

Bible Society News

By MARY ALLED
Member of Women's Speeches Bureau, American Bible Society

NEW YORK—Playing the front half of a horse in a school play, going on an overnight camping trip, swimming or bike riding, are normal activities for a 12-year-old boy.

What makes these feats extraordinary is that John Coughlin, son of Mr. and Mrs. Walter Coughlin, 220 Raff Avenue, Mineola, L. I., is blind. But few people would know that the freckle-spattered strawberry blonde boy does not see normally with the sure, fleet feet of a fully sighted boy, the 118-pound five-foot four inch lad bounds up the same stairs that may have been the cause of his blindness.

About three years ago Mrs. Coughlin was pressing clothes downstairs in the modest two-story red brick house when John fell down the stairs while bringing her some hangers. Although the 40 to 50 doctors who conferred on John's case do not definitely confirm the cause of her son's blindness, Mrs. Coughlin, herself a registered nurse who sat in on some of the conferences, said that the fall may have caused the loss of sight in his right eye. In any event, John underwent an operation for a detached retina in his right eye in April, 1965. When he returned for a checkup the doctors found almost no vision in either eye. Neuritis of the optic nerve had developed in both eyes.

Then came the difficult days of decision.

John left his friends at the local school where he was in a class of 50 students and enrolled in the Lavelle School for the Blind, 221st Street and Paulding Avenue, Bronx, where there are only 11 boys and four girls in his seventh grade class. He also studies Braille for an hour and a half each school day in a special small class at Lavelle.

Seeing him pass his sensitive fingers haltingly over the intricate system of raised dots, making them come alive with meaning, points to the conviction that John will soon be able to read Braille as well as most people read newspaper print. But John and approximately 13,000 youngsters between the ages of six and 12, who are among the more than 400,000 blind in this country, must have Braille books. And the one that brings light into darkness is the Bible.

One of John's most prized possessions is the American Bible Society's new two-volume paperback Braille books, "Bible Stories for Children." Because his favorite Bible hero is Joseph, the chapter entitled "Joseph the Dreamer," is the first one he is planning to read.

An enthusiastic member of Boy Scout Troop 250 of Mineola, John is working toward his Tenderfoot badge and hopes "to go on another overnight hike soon." He is also anxiously awaiting warm weather when he can swim at the municipal pool sev-

eral blocks from his home. When asked if his mother drives him to the pool, John answered nonchalantly, "No, I walk or ride my bike with friends and they guide me."

An avid Yankee fan, John, who displays no self pity, had to give up playing hardball "because I got hit too much." Like most 12-year-olds, he isn't keen about household chores, but handles the garbage detail, dries dishes and cleans his room with comparative ease. His other interests include acting—he will be the front part of a horse in a school play next month and last year he danced in a school production of "The King and I." He is also taking trumpet lessons and gave quite a creditable impromptu performance of "When the Saints Come Marching In" during this interview. He will play "Little Brown Jug" in a duet at a forthcoming PTA assembly.

When John was asked, "What do you want to be?" his little brother, Kevin, chimed in revealing the grown-up plans of all three Coughlin youngsters. (A sister Cathy, 15, had just come home). "Cathy's gonna be a teacher. I'm gonna be a people doctor, and John's gonna be a lawyer, but now he mostly fights with Cathy," Kevin concluded with five-year-aplomb. Ignoring the remark about fighting with his sister, John explained that "I might be a lawyer, but I'm not sure. Now I am planning to go through ninth grade at Lavelle and I hope to learn Braille this year," he said with the realistic approach of one taking first things first—one step at a time.

Pointing to John's progress in learning Braille, is a letter he wrote recently to his new friend, Dr. Dale C. Recker, ABS secretary for blind work, who lost his sight 20 years ago. "This is a brief note to thank you for the Bible you gave me. It was a very thoughtful gesture. I know that it will be a great help for my Braille reading. Thanks again. I am looking forward to meeting you at the Bible House."

At the suggestion of Dr. Recker, publication of the new Braille "Bible Stories for Children" was made possible through funds from The Fellowship of the Least Coin, a United Presbyterian women's worldwide interdenominational prayer group. The Fellowship was formed over 10 years ago in response to a woman in India, who felt the need for a tangible token of prayer and concern that all women—rich or poor—could contribute each month. The "least coin" of each country is such a token, and the total gift from United Presbyterian women is forwarded to the Geneva office of the World Council of Churches for the com-

mon fellowship fund from which grants are made by the East Asia Christian Conference on recommendation of the Asia Church Women's Conference.

In keeping with the American Bible Society's policy of distributing Scriptures to the blind without charge, the "Bible Stories for Children" are available from the ABS, 1865 Broadway, New York, N. Y. 10023, at no cost to sightless children or they may be purchased as a gift for a blind child at \$4 a set.

This Is The Life

By D. E. THOMAS
Immanuel Baptist Church

NO IF IN GOD'S PROMISES

Take your Bible, please, and turn with me to St. John, 3:1-21. A real argument was arising in a Sunday School class of high school boys on "Eternal Security of the Believer." This is a common argument among Christians of today to believe once saved, always saved. It is well to remember that the person of God is not subject to man's logic nor are his workings subject to the logic conceived by man's minds. As the argument proceeded the teacher began to write upon the board John 3:16, If; John 1:12, If; Acts 16:31, If; Ephesians 2:8-9, If.

The pupils sat dumbfounded until one of them asked "Why the If?" Your argument this morning is whether there's an "If" following God's plan of salvation. There are no "ifs" in God's promises. He didn't tell Noah and his family to go into the ark and hang on, but just to come in. The ark today is Jesus. I'd like to ask you a question, "Are you saved?" I didn't ask you what church you belong to, but are you saved? Brother, sister, I love you very much and I don't want any of you to go to hell, but unless you come to Christ and accept and trust (I said trust) Him as your saviour, you're on your way to hell. God doesn't lie.

The Bible says: "Verily, verily I saw unto thee, except a man be born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God."—St. John 3:3.

Mass Schedule At St. Ann's

Father Joseph J. Lash, pastor of St. Ann's Catholic Church, announces the following schedule of masses:

Thursday, 7 P. M.; Friday, 7 A. M.; Saturday, 7 P. M.; Sunday, 8 A. M. and 12:30 P. M.; Monday, 7 A. M.; Tuesday, 7 P. M. At All Souls' Church, Columbia, 10 A. M.; Wednesday, 7 P. M.

A Just Reward
A closed mouth gathers no feet.
—News, Bell Plains, Kan.

Let's Go To Church Sunday

Sunday School Lesson

PERSECUTION AND DELIVERANCE

International Sunday School Lesson for June 25

Memory Selection: "If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye: for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you."—I Peter 4:14.

Lesson Text: Acts 12:1-25.

Our studies for today are concerned with the persecution, imprisonment and subsequent delivery of the Apostle Peter from custody under guard.

Jesus had never painted a rosy picture to His followers in regard to what they would be called upon to face for His sake, and for their profession of faith in Christian principles. They were well aware of the fact that their new religion was unpopular with those who held high offices in local and regional government; they had certainly had ample proof that to be a Christian in those days was to be at the mercy of every barbaric and cruel whim of unenlightened individuals and the fickle populace. Yet they firmly averred their beliefs in the new Messiah. Of such stuff were the martyrs made. But, always when their darkest hour seemed to be upon the bold little Christian community, God put out His hand, and a miracle was performed—such as the one that released the staunch and uncompromising Peter from the hands of his enemies.

It is, indeed, odd to think that what is supposed to be the one unchanging element for good in this troubled world in which we live, should be beset by so much conflict—both within and without its circle. Yet Jesus' warnings that the path would not be easy are as true today as they were all those centuries ago.

For the church is ever in conflict with the world, and worldly things.

The church is—rightfully—at war with poverty and disease; with ignorance and corruption; with cheating and stealing, and with exploitation of people, salacious literature and alcoholic beverages.

And while many say that these are human failings, and (like the poor) will always be with us, this need not necessarily be so.

The early Christians protested the injustices and evil practices of their times; they were sufficiently dedicated to their beliefs to stand up and challenge their enemies—they were not afraid to raise their voices in protest against that which they, under the leadership of Christ, deplored. They had every faith that God would take cognizance of their plight if ill befell them for their outspokenness, and deliver them from the hands of their oppressors.

Today, we prosper as openly-professed Christians in a free land—a privilege that was denied the early Church. True, as this letter is being written, Christian missionaries are languishing in prison camps in foreign lands; but—we, of the Church, who go freely about our business from

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ON AN EVEN KEEL

Young Stan learned to row this summer. It was hard work but he didn't complain about the blisters. He was a captain in control of his ship, and very proud of his new position!

Being in control is often hard work, even for adults. Many people wish they could control their tempers, or perhaps curtail bad habits, but they fail to find within themselves the strength of will that would help them.

When problems are too big for us, that's the time to ask God for assistance. We are His children and He knows all our weaknesses. Through church attendance and prayer, we can be guided to a more serene approach to daily life. We will find His presence a constant support as we begin to take pride in our new possession . . . self control.

THE CHURCH FOR ALL . . .

. . . ALL FOR THE CHURCH
The Church is the greatest factor on earth for the building of character and good citizenship. It is a storehouse of spiritual values. Without a strong Church, neither democracy nor civilization can survive. There are four sound reasons why every person should attend services regularly and support the Church. They are: (1) For his own sake. (2) For his children's sake. (3) For the sake of his community and nation. (4) For the sake of the Church itself, which needs his moral and material support. Plan to go to church regularly and read your Bible daily.



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Sunday Psalms 25:4-10	Monday Psalms 73:21-28	Tuesday Isaiah 58:6-12	Wednesday Romans 8:26-30	Thursday II Corinthians 1:8-14	Friday Hebrews 4:11-16	Saturday Hebrews 13:1-6
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Debbie Watson and
Denver Pyle in
"TAMMY AND THE
MILLIONAIRE"
Sun., Mon. and Tues.,
June 25-26-27—
Robert Morse
Michelle Lee and
Rudy Vallee in
"HOW TO SUCCEED IN
BUSINESS WITHOUT
REALLY TRYING"
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COMMANDMENTS"
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