme evaluation of man's fellowship with God: "He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me; and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him" (John 14:15-24).

These instances cited, are, of course, only samples. The same clear, final, perfect expression of right and true appraisal is all-pervasive in the Bible's teaching, in all of which there is complete correction of the perverse and perverted evaluations of sinful men. It is only by knowing and believing what God has said that we can get our values straight.

THE BIBLE FOR OUR TIMES

"The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handiwork" (PSALM 19:1).

THE other day I paused for a moment captured by the beauty of a stand of stately elms thrown up against the background of fleecy white clouds in a bright blue sky. It was a refreshing pause in the midst of a day's busy activities. Perhaps you have a favorite recollection of an impression of the beauty of God's creation. Such experiences are, for the one who has eyes to see, a vivid reminder of an all-powerful God, a God of wonder and beauty.

Sinful man has done his best to mar and obscure the handiwork of the Creator. But he has not been able to efface completely the loveliness of that of which God, when He had finished it, said, "It is very good." Man cannot destroy the exquisiteness of a summer rose. He cannot deny the overpowering effect of a flaming sunset. For God speaks in His creation and the puny creature cannot completely drown out the voice of Almighty God.

We may ask, however, why it is that some either do not hear the voice of God in creation, or else receive at best a distorted impression of the truth that is conveyed. Some deny outright the testimony of the Psalmist. Others say that it may be true but they are not at all sure. Why this blindness to something that is seen so clearly by so many?

The Apostle Paul gives us the scriptural answer to this question when he says of rebellious humankind, "When they knew God, they glorified Him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools" (Rom. 1:21, 22).

This same writer gives a hint, on the other hand, as to how we come to have the wisdom of God, when he says, "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him. But God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God" (I Cor. 2:9, 10).

RALPH E. CLOUGH

Why Are We Opposed to the NCC ?

PART 2

By ROBERT L. VINING

In his first article Mr. Vining pointed out that the basic criticism of the National Council of Churches is in the realm of doctrine. Its brief doctrinal statement is so vague as to be open to ambiguous interpretation. The organization is dominated by liberals and exalts liberals in places of leadership. Its stated views are frequently at variance with the historic Christian faith.

Conservative Christians are also opposed to the NCC because of its manifestations of what we believe to be an unscriptural pacifism, socialism and softness on Communism. It often makes pronouncements on these and other subjects apart from or even in contradiction to Biblical principles.

The old Federal Council of Churches had a long record in support of pacifism and that record has been continued in the NCC. Dr. Walter Van Kirk, who served the Federal Council for many years as Secretary of the Department of International Justice, wrote *Religion Renounces War* in 1934. The book was thoroughly and enthusiastically pacifist in content.

Pacifism

Three of the denominations in the constituency of the NCC are officially pacifist in their position. On November 28, 1951, the NCC issued a statement regarding International Regulation and Reduction of Armaments. On January 30, 1952 it issued a statement opposing Universal Military Training. In the 1954 Biennial Report of the NCC there is quoted another statement, "The churches in every land have a special responsibility to further the achievement of universal disarmament and the constructive use of atomic power. We believe that the common people everywhere want peace and the churches under God should be their voice" (p. 224). At the 1957 General Assembly of the NCC the incoming President, Dr. Edwin T. Dahlberg, gave voice to his pacifism: "We are faced now with chemical and mechanical destruction on such a colossal scale that nothing

more of the world may be left than a radioactive ash heap. The church is therefore charged with the responsibility of awakening public opinion to the utter folly and futility of spending forty billions of dollars on a system of defense that never in the world can defend us." Dr. Dahlberg advocates removing certain causes of war.

At the Fifth World Order Study Conference called by the NCC, meeting in Cleveland in late 1958, resolutions were adopted that shocked the nation. Section II of the Study Conference declared its non-support of the concept of nuclear retaliation as well as of preventive war; favored a proposal to abolish military conscription and allow the Selective Service System to lapse in 1960; urged more U. S. initiative in effecting international arms inspection and control; desired that the U. S. propose a comprehensive disarmament plan and extend suspension of nuclear tests, even if unilaterally.

In the face of all this pacifism we must not forget that Communism dominates a considerable amount of the land space in Asia and Europe and, moreover, aspires to world domination. Communism does not recognize the existence of God but rather denies His being. Hence, it is a system without moral standards and its word cannot be trusted. Military strength is the only power which Communism respects and we must remain strong as a nation. We do not bear the sword in vain in an evil world. We, too, could wish that the billions spent for defense might be spent in some more productive way but so long as godless Communism controls Russia and China we must be ever vigilant.

Socialism

The NCC, like the old Federal Council, tends to support socialism. Capitalism is abhorred and the profit motive berated. One of the fathers of the social gospel movement in this country was Walter Rauschenbusch. In *A Theology For The Social Gospel* he wrote, "If we can trust the Bible, God is against capitalism, its methods, spirit, and results." In a section on the Kingdom of God he said, "This involves the redemption of society from private property in the natural resources of the earth, and from any condition in industry which makes monopoly profits possible." As a young man the current President of the NCC, Dr. Dahlberg, served under Dr. Rauschenbusch as his private secretary, and was apparently influenced by him.

Dr. Clyde W. Taylor, secretary of public affairs for the National Association of Evangelicals, has observed: "Evangelicals are generally inclined to accept a just capitalism as the most workable modus vivendi in the social order of this world, whereas many liberal churchmen are committed to the principles of socialism. Evangelicals believe that the redemptive claims of Jesus Christ can only find relevance to the human situation within the individual context first, whereas liberal Christianity makes its attempt to 'redeem the social order' apart from individual regeneration.

"Within this context it can be seen why certain liberal churchmen have frequently called for social revolution. While it may be true that they have not adopted the Marxist-Lenin phase of socialism, there has been a tendency to promote a 'social' gospel which has been related at points to the (ideological) objectives of Com-

But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil (Romans 13:4).

munism" (*Presbyterian Journal*, March 30, 1960).

Soon after the NCC was formed a National Lay Committee was established. It rendered valuable service in raising money for the NCC but it soon found itself out of harmony with many of the policies and practices of the organization. This national Lay Committee was not renewed. Its chairman, J. Howard Pew, stated in his report, "The members of the Lay Committee believed, and so stated, that the political adventures of the National Council in the fields of economic and political controversy would seriously hinder and not further Christian leadership in the pressing fields of evangelism, fellowship and education. It appears that the National Council could find no room for opposition to the philosophies and practices carried over from the old Federal Council" (*ibid.*, March 11, 1959).

In an article, "Why Is NCC Prestige Sagging?", in *Christianity Today*, February 2, 1959, occurs this significant sentence, "The fact that church pronouncements in the politico-economic realm repeatedly have tilted to the left—advancing the cause of government controls, weakening free enterprise tradition, and enlarging government paternalism and the welfare state—has been a mounting source of complaint."

Softness on Communism

One of the chief criticisms of the NCC in recent years has been its softness on Communism. The NCC, of course, denies this, but the facts belie the denial. We have, indeed, noted this sentence in the 1954 Biennial Report of the NCC in a Message to the Churches, "We reject communism because of its atheism, its disregard of the rights of the individual, its misunderstanding of the nature of man and of society, and its inherent tyranny." We heartily wish that the attitude of some influential persons and the actions of the NCC were in full harmony with this statement.

One of the most startling evidences of the National Council's softness on Communism was the 5,000 word Message to the Churches adopted by the Fifth World Order Study Conference called by the National Council in late 1958. This message called for U. S. recognition of Communist China and for the admission of Communist

China to the U. N. There were 600 delegates to this Study Conference held in Cleveland. The findings of this Conference were calculated to serve as valuable source material for a \$35,000,000 ecumenical peace offensive scheduled June, 1959 to June, 1960, to be held in the 144,000 member churches of the National Council.

Reaction to this World Order Study Conference was swift and largely critical. Many Protestants were filled with indignation. Both the National Association of Evangelicals and the American Council of Christian Churches issued sharp reproofs. Even within the National Council circles criticism of the delegates' action ran heavy.

Although the NCC General Board maintained that the Study Conference spoke only for itself, it defended the Conference's right to frame a position on these issues, did not repudiate its message, and some officers expressed private and even public approval of the action.

This Conference merely illustrates the tendency of the NCC frequently to speak out on political subjects, subjects in which it lacks special competence, and in which it is often difficult to discern any relationship with Scriptural principles.

Another controversial matter much in the news in recent months has been the Air Force Training Manual with its charges of Communist infiltration into the churches. When the National Council issued a blanket denial of such infiltration it was too extreme. J. Edgar Hoover of the FBI and Herbert Philbrick of *I Led Three Lives* fame are well aware of Communist efforts to infiltrate the churches and that those efforts have succeeded to some degree. The charge that a number of the translators of the RSV Bible were members of Communist-front organizations does not prove that these men were Communists. But it does indicate that some members of the clergy are incredibly naive and have been frequently duped by Communist fronts.

The NCC declares itself to be the

A triennial meeting of the National Council of Churches convenes early in December in San Francisco, Calif. Significant developments are anticipated at this 1960 session. Dr. Edwin T. Dahlberg is the outgoing President.

servant of the churches, but there is danger that it will become their master. The NCC spurns the idea that it would ever become a super church. Yet the tendency is for the National Council to determine policies and to send them down to the member denominations. The NCC ridicules the idea that it would ever be a Protestant Vatican, but those in places of power frequently strive for yet more power.

A Potential Master of the Churches

The Division of Christian Life and Work in the NCC rejoices in the 1957 Triennial Report in its success in long-range planning. "One concrete result has been the adoption for the first time by the member denominations of co-ordinated annual emphases in the field of social education and action, planned ahead for a six-year period. These emphases are as follows:

- 1956-57—Social Welfare
- 1957-58—Race Relations
- 1958-59—Economic Life
- 1959-60—International Affairs
- 1960-61—Civic and Political Life
- 1961-62—The Christian Basis for Action in Society."

That officials in departments within member denominations of the NCC are in agreement with this six-year cycle of emphasis is entirely possible, but we are frankly skeptical that all thirty-three denominations in the NCC have discussed and endorsed this long-range cycle of emphasis.

As we read of the divisions and sub-divisions within the NCC, with its 70 program units, we realize that the NCC exerts its influence upon virtually even the tiniest segment of church activity in America. If this power were being used to promote the gospel of sovereign, redeeming grace we should rejoice greatly. But so often the National Council issues pronouncements of dubious value on social and economic and political matters. This disposition "to intermeddle with civil affairs" certainly runs counter to the restriction laid upon the church by our Westminster Confession of Faith.

In the light of these tendencies and because of our even more basic disagreement with the liberal leadership and doctrinal deviations of the National Council of Churches, we must continue to express our vigorous opposition to this organization.

Letter from Aunt Polly

72 Chung Hsiao Road
Taichung, Taiwan
Republic of China
November 3, 1960

Dear Young Friends:

Have you ever played a game that goes like this:
How high is high?

As high as heaven.

How thin is thin?

As thin as paper.

How yellow is yellow?

As yellow as gold.

How quiet is quiet?

As quiet as a mouse.

The English language has so many words not having any exact limits that we might go on and on asking such questions and trying to recite answers. These answers have become attached to such questions only through long years of usage. The answers are really not exact.

But I am going to ask you one more: *How thankful is thankful?* I think that you will have no exact answer to give to that question either. Our thanks may be very great but they may also be very small and puny. At least three times a day we say thanks for our food, but how thankful are we? Our sinful natures cause us to be very limited in our thankfulness. Yet God leads us in ways that should make us to be thankful. "For it is a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord," the Psalmist said.

If we have a thing taken from us we usually are more thankful for it when we can have it back, aren't we? Something of this truth is expressed in the saying, "You never miss the water till the well runs dry!" Sometimes it rains so much here on Taiwan that we tire of it, but we don't quarrel too much. We can recall the long dry seasons we used to have on the Mainland of China. Once during such a dry season when Japan was at war with China the Japanese cavalry came to Tsingtao in such large numbers that they drank all the city water supply. We had to haul water some distance from a private well and could not get all we wanted. So despite the fact that it was the warm summer time we had only one tub bath a week and several persons used the same water.

Thankful for Common Things

Very often when I lie down in my nice clean bed I thank the Lord for such comfort, because many times in my life I have had to sleep in beds that were most uncomfortable. I can remember being on a train for a long and tiresome journey and not caring to undress and lie down on the bedding provided, because it was so soiled that I didn't want it to touch my body.

The first winter of the Pilgrims in the New World was very difficult. Many persons died and all of the Pilgrims were at some time cold and hungry. Such suffering caused them to be thankful that during the summer that followed God had given them good crops and enabled them to build warmer houses. Had they not suffered we might not have a traditional Thanksgiving Day.

But the experience of suffering because we are without a thing does not always lead us to be thankful. Thankfulness is truly feeling that all that we have is from God and comes to us through him and for his glory. We cannot know this without knowing God's Word. All around us are people who are glad to get a tin can, a brown paper bag, a small cardboard

box or any number of things that we cast away as trash. They may thank us very warmly but they are not thankful in the true sense for they never connect their blessings with the true Giver of every good and perfect gift.

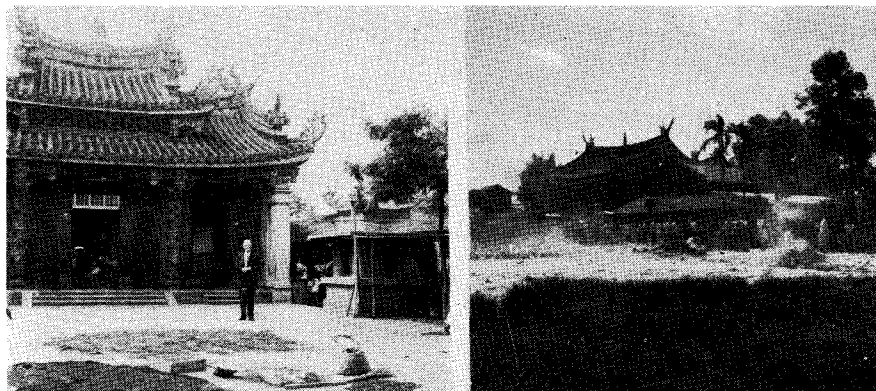
I want you to be sure to ask yourself, How thankful is thankful? And are you thankful? The Bible tells us that it is a very dangerous thing for us not to be thankful. It leads us to be quarrelsome, to find fault with others, and finally to become bitter toward others and toward God. In his letter to the Romans, chapter one, Paul tells us that being unthankful to God leads men to become idol worshippers.

"When they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful," so their imaginations began to think foolish and worthless things about God. They lost the light of true understanding and their hearts became so sinful that they thought they were wise. But they weren't. They became fools. Oh, such fools! Their ideas of the glorious, wonderful God, who made the heavens and the earth and created us, were twisted and changed. So changed that they made images like men and birds and four-footed beasts and even the awful things that creep on earth — and they worshipped these things more than the Creator.

There are three temples in the

These two pictures are of the Ch'eng Hua Temple near the Gaffins' home. Sharp eyes may spot Dr. Van Til standing in the front courtyard. On his left is a furnace for burning paper money and prayer slips. In front on the pavement is rice spread out for drying and winnowing. There is no other place around with a nice pavement like this.

The other picture was taken in the rear of this temple when the people offered sacrifices to appease all devils. The furnace ordinarily used for burning the money and prayer slips was not large enough, so the burning was done in this vacant lot. Perhaps you can see the smoke going up from the smoldering piles of paper ashes.



several neighborhoods surrounding our Reformed Gospel Bookroom. When passing them we see the foolish, pitiful things people do to try to please the false gods. These gods are just like the ones that we read about in the Bible. They cannot help anyone, but these foolish, blinded, thankless people waste their time and money serving them.

Now maybe you are saying very smugly to yourself, I am glad we do not worship idols like that here. But I want to tell you that millions of people in our great country worship invisible idols. Sometimes it is their business or their studies or their pleasures. It is easy to have an idol in our hearts that others cannot see. Let us never forget that Paul says that the way to get started on the road to becoming an idol worshipper is to fail to glorify God and to forget to be thankful.

I hope that you have at some time learned the question and answer from the Catechism for Young Children that tells clearly how to glorify God. We who know God must take the greatest care to glorify him. How can we glorify God? *By loving him and doing what he commands.*

Your loving friend,

Aunt Polly

p.s. Uncle Dick and I send Christmas greetings to each one of you and ask you to keep praying for us.

Philip Hughes Is Worcester Lecturer at Westminster

Westminster Seminary has announced a December 5th lecture by the Rev. Philip E. Hughes, B.D., M.A., Litt.D., of Oxford England. The subject of the lecture is "The English Reformers and the Inspiration of the Holy Scripture."

Dr. Hughes, who is editor of *The Churchman* and an editorial associate of *Christianity Today*, is also vice-president of the International Association for Reformed Faith and Action.

The lecture is under the auspices of the Harry A. Worcester Lectureship Fund established by Mrs. Worcester in memory of her husband, who was a constituting member of the Board of Trustees of the Seminary. Ten lecturers have spoken at the Seminary under the auspices of this Fund.



ROBERT S. MARSDEN

1905 - 1960

Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.

I Corinthians 15:58

A MEMORIAL from the Session of

The Calvary Orthodox Presbyterian Church

The Session of The Calvary Orthodox Presbyterian Church of Middletown, Pa. wishes to express its gratitude to Almighty God for the faithful life and ministry of its founding pastor, the Rev. Robert Samuel Marsden. It was in 1936 that Mr. Marsden, along with some one hundred other ministers in the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A., became convinced of the doctrinal defections in that church, and identified himself with a new denomination, now called The Orthodox Presbyterian Church. The Calvary Church of Middletown was organized at that time, and the congregation unanimously called him to be its first pastor. He continued to serve this congregation, as he had his first, with distinguished effectiveness. He only resigned the pastorate of Calvary Church in 1938 because of the urgent demand that he be General Secretary of the new denomination's Committees on Home and Foreign Missions; after which he served until the time of his death as Executive Secretary of Westminster Theological Seminary in Philadelphia.

The Session of Calvary Church hereby expresses its profound sorrow and loving sympathy to the members of Mr. Marsden's family. God in His all-wise providence has taken unto Himself one of the great defenders of the Christian Faith and although he will be sorely missed in the congregation of the saints and the church militant on earth, we can only rejoice in his triumphant entrance into the presence of the Saviour he loved and served so well. "And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them" (Revelation 14:13).

EDITOR

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All correspondence should be addressed to *The Presbyterian Guardian*, 7401 Old York Road, Phila. 26, Pa.

Christmas — What Does It Mean?

Few words mean so many things as the word "Christmas." Think of all the things Christmas means to people — cards, carols, Christmas trees, lights, tinsel, trains — turkey, shopping crowds, gifts, Christmas stockings, Santa Claus, reindeer — pageants, parties, vacation, family reunions, mistletoe — and, of course, the birth of a baby in a manger which is somehow connected with peace to men of God's good will!

Recently people have become uneasy about all of this and its implications for the meaning of Christmas and they have begun to talk about putting Christ back into Christmas. Of course, they are right. Christmas can't mean all of these things and really mean anything. If Christmas really means so many different things then it actually means nothing.

On the other hand, these people who talk of putting Christ back into Christmas are wrong, because it doesn't make sense to talk of putting Christ *back* into Christmas. If Christmas is the celebration of the birth of Christ, then he has never been absent from it. And if Christmas is simply a time of fun and festivity, then Christ has never been there and we can't very well put him back where he has never been.

It really depends on where you start to think about Christmas. If you start with cards and gifts and snow and trees, then Christmas means primarily a happy season of gay festivities, but this has little or nothing to do with the birth of the Son of God. However, if you start with Bethlehem, and a babe born of a virgin and heralded by angel voices, then Christ-

mas is the joyful and reverent remembrance of that event long ago which introduced to men the Savior of the world, and *this* has little to do with cards and crowds and Christmas trees. It is as simple as that.

Now there is nothing wrong with a time of festivity, but if that is the Christmas we have in mind, then there is no need of any explanation at all. There is nothing unchristian about a time of fun and celebration, but neither is there any deeper "meaning" to it. But we ought to get it quite clear, if this is Christmas, then it has nothing especially to do with Christ or the church and its name should be changed to remove the name of Christ.

On the other hand, if Christmas is intended to be an observance of the birth of Jesus Christ, then it has little to do with the customary festivities, for they can only serve to divert attention from the stupendous and solemn significance of that event. It is this Christmas which *does* require an explanation, for it is largely forgotten — buried under a mountain of sentiment, tradition, and tinsel.

What does Christmas mean? Nearly everyone is at least vaguely familiar with the story of the babe who was born some nineteen hundred years ago in Bethlehem. They have heard how there was no room in the inn for his virgin mother and her husband Joseph and how this child was born and cradled in a crude manger. Most people are also familiar with the story of how shepherds came to worship him that night and how later on wisemen from the distant East came to bring gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh to this one who was born King of the Jews. In addition, many know of the appearance of the angels as they told of Jesus' birth and of the strange star which led the wisemen to Bethlehem. But for the most part, this is just a warm and appealing story with such elements as the angels and the star appearing as enchantingly mysterious additions.

Yet it is in just such elements as the star and the angels that the real meaning of the event is to be found. For these, the Bible plainly says, were divine announcements. This child was not an ordinary child. This was not just another birth in the history of mankind. The star and the angels turn our attention to another startling fact of Christ's birth — namely that he was born of a *virgin* mother. And

that fact sends us back several hundred years earlier to the prophecy of Isaiah which said, "Behold a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Emmanuel — God with us."

God with us! That is the meaning of Christmas. God himself came into the world in the birth of this child. Jesus Christ, born in Bethlehem, was God. But why? Again we must go back — back to the very beginning in the Garden of Eden. There God had once walked and talked with man, but sin entered and man became estranged from God. With hearts in rebellion against God, men were under God's wrath and were subject to eternal death. But the birth of Christ signaled the great work of God's grace by which he himself undertook to remove sin's curse. For now he has sent his own Son to bear that curse for men that those who receive him might be returned to fellowship with God.

That is what Christmas must mean if it means anything to us. For only this can reach us in our need — our need of forgiveness and cleansing from the sin that troubles us each day of our lives. If this is what Christmas means to you, then it is truly a merry Christmas, for then you know and believe that "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16).

ROBLEY J. JOHNSTON

This article, which appears as our editorial this month, is available in tract form from the Committee on Christian Education of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, 7401 Old York Rd., Phila. 26, Pa.

A NOTE OF THANKS

We hope the readers of the *Presbyterian Guardian* who remembered us with so many kind and gracious expressions of sympathy and Christian support at the time of Mr. Marsden's death will accept this means of conveying our appreciation and gratitude, since it has been extremely difficult to try to respond personally to the many condolences.

Bertha M. Marsden and Sons
and Mrs. Edith B. Mish



Mr. Urban is an Orthodox Presbyterian missionary in Taiwan. With his wife and daughter he resides at No. 2, Sublane 24, Lane 201, Section 4, Hsin Yi Road, Taipei, Taiwan.

The Consultative Group For Translations in Tribal Languages, Formosa.

One incident made all that was said at the conference even more meaningful. In America we had seen many beautiful colored pictures of the Formosan aboriginals in various issues of the *National Geographic*, but yesterday we saw our first real Tsalic tribesman. There was no mistaking him with the vertical tatoos on his forehead and chin. We saw him for just a moment in the crowd and then he was gone. As our eyes met, I'm sure that he thought we were as strange as we thought him to be. He seemed almost afraid out of his familiar mountain environment in the midst of all these people. Our hearts went out to him and we wanted to speak with him, but realizing that we didn't know a word of his language we could only let him pass.

During the conference a number of very helpful talks were given by some of the men already engaged in language analysis and translation. Edward Torjeson of The Evangelical Alliance Mission working among the Amis tribe spoke on the subject, "How to Learn a Tribal Language." John Whitehorn of the English Presbyterian Mission working among the Paiwan tribe spoke on, "What's Different About a Tribal Language?"

Tribal Languages Conference

From Hong Kong came Douglas Lancashire, a representative of the British and Foreign Bible Society, to speak on the relationship of the Bible Society to the missionary translators. He also told us of the many new helps being prepared by the Bible Society that will soon be available for Bible translators.

A very helpful report was made by Ralph Covell of the Conservative Baptist Mission working among the Sediq tribe. The report, entitled "Tribal Languages — Living or Dead?" brought to light much material regarding the effect of government education and cultural pressure on the mountain tribes and their languages. His statement showed that, in spite of the fact that the Japanese for 50 years had exerted pressure on the

A Page from a Translator's Diary

Saturday, April 8, 1960

Flying at 8,000 feet somewhere off the east coast of Formosa

CENTURIES ago sailing along these coasts the Portuguese sailors exclaimed "Ihla Formosa!" It is indeed an "island beautiful." As we look out the window of our Civil Air Transport plane we can see range after range of magnificent mountains rising right out of the sea to heights high above the clouds. In these mountains live about 200,000 tribespeople who not so long ago were still taking human heads. The story of how thousands of them became Christians is

a thrilling one and it is heartening to realize that there are over 350 churches among the mountain people. But there are many problems, not the least of which is providing separate translations of the Bible for each of the ten tribal languages.

We have been in Formosa for only a week, but already the Lord has given us an unusual opportunity to become oriented in regard to the translation work being done among the mountain aborigines. We spent most of yesterday and today in the coastal city of Hualien attending a Tribal Languages Conference sponsored by

mountain tribes to learn Japanese, the tribal languages persisted and, upon removal of the pressure, emerged as the only real media of expression of the heart. Whatever knowledge they might have had of Japanese, it is the language that is dying out. The tribal tongues are throbbing with life and still are the media of all really intimate and personal communication, be it with other men or with God in prayer.

In speaking of various problems that will confront the translator as he seeks to interest the tribespeople in using his translation, Mr. Covell reported that there is an attitude widely held by these aboriginals that the Bible is difficult to understand because "God does not speak clearly." They feel therefore that it does not matter whether great pains are taken to make the translations into the tribal language clear and understandable, "because it will have to be explained anyway."

Does God Speak Clearly?

He related this attitude to the noticeable lack of interest during the reading of the Japanese or Chinese Bibles in the worship services of the mountain churches. Something has prejudiced them to make them believe that God does not speak clearly in his Book. Therefore when someone reads God's Book to them the attitude is, "Why strain the senses in trying to understand?" The people feel that as long as someone is able to explain the meaning during the sermon, that is sufficient.

Whatever accounts for such an attitude? Of course! This reflects their experience with these other Bibles which they have been forced to use. The only Bibles that they had any experience with were foreign language Bibles. Not being able to understand these Bibles at all well, the aboriginals in their naivete concluded that "God does not speak clearly." It never occurred to them that God's speech was obscured by their own imperfect knowledge of the foreign language in which he was speaking!

What is the answer to this problem? Must thousands upon thousands of people scattered over thousands of square miles of high mountains be taught a foreign language well enough to read and really sense the meaning of a foreign-language Bible? No, God will only speak clearly to them when

he begins to speak to them in their own mother tongue. That means that we must concentrate on a translation into the tribal tongue. In the Preface to our beloved *Authorized Version* of 1611, Dr. Myles Smith wrote:

"Translation it is that openeth the window, to let in the light; that breaketh the shell, that we may eat the kernel; that putteth aside the curtain, that we may look into the most Holy place; that removeth the cover of the well, that we may come by the water . . . Without translation into the common tongue, the unlearned are but like children at Jacob's well (which was deep) without a bucket or something to draw with."

In these churches in the mountains below there are thousands of these "unlearned" standing like thirsty children beside a deep well. Only a dim shaft of light enters into their souls. Only when the Spirit of God blesses the reading of a vigorous vernacular translation will the shutters of the soul be thrown open to let in the full light of the glorious gospel. Only when that veil called "language barrier" is removed will these people be able to clearly see Christ in the most Holy Place ministering in their behalf.

O God, Thou hast begun a good work among these people in the mountains below. Grant to us grace for all that is needed to give them thy Word in their own language, that they may grow in grace and abound in hope till Jesus comes. Amen.

Vineland Church Breaks Ground for New Building

Ground-breaking ceremonies for a new church building were conducted on Sunday, November 20, by the Covenant Orthodox Presbyterian Church of Vineland, N. J. Pastor Everett C. DeVelde led the brief program, with John V. Simpson, chairman of the New Building Committee, and other Committee members also taking part.

The new structure is to be located on the west side of the present building, paralleling State Street and facing Landis Avenue. It will be of Colonial style with a sanctuary large enough to seat 500 people. A full basement will be completed for Sunday school and general church usage.

The contract for construction was made the previous Thursday with

Messick Brothers of Bridgeton, the successful bidders, who are presently engaged in erecting a new building for Calvary Orthodox Presbyterian Church in Bridgeton. It is estimated that the completed and furnished new building in Vineland will cost approximately \$195,000, and it is expected to be ready for occupancy in about nine months. The architect is George D. Savage of Narberth, Pa.

The date of the ground-breaking happened to be also the 13th anniversary of the start of the broadcasting of the morning worship services of Covenant Church over the local radio station, WWBZ (1360). The Faith and Life Hour, a daily devotional program that is maintained by this church, in addition to the Sunday broadcasts, will mark its 13th anniversary in January, 1961.

Progress in Paradise Hills

THE Paradise Hills Orthodox Presbyterian Church is thankful for a Session consisting of men, each of whom is able to preach a theologically sound and effective sermon. During the summer elders Hiram Bellis, Gordon Peterman, George Smith and Lyman Peterman each conducted one service and preached the sermon.

During the spring and early summer a patio, 36 feet wide and 45 feet long, was built as an addition to the Sunday school building. The patio is enclosed on three sides, includes over 1,500 square feet of Sunday school space, and also has an attractive built-in barbecue for social functions. It is divided into six class rooms by roll-down partitions. The work was done on a volunteer basis and the total cost was about \$3,000.

Each Thursday evening a group assembles at the church to go out on visitation work. Special visitations are sometimes conducted on Saturdays or Sundays. A Telephone Chairman has a committee that can quickly notify the congregation of any emergency or special need for prayers. A Family Sponsor Chairman assigns new families to church members so they will put forth a special effort to be friendly and make the new family feel at home. The pastor, the Rev. Edward L. Kellogg, is now conducting communicant classes with six new families.

The Basic Trouble

By G. I. WILLIAMSON

Once in a while we pause to wonder why it is so difficult to persuade men to make haste to come to God in peace through Jesus the Mediator. We do not seem to have the success that we feel we ought to have. When we think of the actual danger that sinners are in — when we think of the glorious and free offer of salvation through the Saviour — when we think of the judgment to come — we wonder: "What is the basic trouble? Why is it so hard to bring men to flee from their own destruction?"

The basic trouble is that men generally have a *high estimate of themselves and a low estimate of God*. The basic trouble is that man is totally depraved. He is absolutely corrupt, through and through. Even the 'goodness' that remains with him is not really a goodness that dwells in his heart. It is only a goodness that God imposes upon him through certain instruments of 'common grace' such as civil government, law, conscience, culturally fixed standards and the like. Some of these barriers the sinner strongly hesitates to violate because of his own basic self-interest. But in his heart every thought and intent is only evil continually.

And nowhere is the total depravity of his heart more manifest than in this high self-esteem, which is the great barrier to our gospel. Because of the restraints that God has erected to enclose the wickedness of his heart, man is outwardly much better than he is inwardly. And then, with cunning deceit, this relative outward 'goodness' is accounted his very own. He finds the sinner's satisfaction in looking on the outward things, and vainly imagines that God sees not the heart.

The end result is that men say, each in his own way, "I am not so bad!" Whereas the truth is, that each is so bad that God can see no good in his heart. But how can a man with such self-esteem accept our Saviour?

In the second place, men have a low estimate of God. And this low estimate of God is contained in the name that they have given him. "We believe in a God of love," they say.

"Men generally have a high estimate of themselves and a low estimate of God."

But they do not really mean it. For one cannot really believe in a God of love without also believing in a God of wrath, which they do not.

Actually, men do not believe in a personal God. They believe in a sort of 'force,' or 'power.' It would be more correct to describe their view as follows: "Love is God," rather than "God is love." The one statement is as false as the other is true. For God is love and infinitely more besides. He is a Spirit, infinite, eternal, and unchangeable, in His being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness and truth.

And it is because of the absolute perfection of the personality of God, that love can be seen for the exceedingly glorious thing that it is. For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, to save His people from their sins. And to do it, His son was made to be sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him. And when He was made to be sin, He also suffered the wrath of God in infinite punishment on the cross.

But the trouble — the basic trouble — is that men will not, and cannot, accept a high view of God. They insist on lowering Him to their own dismal moral level. Naturally the depraved sinner would want to release the damned from everlasting suffering. Wouldn't every criminal in the death row of a prison gladly escape and let others out also?

The real reason, however, why people denounce the doctrine of eternal punishment is that they are evil. If they were holy as God is holy, they would feel about sin as God feels. And they would know that everlasting punishment for the wicked is alone worthy of God simply because it is right!

The basic trouble is, then, that men are totally depraved, and because they are totally depraved they have a totally depraved view of God and of themselves. And nothing but God Himself can change this basic trouble.

Thanks be to God that He can change a sinful heart by that gospel which is His power unto salvation!

Galbraith to Serve Full Time as Foreign Missions General Secretary

The Rev. John P. Galbraith, for the past 12 years the General Secretary of both the Committee on Foreign Missions and the Committee on Home Missions and Church Extension, will soon devote his full time to the former Committee, it has been announced.

At a meeting early in November the Committee on Foreign Missions voted to request the Home Missions Committee to release Mr. Galbraith from his service to the latter Committee. Later in the month that request, together with a concurring request by Mr. Galbraith, was presented to the Home Missions Committee. The change was agreed to, but will not take place until after a successor has been secured by the Committee on Home Missions and Church Extension. Mr. Galbraith's new term with the Foreign Missions Committee is to be for five years.

This action of the Committee on Foreign Missions is a result of over two years' consideration of such a step. Although for some time it had been thought desirable, it is reported that various factors seemed to preclude its being put into effect until now. A chief purpose of the action, it is stated, is to free Mr. Galbraith from a mounting load of office routine, so as to enable him to devote more time and energy to the direct ministry of the Word, which is of course his primary calling.

In another important action at the same meeting the Committee on Foreign Missions adopted a recommendation of the General Secretary to erect permanent sub-committees for each of our four foreign fields; and another sub-committee to keep under constant purview the possibilities of entering new fields. These committees will consult with the General Secretary between meetings of the full Committee on matters concerning their respective areas. The personnel of the five sub-committees will be chosen at the next Committee meeting.

At the Home Missions meeting the absence of the Rev. Robert S. Marsden, a member of that Committee who had died two weeks earlier,

was noted by the adoption of the following memorial minute:

Marsden Memorial Minute

"The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." Inasmuch as the Lord in His wise and holy providence has suddenly taken from this life our brother and fellow-laborer in the gospel, the Rev. Robert S. Marsden, a member of this Committee for the past ten years, and earlier its General Secretary for a like time, the Committee records its deep gratitude to God for his steadfast faith, his evident zeal for the gospel, his extraordinary gifts, and his diligent service in the cause of missions.

The Committee commends Mrs. Marsden and their two sons, in their bereavement, to our God who is rich unto all that call upon Him, and prays that they will be comforted and sustained by the assurance that God whose mercy is everlasting has raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kingdom toward us through Christ Jesus.

Lynne Wade Visits Churches in the East

Released from the Los Angeles hospital where he had been undergoing treatment, the Rev. Lynne Wade took advantage of the respite by making a trip eastward during November. In Michigan he spoke in some Protestant Reformed churches, the denomination which has been supporting his missionary labors in Guam. In Grand Rapids he had the opportunity of speaking to a sizable group of Orthodox Presbyterian students who are enrolled in Calvin College. After a visit with his son Uel, Mr. Wade flew to Philadelphia where he was met by seminarian Mike Stingley, a son in the faith and one-time helper on Guam, who rushed him to Calvary Orthodox Presbyterian Church, Glenside, in time for a message at the midweek meeting.

With the same zeal that has characterized his ministry through the years he spoke of the Christian's debt and compulsion to bring the gospel to the whole world and affirmed that "as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel" anywhere — and

this is the task of our beloved church. He expressed the hope that the medical report at the end of November would be such that he could return to his family and work in Guam before the end of the year, and continue necessary treatments there. Late word is that the reports were encouraging, and that tentative plans for sailing December 17 on the *India Bear* are being made.

After visiting Westminster Seminary and the new administrative offices of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, Mr. Wade journeyed to Middletown where he enjoyed a brief visit with the Rev. Robert Graham and family, with whom he was closely associated during his service at the Naval Hospital near Berkeley when Mr. Graham was pastor there. Mr. Wade preached in Middletown on Sunday evening and in the Kirkwood Orthodox Presbyterian Church, of which he was a former pastor, in the morning. He expected to make a few stops at both Protestant Reformed and Orthodox Presbyterian churches on his return trip westward.

Santa Cruz Buys Building

The Orthodox Presbyterian Church, Santa Cruz, Calif., has purchased a building from the St. Stephens Lutheran Church of that city, according to an announcement in "The California Presbyterian," new quarterly publication of the Presbytery of California of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church.

Organized in May of 1958, the Santa Cruz Church has been meeting out of town, first in Capitola and at present in Soquel. The congregation hopes to occupy the recently acquired building early in January. Located on Pennsylvania Avenue three doors down from Soquel Avenue, a major street, the former Lutheran building was bought for \$16,000. It is a little more than 70 years old, seats about 150 in the sanctuary, and includes a kitchen, an office, and five classrooms.

After the down payment, the balance will cost less each month than the present rental and will help the congregation to save in terms of future building hopes. The better location within the city, it is anticipated, will open the door to further growth of this church whose membership is more than one hundred.

Sunday School Attendance Contest Winners

Paradise Hills, Hialeah, Thornton

CLOSE races in both Group I and Group III made for plenty of excitement in the Sunday School Attendance Contest sponsored by the Committee on Christian Education. Among the larger schools Paradise Hills of San Diego nudged out Knox, Silver Spring, by less than one percentage point. Both schools had a gain of over 25 percent, with Paradise Hills achieving an average of 66 more pupils each week.

Not until the final week did Immanuel of Thornton nose out Bethel of Wheaton in the see-saw contest between these two of the smaller schools. Thornton's increase was a tremendous 157 percent, with an average of 64 pupils gained over the six-week period above the starting average. Bethel's increase was 150 percent, with an average of 45 more pupils. Of the 21 Sunday schools entered in Group III, 12 showed a gain of more than 25 percent, while five others besides the top two increased by 50 percent or more: Westminster of Los Angeles, Knox of Oklahoma City, St. Andrew's of Baltimore, Community of Center Square, and Pilgrim of Bangor.

In Group II, the medium-sized schools, Sharon of Hialeah pulled out ahead early and maintained the lead to win with an even 50 percent increase, and an average weekly gain of 64 pupils. Grace of Fair Lawn, Brentwood of South San Francisco, and Wayside of Grove City showed gains of between 30 and 35 percent in this group, while two others were above 25 percent.

The average gain for the 35 schools entered in this year's Orthodox Presbyterian Sunday School Contest was 25 percent above the average attendance during the preceding year, and on the final Sunday there were 851 more pupils in attendance than the average.

An Achievement Award is presented in the spring to the school which compiles the best record of maintaining its gains and of making new ones. This Award is now in the possession of Covenant of Vineland.

I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me (PHIL. 4:13).

Murphy's Law and Me

By HARVIE M. CONN

A note from Mr. Conn began: "Trusting that your Calvinistic magazine has a sense of humor, I enclose the following." It does, and we hope you'll agree that there is "a time to laugh" at life's little complications. Travelers will know that whether it's Seoul or San Francisco or Singapore, red tape and Customs often go hand in hand. We're expecting other articles from Mr. Conn and some may be in a more serious vein!

No doubt most everyone is familiar with Newton's laws and Galileo's laws and Einstein's theory. But it took an Irishman like Murphy to compose a law universally valid, without any fear of eventual elimination, a law delightfully appropriate when you try to arrive in a new country. The law is a simple theorem: Everything that can go wrong will go wrong. It is Murphy's law but it just as well might be Conn's law.

The real test for this law comes in Korean Customs. I have always believed airplanes were fast, and I was more confident of it after I had flown to Korea. But now, thanks to science, you can fly to almost any place in half the time it will take you to wait for your baggage in Customs after you get there. Let me tell you about it. It will take several hours.

It starts with two bags which had to go airfreight to Korea to save money. Off they went into the wild blue yonder, flying high over the red tape. We had paid for their passage all the way to Pusan, Korea, and like any normal tourist we asked for them when we arrived in Pusan. But they weren't in Pusan. Didn't we know we had to take them through Customs at Seoul, 300 miles away? Didn't we know government regulation A2890-Z-346AXV? Hadn't our feeble minds grasped the significance of a regulation so weighted with numbers? Where had we been brought up anyhow? So back to Seoul we went.

Out we drove to the International airport at Seoul. Like most airports, this one is located about 50 miles from the city. But it was the thought that counted, we told ourselves. There at the information desk we waited for

information. You don't get information here, we were told. You must go to the Northwest Airlines ticket counter. So we went there. No, they said, after a full hour of deliberation and study among the baggage, your bags are in a downtown hotel in Seoul. You must get them there. Why have you not gotten them earlier? It may be a little difficult to get them, since you have waited so long.

This was the understatement of the year. We arrived at the Seoul hotel. No, they are not here. They are at the Seoul Customs House. You must go to the Seoul Customs House. Why have you not gotten them earlier? It may be a little difficult to get them, since you have waited so long.

So we began at the Seoul Customs House. It is a small building, very inauspicious. You walk in the door. No one speaks English.

You begin the rounds. 200 hwan for paper costs, please. 400 hwan for transportation costs, please. 600 hwan for cost costs, please. And everyone has a stamp. A red stamp for this, a blue stamp for that, and a purple stamp for the fun of it. You get half way through the routine and then they tell you their little secret: Where is your registration certificate? Where is your certificate from Kimpo Airport stating you have not yet received the baggage? Why have you not gotten them earlier? It may be a little difficult to get them, since you have waited so long!

Over to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Two weeks of registration red tape and the certificate is yours. Back to the International airport. You are too late sir, the Customs office just closed. Go to the old airport, perhaps they can help you. Off to the old airport, thru the army camp, warned by the guards to keep off, finally the Customs office, finally the certificate stating the bags are waiting for you at the Seoul Customs House.

Back to the Seoul Customs House and over we go again. 300, 400, 600 . . . red stamp, blue stamp, purple stamp . . . 300 hwan for paper costs? But yesterday it was only 200! Ah, but there have been changes. Yes, we remember you. You were here a

month ago to get your bags, weren't you? Where have you been? Why have you not gotten them . . . ?

Then the fun really starts. There are three houses at the Customs House. The big yellow house, the little blue house and the middle-sized green one. First your papers go upstairs in the big yellow house, then they come down, they go up again, down, up, down. Then they tell you the next man is gone for the day, please come back tomorrow. You come back tomorrow.

Then he lets you look at your bags. Yes, it looks like your bags. Moth eaten, weather beaten, covered with dust, but your bags. Then he looks at them. Then he marks up the prices. Then it starts again. Back to big yellow house. One man puts something in a book. Purple and red stamp. 40 hwan please. A second man copies the first man's work. A third man checks the second man's copy. He passes it on. Green stamp. 60 hwan. You can no longer read the invoice for the stamps. How can they? Maybe that is part of the reason for the delay. Finally it passes through eight (count them—eight) hands, and goes to the little blue house. We're close now. Ah, but wait, this is late. You must have a late stamp. You go across the street, down two blocks and in a small shop you buy a late stamp. Then you start all over again in the big yellow house.

Five hours later, you are lying prostrate in the little blue house while the man from the big yellow house explains to the fellow visiting there from the middle-sized green house what a mess we are all in. We certainly are!

Then it happens. All of a sudden, without warning, he gives you your bags. No questions, no comments, just two beat up bags. And they're all yours. It's taken a month of Sundays but they're all yours.

David Livingstone had his slave traders to fight, and lions to attack him. Adoniram Judson had his prison. And I've had the Seoul Customs House!

Changes of Address

The Rev. Wm. H. McDowell, Box 775, Maitland, Fla.

The Rev. C. Herbert Oliver, 857 Hillman Drive, Bessemer, Ala.

The Rev. Albert G. Edwards, 10118 N.E. Campaign, Portland 20, Ore.

Ohio Auxiliary in Fall Meeting

The semi-annual meeting of the Presbyterian auxiliary of the Presbytery of Ohio met on October 1, 1960 at the Covenant Orthodox Presbyterian Church of Pittsburgh, Pa. Mrs. Lola Fulton, organist of the church, opened the afternoon session with the number, "Come Thou Almighty King" by Felico Giardini. Mrs. Stewart Sandberg, Covenant Church, brought greetings from the host church. Mrs. Edward Quinnette, president, was in charge of the business meeting.

Devotions were conducted by Mrs. Guy VanMeter, Nashua Church, using Psalm 96 for her theme. Mrs. Arnold Kress, Nashua Church, pin-pointed mission fields where special prayers are needed for the welfare of missionaries and for additional help in equipment and personnel that the work of Christ's Kingdom might be carried forward. A prayer circle followed. Mrs. Jack Merry and Mrs. Stephen Gabrielse sang a duet, "The Name of Jesus."

The message of the afternoon was brought by the Rev. John P. Galbraith, General Secretary of the Foreign Missions Committee of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church. Mr. Galbraith talked about Eritrea and its many problems, pointing out a symbolic likeness between the arid, brown physical surroundings of the country and the spiritual death of its people. He pictured it as a land of many religions — Islam created to destroy Christianity and the Coptic Christians propagating a religion of works and formality and feeding upon the illiteracy and ignorance of the people.

To these people the missionary brings the Water of Life and occasionally rejoices to see a Christian life blossom forth. The speaker also pointed out the strategic location of Eritrea along the Red Sea. It is the hope of the Committee that native missionaries will eventually be trained and will cross the Red Sea to carry the gospel to the lands beyond.

Mr. Galbraith outlined six tasks to be carried out in Eritrea: (1) Evangelism — the over-all task carried on for many years by the Rev. and Mrs. Clarence Duff. (2) Literacy — meaning the reducing of a spoken language to writing. Mr. Mahaffy is working on

the Saho language. (3) Literature — Christian writings and the Scriptures are translated into the native language. Mr. Bird is doing this work. (4) Distribution of this literature and the Scriptures as widely as possible is carried on by Mr. Taws in the bookroom and also by colporteurs sent to other towns to sell books, pamphlets and Bibles. (5) Medical men and nurses must be found to work in this field not only to heal bodies, but to have them know the love and compassion of Christ. (6) Orphanages and other works of mercy have not been organized by the O. P. C. but the Mission feels the need to do something for the many children without homes or parents.

The singing of a hymn and a prayer by Mrs. Henry Kiester, Harrisville Church, closed the afternoon session.

After an intermission for lunch, Mr. Dirk Munneke, a teacher in the Christian School of Wilkinsburg, brought a message on "The Providence of God."

The evening session convened with an organ prelude by Mrs. Fulton, "Savior Like a Shepherd Lead Us." Devotions were in charge of Mr. David Bovard, New Hope Church. The Rev. Arthur Spooner, Orthodox Presbyterian Missionary to Korea, gave a message, "Korea, the Land of Opportunity." He high-lighted his talk by motion pictures showing the islands surrounding Korea to which they hope to carry the gospel. The Rev. C. K. Cummings, of Pittsburgh, closed the meeting with a prayer.

MRS. JOHN H. CRIAG

Stratford Calls Peterson

A call for the pastoral services of the Rev. Jack J. Peterson has been extended by unanimous vote of the Stratford Orthodox Presbyterian Church. After approval by the Presbytery of New Jersey the call was transmitted to the Presbytery of California. Mr. Peterson has been the home missionary-pastor of the Bayview Orthodox Presbyterian Church of Chula Vista, California.

Late word is that the call has been placed in Mr. Peterson's hands by the California Presbytery and that he has indicated his willingness to accept the call. It is the hope of the Stratford congregation that their pastor-elect may arrive early in the new year. Formerly served by home missionary Harvie M. Conn, under whose leadership the church was organized, Stratford has been supplied by various ministers and Westminster Seminary students since the Conns left for missionary service in Korea last August. The Rev. LeRoy B. Oliver is presently moderator of the Stratford session.

Neighboring congregations of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church in Bellmawr and West Collingswood are also without pastors at the present time, as is the Grace Church, White Horse, near Trenton. The latter has scheduled a congregational meeting for December 11. Mr. Oliver is also the moderator of the Grace Church session and will conduct the quarterly communion service on December 18.

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