

## FROM WHERE WE STAND The Fragile Wall Of Respectability

He thought about it afterwards. How had he been reduced, from respected citizen to common beggar, in just a few hours? How had it all started?

It was only a tiny spot of printer's ink on the cuff of his trousers, but the chain of events which followed produced a comedy of errors without much humor. Being reduced to begging is very seldom, if ever, funny.

He had worked late that day on a report promised before midnight. As was his habit when quitting-time found him still in the office, he phoned his wife to tell her he would be late.

"Why don't you bring the report with you and finish it at home?" she asked. She said dinner was almost ready—would be ready by the time he could drive home—and the children liked to eat at least one meal per day with their father. He could take the report to his man after dinner.

He knew he was nearly out of gasoline and had planned to stop on the way home to fill up, but dinner was waiting and he hurried on thinking he would stop at the service station when he went out later in the evening.

With dinner over and the report finished, he sat down for a few minutes before delivering the material.

Then he thought about it. That spot of ink on his cuff would dry and be hard to remove. It was a good thing he wore wash-and-wear pants, he thought.

Into the laundry with his old painting dungarees he went. Onto the convenient shelf went keys, wallet, jack knife and other assorted pocket paraphernalia. Into the washer went the soiled trousers and into the disreputable old painting clothes went he.

He really needed a shave. It had been a long day. But he would just drop the report in the letter slot and no one would see him. The hint of snow in the air made his think of his warmest clothes, so he reached for his old sheepskin coat with the fur collar and his old stocking cap. They didn't look so good, but he wasn't planning to be out in society. He pulled on his boots against the cold around his ankles, and he was on his way.

Pocket the report, he thought, then

stop and get gasoline at Paul's where he had a charge account. But the hour was later than he realized, and the station was closed.

"Oh well," he said, "There are other stations open along the road."

When he had gone quite a distance from home he pulled in beside the pumps of a strange gasoline station and reached for his wallet.

Truth came to him like a pricked balloon in the pit of his stomach. He saw in his mind's eye the convenient shelf in the laundry with the wallet on it.

Well, only one thing to do. Deliver the report and hope there was enough juice in the tank to let him reach home.

With the report delivered and the nose of his car pointed toward home he had begun to hope for the best when the engine sputtered and died.

The lights of an all-night service station winked "GAS" invitingly in the distance. He turned up the collar of his old sheepskin coat against the snow and headed toward the lights.

He didn't wonder at the startled look on the face of the service station pumps and tried to explain his situation.

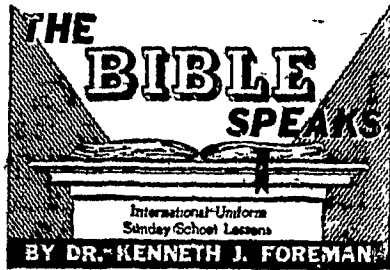
It wasn't lack of money that bothered him. Many times before he had been away from home with no money in his pocket, but now he had been robbed of his identity. He couldn't even prove the car he told the attendant about was his, and he certainly didn't look like he could afford a car of any kind.

His pleas, his improbable story, and the offer to leave his old sheepskin coat and his boots as security finally moved the heart of the attendant, and enough gasoline for the trip home was handed over.

He was thankful the attendant had not demanded the coat and boots as collateral, and as he trudged back toward the helpless car, he mused on the fate which had changed him from respected newspaper editor to common beggar in just a few hours.

"The wall that separates beggars from the likes of such as we is as fragile as a film of mist," he thought.

At least that's how it looks from where we stand.



Bible Material: John 17.  
Devotional Reading: John 17 1-11.

### For His Own

Lesson for March 19, 1961

WHAT ONE of us needs, another does not. In a worship service in the church, the minister cannot offer the same particular prayers which any one person present might rightfully pray; for the circumstances vary from person to person. Nevertheless a minister may offer prayers which every one there may take to heart. So it was with the great prayer of Christ written down in John 17.

This was a prayer for all believers, "for his own." Wherever a Christian lives, whatever his needs, these things at least are Christ's will for him. If we want these things too, we may be sure we are desiring the will of God, praying in the name of Christ.



Dr. Foreman

#### Joy

This prayer is full of requests, yet it is far from a "gumme" prayer. The reader may profitably sit down and think what makes this different from so many of our request-prayers. Meanwhile we can high light for a moment four gifts Jesus asks from his Father for those who have been "given him." One is joy. This is commonplace enough, by the sound of it. Who does wish to be happy, who does not pray for happiness for his friends? Yet this is different from ordinary happiness. "That they may have my joy fulfilled in themselves," Jesus prays. This is not commonplace. The reader is invited to think it out: What is the difference between ordinary happiness and the kind of joy that we can think of as characteristic of Christ?

#### "Keep Them From The Evil One"

We wish we had the actual words Jesus prayed in; probably Aramaic. The Greek language of

the New Testament has no distinguishing between "evils" "the evil one"—that is, Satan. We have to ask: Did our Lord mean that "his own" should be kept from evil or from the evil one? There is not space to give reasons for thinking that Jesus meant the evil one. Certainly we are in contact with evil of kind all the days of our lives in our own hearts if nowhere else.

#### "That They May All Be One"

It is a shame to argue that this great prayer of Christ is a fact that this simple prayer "that they may all be one" had many meanings put on it. At least this can mean is that (1) that all the members of a Christian congregation should be one in heart; (2) that every individual Christian shall feel one heart, and practice in his Christian brotherliness and unity with all other Christians. Now that is so simple that it sounds like a truism, but something so obvious that it might have thought, of whatever it may sound like, never said anything more of the kind. The mere fact that the unity of this kind shows cannot be achieved without help. How easy it is to be in harmony with people just like us. How hard it is to feel any unity with people who are different! But that is just what the prayer calls for.

#### "That They May Be With Me"

Evangelists talk of the will of God for Christ. That is the right to start. But times come when we are called on to decide for Christ. The great and most searching question asked of Christians is: "What do you do for Christ?" He prayed for us to do you? But most students of the Gospels believe Jesus was also—or perhaps chiefly—facing death—of the kind beyond this life. It is putting emphasis somewhere besides center when we talk of heaven and hell. The question for us goes into the next too. Are we with him? To be with him in heaven is; to be without him in what hell means.

Every morning and every evening hour, the Christian may ask himself: Is the way I am spending this hour a way that brings me closer to my Father? Is it going to make him smile to me?

(Based on outlines compiled by the Division of Christian Education, National Council of the United Methodist Church, in the U. S. Community Press Service.)



Davidson

## THIS WEEK —In Washington With Clinton Davidson

### Vanishing Americans

Perhaps you wouldn't call farmers "the vanishing Americans," but that is what the Census Bureau's recently completed 1959 Census Agriculture adds up to

During the past 30 years the farm population has been decreasing, with but few years excepted, at the rate of almost one million a year.

Farm population has been cut in half during a period in which the national population

has approximately doubled. The percentage of the total population living on farms declined from one-third in 1925 to one-tenth in 1959.

Along with the number of farmers, the number of farms has declined by almost 50% since the 1920's; from 64 million in 1925 to 3.7 million in 1959, according to the Census Bureau count.

#### Older Farmers Predominate

How much longer will the farm population decline continue? Sociologists and economists are not agreed on the answer, but they do agree that farmers will continue to be a smaller and smaller percentage of the total population.

The average age of farm operators has increased steadily for many years. The Census Bureau said the average in 1959 was 50 years. Twenty-five years ago the average was 40 years.

While the number of farms and farmers has decreased since 1930 the total acreage in cultivation has dropped only slightly. This is accounted for by the fact that each farmer tills approximately

twice as many acres as he did 30 years ago.

Today four of every five farmers own their farms, compared with just over 50 per cent in 1930. The average value of land and building per farm in 1959 was \$33,242, an increase of 63% over 1954.

#### Why The Population Drop?

There are many reasons why, as the World War I song hit went, "you can't keep 'em down on the farm." Mechanization for one thing, has enabled farmers to till and harvest more acres per man.

More and more farm boys and girls are going to colleges, and finding their opportunities for earning and advancement greater in industry and the professions than in farming. Only about 1 in 10 farm youths who graduate from college return to farming.

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## Rural Rhythms

### PNEUMONIA WEATHER

By J. O. E.

"Pneumonia Weather," is what he said, And I couldn't help agreeing. A hot sun scorched my over-head; A March wind chilled my being

Pneumonia weather — but it can't stay. On the lawn a robin's shopping, And here comes April, then May. The calendar's not stopping.



MAX SMITH

## Now Is The Time . . .

BY MAX SMITH

### TO IMPROVE TOBACCO SEEDING PRACTICES

In the production of tobacco plants the effort should be focused on proper seeding practices in order to keep the plants free from disease and insect damage. After they go into the field it is very difficult and impractical to control the problems. Therefore, from the time the seeds are planted until the plants go into the field special practices should be followed. This starts with soil sterilization, soaking of muslin and boards to control mosaic, soil drench, and a very thorough spray program. Growers are urged to obtain the mimeograph sheet of suggestions at the Extension Office.

### TO USE SPRING OATS AS A NURSE CROP

In the effort to get a new stand of alfalfa, clover, or pasture in the spring months it is best to use a bushel of spring oats as a nurse crop; this will protect the young plants from weather and result in a better stand, it is important to limit the oats to only one bushel per acre. The soil should be limed and fertilized according to soil test prior to seeding. The oats should be removed for hay or silage when in the milk stage.

### TO CONTINUE CALF VACCINATION

Even though Lancaster County and the state of Pennsylvania is completely signed up on the Bang's Disease Testing Program, it is important that dairymen continue to vaccinate their heifer calves when four to eight months of age. This will build up resistance in the young herd and give additional protection against a serious outbreak. With the great amount of dairy cow traffic in this area and the large population of dairy cattle, it is more risky to be raising a head of unvaccinated animals.

### TO TOPDRESS WITH NITROGEN

During the time when vegetation begins to get green wheat growers may increase their yields of grain by topdressing with 30 to 40 pounds of nitrogen per acre. This is especially true on sandy, gravel, or shale-type soils where nitrogen leaches quickly. On heavy, more fertile soils extra nitrogen is not advisable because of more danger of lodging; also, where a grass seeding is to be made in the wheat this extra nitrogen will be less favorable for the new-seeding.

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