

# The Presbyterian GUARDIAN

J. GRESHAM MACHEN • EDITOR 1936-1937

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*The Lord Jesus, then, came into this world not primarily to say something, not even to be something, but to do something; He came not merely to lead men through His example out into a "larger life," but to give life, through His death and resurrection, to those who were dead in trespasses and sins.*

—J. Gresham Machen



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Your FAMILY ALTAR

Daily Bible Readings

**Week of December 29 (Continued)**  
 Thursday ..... Psalms 149, 150  
 Friday ..... Psalm 17  
 Saturday ..... II Chronicles 20:1-13  
 Sunday ..... II Chronicles 20:14-25

Questions for Sabbath Meditation

1. Where are God's people to praise Him? For what are they to praise Him?
2. What characteristic of true prayer is illustrated in Psalm 17:1?
3. What was the first thing Jehoshaphat did when he had been informed of the attack of Moab and Ammon?
4. Note the verses in II Chronicles 20 which speak of Judah's praising God? Is this a part of the Christian's battle against sin?

Wholehearted Praise

To the church of the Laodiceans God spoke stern words, "because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth." Insipidity is disliked by men but how much more by the Almighty God who judges the thoughts and hearts of men. And yet there is always the danger of our falling into mere formalism in our worship. It is surely distasteful to God to be taken "for granted" in worship.

How may we guard against half-heartedness in our praise of the Lord? Looking at the experience of Jehoshaphat and the people of Judah we are struck with the elaborateness of their plans for the worship of God. An enemy was about to attack. This should have called forth detailed military strategy. Instead, danger at their door urged the worship of God and His praise upon His people. This then is the lesson for us. Realization of our weakness and the ever-present enemy, Satan, should drive us to God. Where there is no deep sense of need there will also be no earnest attempt to get aid. In praise of God that is true acknowledgment of His great power and grace, combined with supplica-

tion, strength will be supplied for the war of the soul.

Paul writes to the Colossians, "whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men." God would have us mean what we say. How much more will our spiritual life prosper when with singleness of heart we cry out to the Lord. Few words of sincere adoration of God's goodness and greatness surpass in value and effectiveness thousands of anthems sung to display the abilities of men. "Cursed be he that doeth the work of the Lord negligently." Jeremiah 48:10 (R.V.)

Week of January 5

Monday ..... Ruth 1:1-13  
 Tuesday ..... Ruth 1:14-22  
 Wednesday ..... Ruth 2:1-12  
 Thursday ..... Ruth 2:13-23  
 Friday ..... Ruth 3:1-13  
 Saturday ..... Ruth 3:14-4:10  
 Sunday ..... Ruth 4:11-22

Questions for Sabbath Meditation

1. What moved Naomi to return to Judah? Where had she been living? Why?
2. What decision did Ruth make? How did she seek to provide for herself and Naomi?
3. For what did Boaz commend Ruth when he found her at his feet?
4. What was the name of the son born to Ruth and Boaz? Whose ancestor was he?

Wise Choices

"Once to every man and nation comes the moment to decide In the strife of Truth and Falsehood, for the good or evil side." So writes the poet Lowell. But contrary to those words the Bible makes plain that there are choices to be

made every day. Life is a series of forks in the road. At the opening of a new year and at the beginning of each new day we are faced with problems that call for decisions. And deceived we are if we think that we can separate one choice from another. Each life forges a chain the links of which inevitably join each other.

Ruth the Moabitess like Joshua chose to serve the Lord. Her life which followed the decision to remain with Naomi was ordered by that decision. So it is with the Christian. Casting his lot with those who serve Christ Jesus the Christian's subsequent choices either contribute to God's praise or bring reproach upon Him.

Before every person who hears the gospel is set life and death, blessing and cursing with the exhortation to choose life. That decision to receive blessing is made by God's sovereign grace and is, therefore, a wise decision. For a wise choice is one motivated by love for God and a desire for His glory. It is made in accordance with God's will as set forth in His Word. And it is made by only those who have been born again by God's Spirit.

In the year 1948 many situations will arise which will call for wise decisions. There is no dependable guide save the Bible. And in the pondering of God's Word, illumination by the Holy Spirit is a necessity for proper choices. Let us like Moses in maturity of faith choose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. For all the forks in the road of life have the same signs, God or Mammon. "Choose ye this day whom ye will serve!" May this daily and momentary call bring an eager response: "We will serve the Lord!"

Week of January 12

Monday ..... John 15:1-15  
 Tuesday ..... John 15:16-27  
 Wednesday ..... I John 4:1-11  
 Thursday ..... I John 4:12-21

Some Prayer Suggestions

1. Pray for the Committee on Home Missions and Church Extension of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church.
2. Pray for ministers serving as missionaries on the home field.

—LEROY B. OLIVER

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## The Presbyterian GUARDIAN

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## J. Gresham Machen

IT WILL be eleven years ago this New Year's Day that the Lord called Dr. J. Gresham Machen to Himself. Editor and founder of THE PRESBYTERIAN GUARDIAN, leader of the movement of which the GUARDIAN seeks to be a spokesman, friend and father to many of us, his memory is still green among us.

At the time of his death Dr. Machen occupied a rather unique place as a spokesman of the evangelical faith. In the world without he was certainly the best known representative of evangelical protestantism.

In seeking the reason for Dr. Machen's prominence we speak first of his scholarship. He was the leading scholarly spokesman of the orthodox faith. In a world in which the schools and their scholars had rejected the historic Christian faith as untenable here was one man who remained unshaken. In a generation in which all too often the public identified "fundamentalism" with clowns and ignoramuses here was a gentleman and a scholar worthy of respect. We recognize that our faith is often caricatured and ridiculed unjustly but we must admit that sound and genuine scholarship has been too rare among evangelical leaders. His scholarship was a great talent which Dr. Machen used in the service of his Lord. He taught in Princeton Theological Seminary for almost a quarter of a century. For the last seven years of his life he was Professor of New Testament in Westminster Theological Seminary. During all these years through his contributions to theological journals and through his books he became famous in Britain and Germany as well as in

America for his great learning. In the first quarter of this century New Testament criticism and the liberal reconstruction of Jesus were in full cry. J. Gresham Machen stood almost alone against them in the field of scholarly debate. He dealt with their positions fully and fairly. With massive learning he set forth the arguments for the orthodox faith. Demagogery and sensationalism were foreign to him.

However it was not scholarship alone that made Dr. Machen the leader that he was. He was known to his generation as a scholar indeed but far more as a contender for the faith. It was the use of his intellectual gifts in the battle against modern unbelief that brought him to prominence in the church and world. In his writing, both technical and popular, he contended against the modernism that was blighting the church and leading astray the souls of men. Not content with words only he went into the courts of the church of which he was a member and carried on unrelenting battle against unbelief. It was his leadership in the attack on the Committee on Foreign Missions and in the formation of the Independent Board for Presbyterian Foreign Missions that led to his expulsion from the ministry of the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A. and to the formation of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church. The battle was long and hard and, from the worldly point of view, a losing one. Many men weakened and deserted. The pressure on Dr. Machen was terrific, his character was maligned, but he never weakened. His courage and his utter loyalty to the truth was Dr. Machen's greatest attribute to those who knew him.

It was his fight against Modernism that occupied Dr. Machen's life. But he did not oppose Modernism with a general evangelicalism. He recognized

all evangelicals as his allies and naturally felt drawn to them in the common battle against unbelief. But he was never content with a creed that included only the great fundamentals of the faith. Dr. Machen was a Presbyterian and he believed in the Reformed Faith. When he left Princeton in 1929 to found a new school he had a great opportunity to establish an institution to which all the Bible believing people of America could rally. Instead he led in the formation of a Presbyterian seminary, as clearly and unequivocally Presbyterian as Princeton had been. Dr. Machen was a Christian but he was never ashamed to say a Presbyterian Christian. The last months of his life were gladdened by the fact that at last he was in a real Presbyterian Church.

One more facet of Dr. Machen's character we would mention was his warm heartedness. If you have noticed the quotations from his writings which appear in the GUARDIAN you have been struck by the glow that characterizes them. His enemies said he was cold and hard but they lied. We who knew him knew his warmth and devotion. His intellect was massive but his faith was childlike. He loved the Lord and served Him unto the end. Now he rests from his labors and his works do follow him.

J. P. C.

## Christian Duty and the DP's

AMERICANS have become so accustomed to astronomical figures that when we read that there are in giant cages and in hiding 1,200,000 displaced persons in Europe we are liable to regard this as merely an interesting statistic. Yet this figure is equal to that of the total population of one of our larger cities. These most miserable people are largely there because of a technical fault in the immigration laws of the United States—a flaw which the Congress seems reluctant to correct for fear of offending some misguided interests in this country.

It is estimated that about one-fifth of this vast number are Jews who would prefer to enter Palestine. But the remaining million, most of whom are Gentiles, are largely refugees from the Communism of Eastern Europe. They are people who are active anti-Communists who find it impossible

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to return to their former homes for fear of Communist reprisals. They were displaced during the War, and their native lands have since become Communist and they are loathe to return. Immediately after the War the Allied occupation forces had a comity arrangement by which they agreed to repatriate any who were found in the occupied zones whose native origin was in any other Allied country. Through this agreement thousands were forcibly repatriated to Russia or to Russian satellite countries. Their fate is unknown, but undoubtedly many of them are languishing in prison, in exile in Siberia, or in slave work-camps. Others who might be returned to Eastern Europe would face a similar fate. The evident injustice in returning all to their home countries was seen, and consequently the American authorities are maintaining hundreds of thousands in DP camps throughout Europe. What can be done with these people?

The obvious solution to the problem is that they be permitted to enter some countries in the Western Hemisphere where there is room. Some South American countries are being persuaded to accept a limited number of these people, and the United States should do its share. Our nation was founded largely as a haven for religious and political refugees. It is not an overstatement to say that the majority of our immigrants during the 18th and 19th centuries fell in this category. Many of the German immigrants who came to this country in the middle of the 19th century and who have formed so substantial a portion of our population came as refugees from German militarism. It is through no inaccurate conception of America's role in world affairs that the inscription on the Statue of Liberty reads:

"Give me your tired, your poor,  
Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,  
The wretched refuse of your teeming shore,  
Send these, the homeless, tempest-tost, to me:  
I lift my lamp beside the golden door."

It can well be established that from each wave of immigration the United States benefited, for those who enter are, by and large, the most able and aggressive from their native lands. It can certainly be established that the admission of a large number

of these present-day DP's would be of incalculable benefit to this country. Many of these people are intellectuals; practically all of them are anti-Communists; many of them base their anti-Communist principles not upon political expediency but upon their Christian beliefs. They are opposed to Communism because they are Christians.

The argument that they would disturb our political and economic stability is unconvincing. Their whole number—and we are not called upon to take them all—is less than 1/100 of our population; considerably less than our normal annual population increase.

What is blocking their entrance into this country? The regulation governing immigration quotas. About a generation ago a quota system of immigration was adopted, designed to permit only a specified number of immigrants of any one national origin to enter this country in any one year. The law was based upon the census figures of 1890 in order to permit a relatively large number of Western Europeans to enter rather than the larger number of Eastern Europeans and Italians whose wave of immigration was after that date. During the war years these quotas were not used

up, but these unused quotas cannot be applied to later years. If they could be, large numbers of these DP's could find refuge here. The Congress alone can remedy this situation, and Christians who feel that it should be remedied should urge upon their congressmen a vote for one of the several bills which will be introduced to correct this great wrong.

This is certainly not simply a political matter with which papers like the GUARDIAN have no direct interest. It is a moral matter—our fellow men, many of them bulwarks against Communism, many of them Christians suffering for their faith, are in great trouble. The means to help them is in our power. The use to which we put it may well be a test of our sincerity as a nation which professes a desire to help those throughout the world who are in trouble. If we do nothing permanent to help these DP's who are now being given temporary relief, where is the sincerity of our humanitarian professions? If we help them, they in turn will strengthen our nation, they will bring with them skills which the nation needs, and the blessing which God promises to those who help His persecuted ones will be upon us.

R. S. M.

## Life and Work in Eritrea

By CHARLES E. STANTON

**M**ANY of our friends when writing to us ask about our life and work here in Eritrea. In many ways our life is probably more pleasant than our friends back home think.

Addi Caieh is on the main road from Asmara in Eritrea to Addis Ababa in Ethiopia, and is a small center of European culture. We have such conveniences as the telephone (not in our own house), electric lights, running water and daily mail and bus service. Almost all European houses in Eritrea are very substantial, being built with thick walls of stone and lime, tile floors and zinc roofs. In front of our Addi Caieh house we have a garden of flowers and vegetables (few vegetables this year because the rains were very late). The garden is enclosed by a stone wall surmounted by a wood railing. Our

house is shaped somewhat like a horse-shoe which, in Italian fashion, gives us a sunny court in the back, encircled by flowers.

The weather is very mild and comfortable for the most part. Addi Caieh is about 8500 feet in altitude, and never gets so hot but that a fire in the evening in the fireplace seems a cheerful companion. On the other hand it never gets cold enough but that a bit of fire in the fireplace is enough to take the chill from the coolest evenings. Here in the highlands the temperature is much the same the year round, the seasons being marked by the small rains in May, the heavy rains in July and August, and the dry weather the rest of the time. For months in this period there is just no rain, and the grass dries up and the  
(See "Stanton," Page 359)

# The Gospel In Britain

*Some personal impressions received during a visit to that country*

By STANFORD REID

**G**REAT Britain today is a land of scarcity. The war which has just come to a close brought great suffering to the people. More than that, however, it struck a hard blow at the whole foundation of their economic way of life. Coupled with this must be the fact that the nation is tired out. After eight years of never-ending toil, and worry and strain, nearly everybody seems possessed of a certain lassitude. This attitude is strengthened by the present dominance of the Labor Party. For forty years this party has been promising the electorate that once it gained control, all need for long hours and hard work would be over. Now that it is the government, the people are taking it at its word. The result is that something very close to disaster is staring Great Britain in the face.

What appears to us to be the greatest requirement at the present time is the will to work. The situation would be partially met if there were an improvement in the food supply. But only partially. Men must begin to realize that as individuals they have a responsibility to work. They have to be brought back to consciousness of the fact that it is a law of God, that they can eat only if they are prepared to labor. They, as well as we on this continent, need a renewed sense of responsibility to serve God and man in all that is done in life. Once again they must be faced with their duty to be "diligent in business"—to do with all their might what God in His providence puts to their hands.

How can this be brought about? The only hope would seem to be a renewal of true Gospel preaching. Only when man is brought face to face with God in Jesus Christ, the Saviour, will he begin to see his social as well as his personal responsibility.

Unfortunately when we look at the present situation in the British churches, the hope, humanly speaking, appears very dim. The big churches seem generally dead. A kind of quasi-Romanism pervades large areas of the Church of England. In

one church in Oxford there is a sign on the door explaining that the Church of England is not a Protestant church, but one that agrees in all respects with the Church of Rome except regarding papal supremacy. The Church of Scotland for the most part seems to have lapsed back into 18th century Moderatism, while the Presbyterian Church in Ireland is riddled with Modernism. What can be expected of such churches? Many people are hungering for the Gospel, but they are not receiving anything in

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**WE ARE** happy to have this firsthand account of the present status of Calvinism in England, Scotland and Ireland. The author, the Rev. Dr. W. Stanford Reid of Canada, visited those countries during the past summer, and had an opportunity to worship in their churches, preach in their pulpits, and visit with the people. The challenge of which he speaks applies also in America.

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the nature of spiritual food. After attending a number of services in both England and Scotland the author of this article came away feeling that it is no wonder the people do not attend church. They receive nothing when they go. This lack of real preaching undoubtedly goes far in explaining why only 10% of the British people are connected with any church.

Despite the condition prevailing generally in the churches, it is heartening to find small denominations, most of them Calvinistic, which are holding forth the Word of Life in all its fulness. It is only too true that these groups, as compared with the total population, are usually small. Also they are generally not too popular with the ordinary run of people. But they are very active and energetic, and as a result of preaching the whole counsel of God they have a truly faithful following. It looks as though

these groups are Britain's great hope in her hour of crisis.

The first introduction we had to this element in the church came in London. While staying at a mission home in one of the suburbs, my wife and I were invited by a fellow Canadian to go with him to Westminster City Chapel on Buckingham Palace Gate. This offer we gladly accepted for we knew little about London, having arrived only the previous day. Knowing a little of the situation which prevailed in England we did not expect much of a sermon. Great was our joy, therefore, when we found ourselves listening to one of the greatest sermons we have ever heard, preached by the pastor of the church, Dr. Martin Lloyd-Jones. We were greatly encouraged, too, following the service, to hear from Dr. Lloyd-Jones himself of how closely he kept an eye on the efforts and labors of fellow-Calvinists on the North American continent. It was very gratifying also to find that the name of Westminster Theological Seminary and of THE PRESBYTERIAN GUARDIAN were well-known to him. So from the beginning of our sojourn in Britain we found those who were one with us in our allegiance to the Reformed Faith. It was indeed good to find the Gospel being preached in all its completeness and glory there in the very heart of old London.

In Scotland it was not long before we discovered that the principal body standing firmly for the Reformed view of the Gospel was the Free Church. Tracing its origins back to the Disruption of 1843, it has held firmly to its Calvinistic position, and proclaims boldly the doctrines of God's sovereign grace. After listening to some preachers of other denominations, it was a relief to sit and hear the faithful exposition of the Scriptures given in the Free Kirk services. One can only wish that the lack of instrumental music in the services did not form such a bar to many who might otherwise join its number. All too often even Christians allow practices

such as this to separate them from their brethren. Many seem to prefer Modernism with an organ, to orthodoxy without one!

One thing which was quite noticeable about the Free Church was the number of young people in the congregations. In a service in Glasgow at which the writer preached, the younger element was very strongly represented despite the fact that it was the time of the Glasgow Fair, when everyone who can goes away on a holiday. This same feature characterized other Free Church services. Here is one great hope for the church.

But while the Free Church is thus doing an excellent work, there is an ever-present danger. Some of the liberal denominations are beginning to pay it attention. There is the grave peril that Satan seeing it impossible to take the citadel by storm, may attempt to take it by guile. There is the danger that the Free Church, secure in its orthodoxy and its faithfulness to the Reformed Faith, may relax its vigilance. That would be a sad day for Scotland and for Christ's Kingdom everywhere.

In Northern Ireland a Calvinistic witness is maintained by the Irish Evangelical Church. This body was formed in 1926 as a result of the modernistic teaching of the Irish Presbyterian Church. It is a small body, having only about 700 members in nine congregations, and five ministers. Yet despite its comparative smallness it is a very active church. It publishes *The Irish Evangelical*, and operates the Evangelical Bookshop in Belfast. Under the leadership of men such as the Rev. W. J. Grier, a former student at old Princeton, it is carrying the Gospel to the people on every possible occasion. This summer, toward the end of August, it conducted an open-air campaign in various parts of Belfast for those who never go to church. By such methods it is gradually growing as a church, and is today the one real hope of the Reformed Faith in Northern Ireland.

While these different groups are small and very much involved in their own problems, they never forget that they are part of a much wider fellowship. They are looking outside of themselves for contact with other Reformed groups. It is a real education and a heart-warming experience to go from this continent and visit these brethren in Christ. One finds an immediate and hearty welcome when it

is known that there is the basic agreement of loyalty to the Reformed Faith. The British Calvinists have a truly Reformed ecumenical outlook. They neither demand that one shall conform to every last jot and tittle of their doctrine and order before one is received, nor do they require that one shall have an identical racial or national background before accepting him as a brother Calvinist. It is the common faith which makes the bond, and strengthens the fellowship.

This fellowship is a great experience. Bob Hope wrote a book describing his adventures amongst American G.I.'s overseas. He called it, "I Never Left Home!" How much more can the Calvinist who travels abroad say the same! With one exception, the present writer had had no contacts with the brethren in Britain before this summer. Yet there was an immediate feeling of being at home when contact was made. There was a warmth and unanimity of feeling which stirred the heart and gave real joy. Coming away from such associations, one feels strengthened and refreshed for his own work. He realizes that despite the fact that he may have his many local difficulties, he is not alone. The world over, there are others, like himself, striving to bring men to a humble faith in Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord. It is a marvel-

lously comforting and strengthening thought in these days of trial.

At the same time this fellowship is a tremendous challenge. What is happening today in Great Britain can happen in America tomorrow. There is a common and general need for men to know the sovereign grace of God. We who hold to the Reformed Faith believe that it is the great answer to the world's present problems. This means that we must get busy. If we do not, the consequences may be simply appalling. We must hold forth the Word in all its mighty power, that men may turn unto Christ the King. As well as this, we must strengthen our ties with our brethren in other parts of the world. Modernism has its ecumenical movement. Should not Calvinists have the same, not limited to men of one race, or of one language, but truly ecumenical in the real sense of that term? Moreover we must be instant in prayer upholding the hands of our brethren across the seas. Those who are in Britain and Europe today are sorely in need of our help in every possible form. Therefore let us realize that it is only as we together with them go forward with the Word in prayer and fellowship, that we can help stem the tide of sin which is seeking to drag us all into another and perhaps last world war.

## The Needed Revolution

By EDWARDS E. ELLIOTT

**T**HE *Wall Street Journal*, 1946 Pulitzer prize winner for the best editorial writing, has recently called for a revolution in Europe. For such a conservative paper to advocate radical cures is news.

The *Baltimore Sun* replied that as things now stand in western Europe, the only possible revolution is a Communist revolution, and that all non-Communist parties in these countries are determined to prevent revolution.

Here is the original statement of the *Wall Street Journal*:

"It is this failure of Europe to effect a political and economic revolution which will make whatever relief we extend largely a futile operation—futile in the sense that it will not constitute a cure. As with the indi-

vidual, so with nations, the necessary change in character and habit must come from within; it cannot be imposed from without. As long as Europe refuses to make the change, it must face the implications of its refusal. It is not a cheering thought, but perhaps only the inevitable disaster will shake Europe into a realization of what must be done."

There is no more radical and complete revolution than that which we as Calvinists have always advocated as the cure for national as well as individual sin. "Repentance unto life is a saving grace, whereby a sinner, out of a true sense of his sin, and apprehension of the mercy of God in Christ, doth, with grief and hatred of his sin, turn from it unto God, with

full purpose of, and endeavor after, new obedience." Is Europe capable of a true sense of its sin? It is very doubtful. Europe did not get into this trouble by accident. Fifty years ago Abraham Kuyper in his *Stone Lectures on Calvinism*, delivered at Princeton Theological Seminary, pointed out the coming crisis.

"After this manner then," wrote Dr. Kuyper, "we in Europe at least have arrived at what is called *modern life*, involving a radical breach with the Christian traditions of the Europe of the past. The spirit of this *modern life* is most clearly marked by the fact that it seeks the origin of man not in creation after the image of God but in evolution from the animal. Two fundamental ideas are clearly implied in this: 1. That the point of departure is no longer the ideal or the divine, but the material and the low; 2. That the sovereignty of God, which ought to be supreme, is denied and man yields himself to the mystical current of an endless process, a *regressus* and *processus* in *infinitem*. Out of the root of these two fertile ideas a double type of life is now being evolved. On the one hand the interesting, rich and highly organized life of University-circles, attainable by the more refined minds only; and at the side of this, or rather far beneath it, a materialistic life of the masses, craving after pleasure, but, in their own way, also taking their point of departure in matter, and likewise, but after their own cynical fashion, emancipating themselves from all fixed ordinances. Especially in our ever-expanding large cities this second type of life is gaining the upper hand, and overriding the voice of the country districts, and is giving a shape to public opinion, which avows its ungodly character more openly in each successive generation. Money, pleasure, and social power, these alone are the objects of pursuit; and people are constantly growing less fastidious regarding the means employed to secure them. Thus the voice of conscience becomes less and less audible, and duller the lustre of the eye which on the eve of the French revolution still reflected some gleam of the ideal. The fire of all higher enthusiasms has been quenched, only the dead embers remain. In the midst of the weariness of life, what can restrain the disappointed from taking refuge in suicide? Deprived of the wholesome influence of rest, the brain is over-stimulated and over-exerted until the asylums are no longer adequate for housing the

insane. Whether property be not synonymous with theft, becomes more and more a seriously mooted question. That life ought to be freer and marriage less binding, is being accepted more and more as an established proposition. The cause of monogamy is no longer worth fighting for, since polygamy and polyandry are being systematically glorified in all products of the realistic school of art and literature. In harmony with this, religion is of course declared superfluous because it renders life gloomy. But art, art above all, is in demand,—not for the sake of its ideal worth, but because it pleases and intoxicates the senses. Thus people live in time and for temporal things, and shut their ears to the tolling of the bells of eternity. The irrepressible tendency is to make the whole view of life concrete, concentrated, practical. And out of this modernized private life there emerges a type of social and political life characterized by a decadence in parliamentarism, by an ever stronger desire for a dictator, by a sharp conflict between pauperism and capitalism, whilst heavy armaments on land and on sea, even at the price of financial ruin, become the ideal of these powerful states whose craving for territorial expansion threatens the very existence of the weaker nations."

Kuyper, when he wrote these words, had never heard a radio, seen an auto, been on a modern battleship, seen an airplane, tank or radar screen. He did not associate Communism with the Russians. But he did detect that blood poisoning had infected the culture of Europe, and that there was "positive aversion to the only effectual antidote."

Daniel the prophet was neglected in the days of Belshazzar. His heavenly analysis did not suit the taste of the times. But at the last, he was called in and heard. Our message to our day is not welcomed by the masses. But perhaps we shall have the last word, when men are gnawing their rebellious tongues in pain and fright at the fearful judgments, famines, pestilences, storms and signs of the end.

"Behold, he cometh with the clouds. . . ." We can see the clouds of cataclysm forming up, even now. There must be a revolution in men's hearts, or the Lord will overturn, overturn, overturn the earth until he come whose right it is to reign. We are members of the revolutionary party.

## Stanton

(Continued from Page 356)

trees shed their leaves from lack of moisture.

We think ourselves fortunate that during the driest six months of the year here in the highlands, we move down to the coast. We leave here about the first of November when the cooler season on the coast is beginning. There the rains usually begin in December and last two or three months. But there is far less rain than in the highlands. After one good rain the plains which have been scorched and bare for months will begin to turn green, and after two or three more rains one can appreciate better the familiar phrase of the Bible, "the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose." Indeed the semi-desert country so common in this part of the world may come to have a fascination of its own for one who has begun to know it well.

From the viewpoint of climate, and the pleasure afforded by a change of scenery and country, we feel that our six months in the highlands and six months in the lowland is a pleasant arrangement. And I feel a little like Abraham as I gather about me my household and cattle and set out upon these annual migrations.

Social life here is not nearly so barren, either, as our friends may think. The English-speaking individuals in Addi Caieh may be counted on one's fingers—in fact, our family constitutes just half the English-speaking population. It seems enough. Major Passey's wife (he was recently promoted from Captain to Major) and my wife are the only English-speaking women. We see one or both of the Passeys frequently. Every Saturday evening they come to our house and we read Shakespeare, each taking different parts. This is a scheme I have been wanting to try out ever since my college days. We all seem to enjoy it. A fine tennis court has just been completed and is available to all who have the necessary equipment (which we do not). For those who enjoy walking, there is plenty of space and scenery. From our plateau one can look down to the Haddas River, a thousand feet below. It is a beautiful sight in a country where trees and vegetation are rather scarce.

One of our amusements is that of laughing at the exaggerated statements

some people manage to get into print about this country. (We receive the *Reader's Digest*.)

From the viewpoint of health we are well protected. The hospital is just across the street, and the Italian doctor lives next door to us. He has three little girls about the same age as ours, and so ours are learning Italian the easy way!

There are obvious difficulties about living in such a country. One of them is the high cost of the necessities. By American standards Eritrea is a barren country. Only in good years can the people produce enough food for even a meagre sustenance. The price of wheat in the market today is over seventeen cents a pound, dirt and all. Yet the past season was one of the best, and wheat is one of the staples of life here. Abujedid, a very coarse cotton cloth which is the chief material used for native dress, costs 80 cents a meter (about 39 inches). As a result the natives must often go hungry and in rags. Our boy Ahmed, single and of sober habits, cannot make ends meet on his pay of \$20 a month plus some clothes. Meat is, relatively, the cheapest food. It is available all the time. Beef sells at 20 cents a pound, flat rate (quality uniformly tough). Goat meat is half that price. Goats can graze on the thousands of mountain slopes too steep for other domestic animals to climb, and goat meat and milk are a chief means of livelihood for many of the Muslim nomads.

I sometimes fear that our language work is progressing rather more slowly than some of our friends back home may expect. When we began our study of the Saho language there was nothing at all in English on that language except a few notes a British officer had jotted down. In Italian there is an Italian Saho vocabulary of some five thousand words, but many of these are various verb forms of the same stem. I do not believe the Italian who wrote this work was familiar with the construction or meaning of the words he wrote down. It is quite easy to reproduce on paper in a rough way the words of an unfamiliar language, without understanding the meaning or grammatical construction. Most of the Eritreans understand some Italian, and we occasionally meet one who has been to Rome to study.

My wife and I now have a Saho vocabulary of over three thousand words. By this I mean that we have

memorized these words so that we can recognize them when we hear them. These words constitute the bulk of the language as it is spoken by the Miniferi tribes with whom we have been living. We have a corresponding amount of grammar and verb forms. The main dialect of the Saho language is that of the Assaorta who live to the north of our area. In recent weeks I have been working with a language informant who speaks that dialect, and I have been getting many new words.

As yet we have done almost no preaching or evangelistic work. We do not know the language well enough. We can talk with the people quite freely about the things we hear them talk about, such things as the care of their goats and sheep and camels, the

planting and harvesting of grain, and the buying and selling of goods. But to preach the gospel to them will be to introduce a new body of truth into their language, and to do this properly will require much careful work. We feel that the proper way to do it is by first translating the Bible, or part of it, into their language. In so doing we will discover the best terms and idioms for expressing its precious truths.

We do not contemplate accomplishing anything spectacular here. The basis upon which we hope for fruit from our labors is, first of all, the promises of God, and the sovereign power of the Holy Spirit to work when, and where He wills; and secondly persistent application of ourselves to the work God has given us to do.

## The Visible Church

### Part 6: The Witness of the Visible Church

By the REV. JOHANNES G. VOS

Pastor, The Reformed Presbyterian Church, Clay Center, Kansas

SCRIPTURE affirms that the Church is "the pillar and ground of the truth" (I Tim. 3:15), and it must be the visible Church that is referred to, for in the same verse it is called the house of God, in which persons are to conduct themselves according to the instructions Paul had just written concerning public worship, the silence of women, and the qualifications for the offices of bishop and deacon. But in what sense is the visible Church the pillar and ground of the truth?

Although Roman Catholic commentators naturally take the phrase as relating to the alleged infallibility of the Church, most Protestants who have interpreted the phrase as referring to the Church rather than to Timothy have followed Calvin in holding that the Church is the pillar and ground of truth because it is the divinely appointed instrument by which the truth is perpetuated, lest it perish from the memory of men. The visible Church is thus the custodian, defender, and proclaimer of, divinely revealed truth.

Although this proposition will be readily accepted by orthodox Christians in general, a problem inevitably arises in connection with it. Of what

truth is the Church the pillar and ground? To how much divinely revealed truth is the visible Church to bear testimony? Human fallibility results in diverse and conflicting views of divinely revealed truth. In view of this diversity of faith, how can the visible Church really bear witness to the truth?

The problem under consideration at this point should not be mistaken for the problem of the degree of conformity to the Church's creed which ought to be required of officers, members, or applicants for membership. That is indeed a real and important problem, and it will be discussed at a later point. But the question before us now is how the visible Church, in view of the diversity of faith which inevitably exists among those who profess the true religion, can have a creed at all. We are raising not the question of what should be required of candidates for Church membership or office, but the question of how those who are already members can express their Christian faith not merely as so many individuals, but in a corporate testimony for the truth. It is true, of course, that the Church decides who can be its members but it is also true that the members de-



termine what the Church shall stand for.

This may perhaps be illustrated by considering the civil government of a nation. The government indeed decides who is qualified for citizenship in the nation, but it is also true that the citizens determine what shall be the character of the constitution and government itself.

Similarly there exist two reciprocal functions in the visible Church: (a) the function of determining the membership of the Church itself; and (b) the function of the members in determining what shall be the character of the Church's corporate witness to the world. The Church is the pillar and ground of the truth, certainly; but after all, the Church is not an abstract ideal; it is a real body made up of individual members, each of whom is subject to error and therefore views the truth somewhat differently from all others. If the Church is in any real sense the pillar and ground of the truth, it must bear a corporate witness to the truth. But that witness cannot be merely an ideal detached from the actual beliefs of the Church's members. In some sense it must be the collective product of the doctrinal convictions of individual persons, as these view the divine special revelation. How can the visible Church, made up as it is of fallible individuals, bear a corporate witness to the truth?

The fact that every Christian is subject to error must always be

reckoned with. Just as every Christian, even the most holy, has within him a remaining element of the corruption of original sin, which inevitably finds expression in actual transgressions, so every Christian, even the most enlightened, has within him a remaining element of intellectual perversity, which inevitably finds expression in some degree of doctrinal error in his personal convictions. Every Christian, it must be realized, has within him the germs of heresy. Just as the corruption of original sin, and its expression in actual transgressions, are subdued, but not eradicated, by the process of sanctification, so the germs of heresy are in the Christian, and their tendency to find expression in actual errors, is kept under control, but not eradicated, by the gradual process of illumination by the Holy Spirit which accompanies the work of sanctification. And like sanctification, illumination cannot be total in the present life. There are also those in the visible Church who are only professing Christians, and who lack the Spirit's work of regeneration, sanctification and illumination. Such persons have only those operations of the Spirit which pertain to the realm of common grace. Yet they exist and have an influence among the regenerate members of the visible Church, and will inevitably have an effect on the character of its witness to the world.

(To be Continued)

## Across the Country in Orthodox Presbyterian Churches

**Berkeley, California.** Covenant Church was host to the congregation of First Church of San Francisco for a joint Thanksgiving musical festival. Following the program, the ladies of Covenant Church served refreshments. The Rev. John Gray of Ripon preached the sermon at the Thanksgiving Day service.

**San Francisco, California.** The Rev. Carl Ahlfeldt, pastor of First Church, is conducting two classes in the study of doctrine, for young people between the ages of 8 and 15. The auditorium of the church has been equipped with new chairs, the old ones being

used for Sunday school purposes. Two members of First Church, Mrs. Sarah J. Cass and Miss Dora E. Parks, were recently called to membership in the Church Triumphant.

**Los Angeles, California.** Five persons were received into membership in Westminster Church at the last communion service. The church is rejoicing in the steady progress which has been made in reducing its indebtedness. Weekly services are being conducted by the Sunday school superintendent in the Los Angeles County Hospital. Young people have a gospel team which conducts services

in Rest Homes and for shut-ins.

A newly organized choir of about 20 voices, under the leadership of Mr. Mel Kerber of the Bible Institute, is assisting in the worship services of Beverly Church. The pastor, the Rev. Dwight L. Poundstone, reports that young people of the church put up 1147 small cups of jelly and jam, each with a Scripture verse glued to it, which will be distributed to patients in the County Hospital. The church has been able to borrow locally the funds needed to complete its building, and the work is going forward.

About fifty persons attended a Missionary Fellowship supper at Grace Church in November. The Rev. Henry Coray of First Church, Long Beach, was the speaker of the evening. He also showed pictures of Manchuria, where he spent some time in missionary service. The church has shipped six boxes of food supplies to Bruce Hunt in Korea, for use by needy Christians there. A Thanksgiving Day service was attended by about 70 persons.

**Bancroft, South Dakota.** The Rev. Melvin B. Nonhof, pastor of the churches at Bancroft, Manchester and Yale, is recovering from some minor surgical treatment which he underwent recently at Bancroft Hospital. Earnings from the "God's Acre" project of the three congregations have been turned in, and the results have been excellent. A week of special meetings was held at Bancroft, with the Rev. Walter J. Magee of Carson, N. D., as the evangelist.

**Carson, North Dakota.** Two new elders have been installed in the church at Carson, and one in the church at Lark. A junior and a senior choir are now assisting in the services of the Lark church. New seats have been installed in the auditorium there, providing more adequate seating capacity. On November 9th the Leith church suffered the loss through death of its oldest member, Mrs. Nicholas Emch. She was 91 years of age, and leaves six sons and three daughters, forty-five grandchildren, eighty-nine great-grandchildren, and three great-great-grandchildren. A newly organized Missionary Society at Leith is holding fortnightly meetings in the various homes, with studies of the Book of Acts and of material in the GUARDIAN as part of its regular program.

**Hamill, South Dakota.** Improve-

ments to both manse and church building have been completed. A gas furnace is in use in the church. Some of the main roads in the neighborhood have been graveled, making travel easier, especially in bad weather. A weekly Bible class is being conducted in Winner for some of the young people attending High School there. The Rev. Edward B. Wybenga, pastor of Westminster Church, and members of the session are engaged in a program of House-Visitation for the spiritual upbuilding of the church.

**Volga, South Dakota.** The Sunday school of Calvary Church has begun an attendance contest with the Sunday school of Faith Church, Quarryville, Pa. On November 19th the Missionary Society sponsored a praise service at which the Choral Society of the Volga Christian Reformed Church gave a concert. The Choral group is directed by Mrs. Milton Amie of Calvary Church.

**Gresham, Wisconsin.** The men of the Old Stockbridge Indian Church worked hard to get the auditorium in condition to be heated for a series of evangelistic services the week of December 9th. The Rev. George W. Marston of Evergreen Park, Ill., was the speaker. Temperature in this area has been below the zero mark already, and services for a month were held at the manse. Early in November a group of men from Calvary Church, Cedar Grove came to Gresham and in less than a day had completed painting the manse.

**Evergreen Park, Illinois.** On November 21st one hundred twenty members of the Westminster Chapel and Sunday school families gathered for a "pot luck" supper and an evening of fellowship, in a large room in the local public school. There were songs, special musical numbers, and some motion pictures were shown by Mr. Henry Riemersma. A Sunday school Christmas program is being planned for December 21st. Midweek prayer services are being held in the homes of members of the congregation. A quantity of used clothing and canned goods was sent to Korea for needy Christians there. On December 14th the Rev. Vincent Crosssett, a missionary on furlough from service in China, spoke at the services of the Chapel.

**Westchester, Illinois.** A fellowship supper and Christmas program are being planned by the Westchester Chapel congregation for December

19th. The Rev. George W. Marston and the Rev. Edmund P. Clowney are continuing a survey of new homes in the area. This survey has resulted in an increased attendance at both Chapel and Sunday school. "Bundles for Korea" are being collected and sent to Christians in that country.

**Cincinnati, Ohio.** The Machen League of First Church sponsored a breakfast followed by an informal service of thanks on Thanksgiving morning, in keeping with a practice established a year ago. The Rev. Charles Ellis, pastor, marked the 300th anniversary of the completion of the Westminster Shorter Catechism, by beginning a series of sermons on Catechism subjects, which is being continued at Sunday morning services. On December 9th Mr. Mark Fakkema spoke on the subject of Christian Schools, at a gathering at the church attended by representatives of other neighboring churches, as well as of First Church.

**Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.** Covenant Church was host, early in November, to a Young People's Conference for groups from the Western Pennsylvania area. The Rev. John P. Galbraith of Kirkwood, Pennsylvania, was the guest speaker. Other leaders were the Rev. Calvin K. Cummings of Covenant Church and the Rev. LeRoy B. Oliver of Faith Church, Harrisville.

**Harrisville, Pennsylvania.** Twenty-seven young people from Faith Church attended the Y. P. Conference in Pittsburgh early in November. Miss Margaret Duff addressed the Western Pennsylvania branch of the Presbyterial Auxiliary meeting in Faith Church November 1st.

**Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.** The Rev. Samuel J. Allen has accepted a call to a church in Florida, in the Presbyterian Church U. S. (Southern). Mr. Allen preached his final sermons at Gethsemane Church on November 30th. A pulpit committee has been appointed. On December 7th the Rev. George J. Willis, field representative of Westminster Seminary, conducted the services.

**Wildwood, New Jersey.** Miss Florence Handyside, missionary appointee to Korea, recently addressed the missionary society of Calvary Church, and her message was greatly appreciated. A surprise shower was given her on the occasion of her visit. A senior choir has been organized,

under the direction of Mrs. Leslie Dunn, and assists in morning services frequently. With the removal of all indebtedness on the church building, contributions are being received for the erection of a manse. At a well-attended Thanksgiving service, an offering was taken for the Boardwalk Chapel.

**Trenton, New Jersey.** Thirty six young people of Grace Chapel will receive awards for church attendance in December in connection with the "Go-to-church-Brigade." Nine of these are full awards. In November the congregation determined to proceed as soon as possible with the construction of the cellar of the new church building. Recent guest preachers have included Dr. Robert Strong, Dr. N. B. Stonehouse, the Rev. Samuel J. Allen and the Rev. Leon L. Blackman. Newly elected officers of the Girl's Christian Club are Helen Long, Mary Whitley, Gloria Clark and Barbara Halliday.

**Fair Lawn, New Jersey.** A contest is beginning on December 7th between the Sunday school of Grace Chapel and the Sunday school of First Church, Omaha, Nebraska, based on increasing the regular average attendance. Building Fund banks have been distributed among families interested in the work of Grace Chapel. Nearly 60 pounds of food-stuffs have been sent to Bruce Hunt for Korean Christians.

**Franklin Square, New York.** On November 23rd the Bible School was addressed by "Uncle Win" Ruelke of the Child Evangelism Fellowship. A "Fishing Contest" is in progress to encourage the pupils in getting new children for the school. A generous offering for the Committee on Foreign Missions was received at the Thanksgiving service. During recent months gift packages have been sent to the missionaries of the church, both at home and on the foreign field.

**Schenectady, New York.** On the evening of November 23rd the choir of Calvary Church presented "The Gospel in Music," a service of anthems and solos all in the words of Scripture. Soloists included the pastor, the Rev. Raymond M. Meiners. An offering for the Choir Robe Fund was received. Over 50 persons attended a worship service on Thanksgiving evening.

**Albany, New York.** On November 7th, 116 members and friends of the Covenant Church Sunday school

gathered for the fourth annual Sunday school banquet. The theme of the banquet program was "Through Faith to Freedom." Mrs. Donald Hill, a member of the church, recently inherited the library of her grandfather who was a minister, and has given many valuable books to the Sunday school and to the pastor, the Rev. Herman Petersen. A Christmas gift box was sent to Frank Renak, who is the only church member still in the army and who is stationed with the

occupation forces in Germany.

**Hamden, Connecticut.** The Young People's Christian Fellowship of First Church sponsored a weekend of special meetings December 6 and 7, with the Rev. Edward L. Kellogg of West Collingswood as guest preacher. Invitations to attend the Saturday evening meeting were extended to several youth groups in neighboring churches. A number of visitors attended the regular services on Sunday, at which Mr. Kellogg also preached.

troubles of various sorts. He speaks of the "sign of the Son of Man" appearing in heaven. All peoples of the earth shall mourn, He says, for they shall see Him coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And the angels shall be sent to gather His own people from all over the earth, that they may meet Him and be with Him.

We dare say that the understanding of these things will be much more a matter of hindsight than of foresight. In other words, after the time has come, we will be able to look back and see how that each thing mentioned was perfectly fulfilled. But to look forward, or around us, and say definitely that such and such an event fulfills such and such a word of our Lord, is more than we can expect. Rather in all the strange events of earth we should see portents of the Day of days, and should be the more encouraged to await eagerly His appearing.

Jesus stresses two points concerning what He has been saying. The first is the certainty of the events. Heaven and earth shall pass away, but not His words. The second is the general ignorance concerning the day and hour when His coming shall take place. Only the Father knows that, for it is subject to His sovereign determination. Even the Son, in His human nature, is ignorant at this point. It follows that all attempts to set a day and a date, or even a time, when these events will occur, is contrary to the teaching of Scripture. But if no time is definitely indicated, then all time is possibly involved. Right now we should be ready, for perchance He may come when we least expect it.

Our Lord concludes His discourse with three parables. The first tells of the wise and foolish virgins. Some were prepared, but others lacked the essential item that fitted them to accompany the bridegroom in to the marriage feast. If the interpretation generally placed on the oil is correct, that essential item is the Holy Spirit, in which case we have here another indication of the sovereignty of God in the salvation of men, for the Holy Spirit is the gift of God to His own. How often our Lord dealt with the distinctions which would be made, within the body of the professing church, at the last day, as between the true and the false disciples. Think, for example, of the conclusion of the

## The Life of Jesus Christ

By the REV. LESLIE W. SLOAT

### LESSON 27

#### The Olivet Discourse

SCRIPTURE: Matt. 24:1-25:46; Mark 13:1-37; Luke 21:5-38.

ON ONE of these last days, as Jesus and the disciples were leaving the temple grounds at Jerusalem, they called His attention to the great stones with which the temple was built. Jesus replied that the time was coming when even this great building would be destroyed, and when one of these huge stones would not be left upon another.

Later, after the group had arrived at the Mount of Olives, several disciples asked Jesus privately when this destruction of which He spoke would occur, and what would be the signs of His own coming, and of the end of the world—or as it is in the original—the "consummation of the age." The discourse of Jesus in reply to these queries has come to be known as the "Olivet Discourse."

In this discourse Jesus removed to a degree the veil which hangs over the future, and disclosed the general trend of events in the history of the world and the Church. He had been asked several separate questions: when the destruction of Jerusalem would take place, and when He Himself would come again. The disciples associated the two events in their own minds.

Jesus did not give dates, or specific details of the future. But he did speak of the rise of false Messiahs, of the growth of trouble between nations, of hatred and persecution directed

against Christians, of the appearance of false prophets and of the general spread of wickedness. He told more particularly of certain things that would be associated with the destruction of Jerusalem, and included a reference to the "abomination of desolation" mentioned by Daniel. Persons in Jerusalem when these things occurred were to flee, not to wait for some expected divine intervention and deliverance.

It is an historical fact that many of the things about which our Lord spoke did occur in connection with the capture and destruction of Jerusalem by the Roman armies under Titus in 70 A.D. It is the considered opinion of many able Bible scholars that our Lord was speaking of that historical event. But there are many other scholars, of equal devotion to the Bible, who feel that the fall of Jerusalem in 70 A.D. was but a preliminary fulfillment of our Lord's words, and that the final fulfillment will take place when He comes again to earth in solemn and mighty judgment. And we are quite willing to agree that the judgments which have occurred from time to time in history are prophetic in character, and all point to the great and final judgment.

The discourse then moves on to deal with the other question the disciples had asked, about the return of Christ and the end of the age. The words of Jesus at this point have yet to receive a clear interpretation. He speaks of great changes in the outward universe—of signs in heaven above and in the earth beneath, of

Sermon on the Mount, of the Parable of the wheat and the tares, of the guest without the wedding garment. What a warning this should be to all of us, to examine our own faith, that it be genuine trust in Christ as Savior of our souls.

The second parable, similar to one already noted in Luke, concerns a man who left his home for a time, and gave to his servants varying sums of money to be used by them during his absence. As the previous parable emphasizes the necessity of true faith, so this one calls for devoted living,—for the use on our part, in this world, for His glory, of the talents, abilities and possessions our Savior has given to us. We are to remember that we shall be required to give an accounting of our stewardship, when on that last day we shall stand again in His blessed presence.

And finally there is the parable—perhaps not so much a parable as a pictorial description—of our Lord's own glorious return. He speaks of it in terms of judgment, when He shall sit upon the throne of judgment, and all peoples of the earth shall be gathered before Him. The first time our Lord came to earth as a humble baby, born in a stable, raised in a lowly family, destined to a life of conflict, opposition and final death. The second time He shall come in glory, with the angels of heaven as His companions, and those who before opposed Him shall stand silent in His presence, to hear the word of condemnation.

As we listen to this discourse of our Lord, spoken on Mount Olivet as the days of His earthly pilgrimage were drawing to a close, we cannot but help be deeply moved. What a sad picture He presents of the world and humanity. What He had experienced in His own time, He saw too as the character of the history yet to be unfolded. Can we, looking back from the vantage point of twenty centuries, say that He was wrong. Does not history bear witness to the things of which He spoke—to the spread of iniquity, to wars and tumult, to persecution and judgment? But does it not also speak of the grace of God in the spread of the Church, and of lives devoted to Him and to His kingdom? And thus does not all of history point also to the time of a final conflict, of a final judgment, of a final end when righteousness—His righteousness—shall be exalted, and every con-

trary force and opposing opinion shall be cast down? So general revelation confirms that which is declared in special revelation. Are we ready to stand in the judgment? Only those who look upon Christ as personal Savior and sovereign Lord dare contemplate with equanimity, yes, with joy, the coming of that great day. For such, even, it is a day much to be longed for, and in its contemplation we have great delight.

#### QUESTIONS ON LESSON 27

##### Detail Questions:

1. What prophecy did Jesus make concerning the temple at Jerusalem?
2. What general picture did Jesus present concerning the future?
3. Did Jesus teach that He would return to earth some time? Is it possible for us to know the exact date of that event?
4. What was the parable of the ten

virgins? What is the teaching of the parable?

5. What does Jesus say will happen when He returns to earth?

##### Discussion Questions:

1. Can we expect the world ever to be entirely free of war? Should we seek to prevent war?
2. What changes in the administration of the Kingdom of God were involved in the coming destruction of Jerusalem?
3. Contrast briefly the first and second comings of Christ?
4. What are the responsibilities of the disciples of Jesus toward those things He has given to them? What are some of the possessions committed to us? Are truth and doctrine included as well as material goods?
5. What will characterize the lives of those who will not be afraid of Jesus at His second coming?



Miss Blakemore and Mrs. Walker, teachers, with some of the pupils of

the West Collingswood Christian School.

# GUARDIAN NEWS

## *The* COMMENTATOR

VIEWING THE NEWS FROM THE RELIGIOUS NEWS SERVICE AND THE RELIGIOUS AND SECULAR PRESS

### **Supreme Court Considers Illinois Religious Education Program**

THE Supreme Court of the United States has heard arguments and taken under advisement the famous Champaign, Illinois, religious education case. In this case the parent of a child in the school, herself a professed atheist, has maintained that the religious education classes conducted in the school buildings during school hours constitute a violation of the U. S. Constitution. She lost the case in the Illinois courts, and appealed to the Supreme Court.

Under the program in effect in the Champaign schools, the Council of Religious Education, composed of Protestants, Catholics and Jews, is authorized to send teachers into ten elementary and one junior high schools, to conduct religious classes for a half hour each week. Pupils enroll voluntarily with the consent of their parents, and are taught by an instructor of their faith. Mrs. McCollum, the complainant, asserts that her son was embarrassed and ridiculed because he was the only pupil in his class who did not enroll in a religious session.

A case such as this makes it more and more apparent that the introduction of religious education, in any form, into the public schools, is subject to definite hazards. The Champaign school board claims that it is aiding all religious groups in its diversified plan, and thus is within the law as specified in the Constitution. It admitted, however, that it had not been found possible to set up classes for a "sect" unless a "sufficient number" of pupils of that sect applied.

Of course we disagree with the claims of atheism. But in a case such as this we perhaps have something in common with them. For Biblical orthodoxy is probably as far from the indefinite teaching sponsored by a joint council of Protestants, Catholics,

and Jews, as is Atheism. To Atheism, the program is a teaching of religion. To us, the program is probably, in large part at least, a teaching of false religion. But in either case, we have here a public teaching of religion, supported by tax funds. Interestingly enough the lawyer for the defense refused to discuss the question of just what was taught in the classes. The question, he said, was as to the constitutionality of the program, not as to the content of the curriculum.

The decision of the Supreme Court will be awaited with interest, for it will undoubtedly have a bearing upon the whole question of released-time classes and other religious programs connected with the public schools.

### **Jehovah's Witnesses Convicted**

IN ANOTHER case of religious significance, the Supreme Court upheld the conviction of certain members of the Jehovah's Witnesses sect. The defendants were three men who had sought ministerial classification under the wartime draft regulations. The local draft board refused them that classification. They were placed in conscientious objector camps, but failed to return after receiving weekend passes.

The local board denied them ministerial classification on the ground that they were occupied with secular employment, and did not come under the administrative order relative to ministerial classification, even though they spent some time in religious activities.

The court majority, in the 5-4 decision, held that the local board had sufficient evidence before it to justify

it in denying the men ministerial classification.

The point of interest in this case, evidently, is how one is to determine whether a person is a minister or not. There are ordained ministers who are largely or entirely occupied in what is technically secular business. There are individuals not officially ordained by any religious organization, who yet devote much of their time to religious activities and promotion. Congress in passing the draft law tried to provide a basis to guide the local boards in deciding the question. That the law was not clear concerning every possible situation is not strange.

Here again we find the civil courts and government called upon to decide a question of a religious character. The answers given in such cases never satisfy the people most immediately involved. We do not profess to have the solution to the problem. But it certainly deserves study.

### **Religious Freedom Statement**

A SUB-COMMITTEE has approved for submission to the full United Nations Human Rights Commission, a statement on religious freedom. The statement reads: "1. Every person shall have the right to freedom of religion, conscience and belief, including the right, either alone or in community with other persons of like mind, to hold and manifest any religious or other belief, to change his belief, and to practice any form of religious worship and observance; and no person shall be required to do any act which is contrary to such worship and observance. 2. Every person of full age and sound mind, shall be free, either alone or in community with other persons of like mind, to give and receive any form of religious teaching, and to persuade other persons of full

age and sound mind of the truths of his belief, and, in the case of a minor, a parent or guardian shall be free to determine what religious teaching he shall receive. 3. The above rights and freedoms shall be subject only to such limitations prescribed by law as are necessary to protect public order and the welfare, morals and freedoms of others."

In some countries, notably those Catholic-dominated, the teaching or manifestation of Protestantism is considered contrary to the public welfare and morals. It might well be that in Communist dominated countries the teaching of any religion would be so considered. And in democratic countries even now to a large extent the acceptance and promotion of Communist beliefs is also considered contrary to public welfare and morals. Thus does point No. 3 above cancel out what is said in the first two points, depending on the local circumstances.

Such things as religious freedom, tolerance, racial equality and the like cannot be legislated into existence. They are matters of personal attitudes, and depend upon the character of the individual. Only in a community where the grace of God has wrought its work of regeneration and sanctification can we expect envy, hatred, strife, divisions and the other fruits of sin to be in a measure overcome, and true liberty to exist.

### Bible Distribution Plans

THE American Bible Society plans to operate next year on the largest budget in its 131 year history. Some three million dollars is expected to be expended in printing and distributing the Scriptures.

Specific plans call for this distribution: 78,000 Bibles and 36,000 Testaments in the Philippines; 125,000 Bibles and 600,000 Testaments in Japan; 130,000 Bibles, 130,000 Testaments and 690,000 Gospels in Bulgaria; 700,000 Bibles and 1,155,000 Testaments in Germany; 250,000 Bibles and 200,000 Testaments in Korea; and 150,000 modern Greek Testaments for Greece. Schedules have also been set up for Russia, Czechoslovakia, Romania, Ukraine, and other countries.

### Blames Secularism for Crime

SECULARISM is the basic cause of crime, according to J. Edgar Hoover, director of the F. B. I. In an address prepared for delivery to a conference on Ministerial Training, he denounced the "apparent quiescence" of church people in the face of corruption in high places.

Mr. Hoover went on to state, "The crime problem is essentially a youth problem. In the first nine months of this year the arrests of boys under 21 years of age increased 13.6 per cent over the same period last year. The greatest increase in arrests of boys under 21 was for offenses against common decency, which increased 26 per cent over 1946. . . . Secularism has taken its toll. Too many homes consist of four walls, furniture, something to eat and a place to sleep. The spirit of parenthood has vanished, or, to be more correct, has been superseded by one of secularism. The moral fibre of the nation has weakened. Standards of decency have been polluted. Human rights have been trampled in the slime of corruption, indifference and selfishness. A wanton disregard for personal responsibility is growing. . . . The danger of communism in America," he added, "lies not in the fact that it is a political philosophy, but in the awesome fact that it is a materialistic religion, inflaming in its adherents a destructive fanaticism. Communism is secularism on the march. It is a mortal foe of Christianity. . . ."

### W and J College Breaks with Presbyterians

WASHINGTON and Jefferson College, identified with the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. since the 1870's, has announced that it has broken off with the church for trying to usurp its authority. The denomination is supposed to have laid before the school officials a set of regulations regarding faculty, trustees, and curriculum. Reportedly, members of the faculty must be members in good standing of an evangelical Christian church. Also these regulations called for a course in Bible at the College. Such a course has been given before, but apparently the College is planning

to drop it in favor of a more generalized course on comparative religion.

The relationship of the College to the Church involved the annual contribution by the denominational Committee on Education of a certain sum for the College. The College had been receiving from \$1,000 to \$5,000 each year from the committee, and had also received and been promised a much larger sum from the denomination's Restoration fund.

The president of the College claimed that there had been no change in policy. He alleged that the school had always operated independently, and was merely reaffirming its former position. From the church angle, the matter will be referred to the Pennsylvania Synod for advice.

### Christmas in the Public School

IN VIEW of the current discussions concerning religion in the public school, it is not surprising to find Christmas getting into trouble also.

The assistant superintendent in charge of the Brooklyn public schools ruled that Christmas carols that referred to the nativity of Christ or which had religious significance might not be sung in the schools. The assistant superintendent, who is a Jew, said that his order was designed to avoid giving offense to any segment of the population. He held that definite sectarianism in the schools was prohibited by the Constitution of the State of New York.

A day or two later the superintendent of the schools revoked the order. Schools will therefore hold exercises which, in the judgment of the principal, teachers and participants, are "suitable." "Christmas," he said, "has been celebrated in the schools of our nation ever since the founding of our great public educational system. It is no time now, when we are fighting materialism and irreligion in the world, to eliminate such celebration from our public educational system."

### Want to Be a Minister's Wife?

THE University of the South (Episcopal) located at Swannee, Tenn.,

has started a series of courses designed to prepare young women for a career as wives of clergymen. More than a score of young ladies are at present enrolled. The full course will attempt to deal with all problems and opportunities confronting the wife of a parish minister. The report does not state whether the ladies are merely hopeful, or whether they are already betrothed to prospective clergymen.

### Congregationalists Oppose Merger

**P**ROPOSED merger of the Congregational and Evangelical-Reformed denominations has run into strong opposition among the former group. The leading difficulty seems to center around church government. The Evangelical-Reformed group has a tradition of presbyterial organization, with sessions and synods. The Congregational Church holds to the autonomy of the local church. Individual congregations, including that of the Park Street Church in Boston, have indicated that if a union were to take place, they would not go into it, but would withdraw, thus making more divisions than now exist.

One hundred ninety Congregational clergymen meeting in Chicago recently voiced their opposition to the plan of merger. On the other hand it is reported that the voting among local congregations of the Congregationalist Church is strongly in favor of the union.

Some of the church leaders have declared themselves as being in favor of the plan of federated relationship now being advocated by E. Stanley Jones, rather than the merger,

### Southern Church on Federal Council

**P**RESBYTERIES of the Southern Presbyterian Church have been voting on the question of withdrawing from the Federal Council of Churches, in line with the action of the last Assembly referring the matter to the Presbyteries. The December 15th issue of *The Presbyterian Outlook* reported that 42 Presbyteries had declared themselves for the Council, 12 against it, with 33 not yet voting. The trend

of the voting at this date seems thus to be for remaining in the Council.

### Telephones and the Missionaries

**M**EMBERS of a Baptist church in Nashville, Tenn., recently enjoyed listening in on a telephone conversation with one of the church missionaries, stationed in Colombia, South America. The telephone company installed an amplifier in the church auditorium, and about 300 people listened in to the call, which was handled on this end by an executive secretary of the Southern Baptist convention. The phone call was a part of the day-long missionary program by the local church.

### National Protestant Headquarters

**P**LANS are under way for the construction, in Columbus, Ohio, of a "Temple of Goodwill," a large building designed to provide office space for the national headquarters of all Protestant denominations. An option has been secured on a proposed downtown site. It is expected the building will cost in the neighborhood of 20 million dollars. A number of individual denominations have endorsed the idea. Construction is not expected to start for a year or two, but in due course we may expect to find the headquarters of many denominational organizations under one roof.

### Presbyterian Life Due February 14th

**I**T HAS been announced that *Presbyterian Life*, the new denominational magazine of the Northern Presbyterian denomination, will make its initial appearance on February 14th, and will appear each two weeks thereafter. The general manager will be Robert J. Cadigan, a former associate editor of the magazine *Holiday*.

Meanwhile the report previously circulated, that *Presbyterian Life* would try to buy out other magazines in the Northern Presbyterian Church, has been tentatively denied. What will

happen to them, however, if the new paper proves to be a huge success, remains to be seen.

### The Archbishop Again

**T**HE Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. Geoffrey Francis Fisher, who a little while ago attracted some attention to himself by publicly rebuking the Bishop of Birmingham for heresy, has now publicly rebuked the Dean of Canterbury Cathedral for his pro-Soviet views.

The Very Rev. Hewlett Johnson, the dean in question, has gained for himself the popular designation of "Red Dean," because of his general and frequent endorsement of the Communist regimes of eastern and central Europe. Dean Johnson has recently toured the Continent, and was well-received and roundly cheered in the pro-Soviet areas.

The Archbishop disassociated himself completely from the views expressed by Dean Johnson. He declared that he was neither responsible for, nor able to control, the dean's actions outside of the confines of his ecclesiastical jurisdiction. The dean was appointed to his position by Prime Minister Ramsay MacDonald.

The Archbishop was concerned lest the utterances of Dean Johnson be taken as authoritative because of his position at Canterbury, and thus affect the relation between the Church of England and churches of other countries.

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