

# The Truth About Church Membership

(By Eger W. Babson)

**BABSON PARK, MASS.**—During recent weeks I have read several editorials congratulating our churches on their progress during these perilous times. I am loath to discourage those who have accented these Polly-Anna reports; but I do believe many of my regular readers will be interested in my conclusions:

1. The so-called "church membership" figures published annually by the Christian Herald and broadcasted by the Press Associations are incorrect. They contain not only the names of millions who have repudiated the church which they joined in their youth—but also millions who are dead and buried physically.

2. Protestant church attendance has been falling off for many years. This may not show by recent statistics on church attendance at the Sunday morning service; but in many churches attendance at this Sunday service has been kept only by omitting the mid-week and evening services, and by closing down in summer-time. A record of the number of Protestant entering the churches during a year shows a constant falling off. This decline is taking place despite the fact that our Protestant population is increasing each year.

3. Sunday school attendance is also falling off. The Congregational Christian churches of which I am moderator have had a net loss of over 150,000 Sunday school scholars since 1925. At first I assumed this to be due to a serious drop in the birth rate among us; but study shows that the decline is primarily among those of high school age and adults. The young children are still being sent to Sunday school to give fathers a chance to read the Sunday paper!

**Reasons for the Decline**  
I have attempted to ascertain the reason for this collapse of protestantism. Upon visiting the national headquarters of different denominations, the secretaries dispute my conclusions. When interviewing parents, they blame it onto the preachers, the latter in turn blame it onto the young people, and the schools. The only fact all groups seem agreed upon is that "young people are more intelligent and enquiring today; they do not accept as readily what their grandparents did." Yet statistics show that the liberal churches—such as the Unitarian—have even more trouble in holding their young people than do the Fundamentalists. So "creed" is not the real reason.

Determined to find the cause, I devoted the month of May, 1937, to visiting twenty prominent protestant colleges, more of which were started many years ago by ministers and earnest church people. To my great surprise, these colleges were having their troubles also. Attendance at chapel had fallen off tremendously and there is an indifference toward religious instruction. Although the colleges of the middle-west have a more religious atmosphere than most New England colleges, all educational institutions are losing control of their young people.

Unlike the denominational secretaries, and the preachers and parents, these young people gave me a definite reason for their lack of interest in their churches. They stated kindly and diplomatically that "we church-goers appear to them to be a group of hypocrites! They cannot connect our mode of living and methods of doing business with the teachings of Jesus whom we claim to follow. They do not understand how we can attend church, sing hymns, and make the prayers which we do on Sundays, and then act as we do the other six days of the week. As a result of this inconsistency on our part, they ask: "What use is the church?"

**What Young People Say**  
The troubles from which our churches are suffering are due to the fact that protestant young people are beginning to think for themselves. Furthermore, the day is coming when Catholic young people will reach the same stage. In fact, the Catholic church probably has its troubles ahead so that they need no bragging now. Young people insist that for the church to interest them, we laymen must be better men, better employers and workmen, better parents and neighbors than those who do not go to church. In short, we laymen must take our religion seriously and pay the price if the church is to continue to grow.

My answer to these criticisms is that we laymen are living and doing business in a competitive world. We can be a little more generous than the non-churchman; but if we really follow Jesus we would be like the poor and helpless disciples of His day. To this these students almost unanimously retorted: "Then why not try to change the prevailing economic system? If you cannot worship both God and Mammon under the present system of industrialism, capitalism, and nationalism, you can at least take sides with

those who are trying to change the system."  
**Spiritual Revival Necessary**  
It, of course, is true that our churches must cease being only social clubs and we laymen must be known by a stronger character and good works. Young people and all other people must realize, however, that men cannot be reformed by mere legislation or even education. The American Magazine does not even realize this, as shown by their recent article on the subject.

We must be "born again." The hearts of people must be changed in order for any social or other system to succeed. This is a spiritual problem. Here is where America again needs the churches, family prayers, Sunday observance, Bible study, and the Ten Commandments. Therefore, when we criticize the church and note how it is declining in behavior and influence, we must not forget that the world still needs it. The church continues to be the basic agency through which civilization will be saved. The world is still ruled by feelings rather than by figures.

## Law Enforcers Have Busy Week

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fired through a window at Grosz, sending a charge of bird-shot into Grosz's thigh and leg, the report stated.

Bibb then took Grosz to a Portland hospital, where he was taken by Portland police and later turned over to Sheriff John W. Connell. He was being held on an open charge pending developments in Grosz's condition, which was regarded as serious.

**Hit and Runner Caught**  
Shortly after Joe Smith, young CCC boy from Camp Beeners, was seriously injured late Saturday night on the road near Forest Grove. Torvald Branda, 23, of route one, Gaston, was arrested by Deputy Sheriffs Ireland and Cornelius on a hit-and-run charge. Smith had reportedly just stepped from a truck when struck by Branda. The two deputies made the arrest shortly after the accident. Smith was taken to the hospital, suffering from a fractured leg, concussion of the brain and head injuries.

Mel Dairon, 22, was taken into custody here last week on a charge of parole violation. He was placed in the county jail to serve out the remainder of the sentence from which he was paroled some time ago.

V. W. McNabb was arrested in Tigard last week by Deputies Ireland and Cornelius on a dog law violation charge. A \$10 fine was assessed, plus payment of the \$2 dog license fee.

Joseph W. Poffenberger, 61, was arrested in Multnomah county Friday on a charge of violation of court order of payment of child support. Theo Edelman, 28, of Beaverton was charged with reckless driving when arrested by State Policeman Johnson Friday night.

Edelman was assessed a \$25 fine and released Saturday. After causing considerable disturbance, Melvin Hall, 32, and George Link, 52, were arrested by Sheriff John W. Connell and State Policeman, W. H. Hadley near Gaston Saturday. The two were booked on a charge of being drunk in a public place.

**Accident Victims Numerous**  
The deluge of accidents, which nearly swamped Washington county a week ago, continued almost unabated in number during the past week, although no fatalities were reported. In addition to the hit-run accident in which Joe Smith was injured, a number of other collisions were recorded in the sheriff's office.

Dorothy Kreiter, 22, was injured Sunday evening at First and Main streets when the car in which she was riding, driven by Pete Kreiter, 23, of route one, Hillsboro, was struck by a machine operated by William Laing.

Three were injured shortly before midnight Friday when a car driven by Robert M. Chamberlain of Portland was struck by a train at the railroad crossing in Tigard. Chamberlain, 18, driver of the car, and two passengers, Jack Bernard, 17, and Frank Campbell, were listed as injured. Harry Bearnford was engineer of the train.

Other accidents, reported in the sheriff's office, ran from collisions on the straight sections of highway to mixups caused by backing out of driveways into the paths of oncoming cars. Two of the last-named type were reported Sunday.

Brooks Taylor, 18, a student of Forest Grove, reported that his car was struck early Sunday on the highway two and one half miles east of Hillsboro in a hit-and-run case. No information was gathered on the driver of the hit-and-run vehicle, a report stated. Taylor and his passengers suffered minor cuts and bruises.

Run until out of gasoline, a light sedan registered belonging to the Portland office of the U. S. Gypsum company of Los Angeles was picked up near Bethany by deputy sheriffs Saturday night. Original license plates when car had been replaced with stolen licenses, they reported.

Help your correspondent send in early copy. Some Friday or Saturday if possible.

—ENTRY BLANK—  
Hillsboro Rotarians Sixth Annual  
**Christmas Lighting Contest**  
Please enter my name in the Hillsboro Christmas Lighting Contest.

NAME \_\_\_\_\_  
ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

Check which division you intend to enter—  
 Home, General Decoration  
 Home, Window or Doorway  
 Commercial, Window and Store Front

All lights should be in place by Sunday, December 19, for the contest. Judging will take place on Monday evening, December 20. Send or bring this blank to the  
**CHRISTMAS LIGHTING COMMITTEE**  
 Care of the Hillsboro Argus

**Chamber Seeks Jobs**  
Dozens of requests are coming in every week to the Hillsboro chamber of commerce seeking work, according to Leon S. Davis, secretary of the organization. Anyone needing help or having jobs of any sort open is requested to contact Davis at the chamber of commerce.

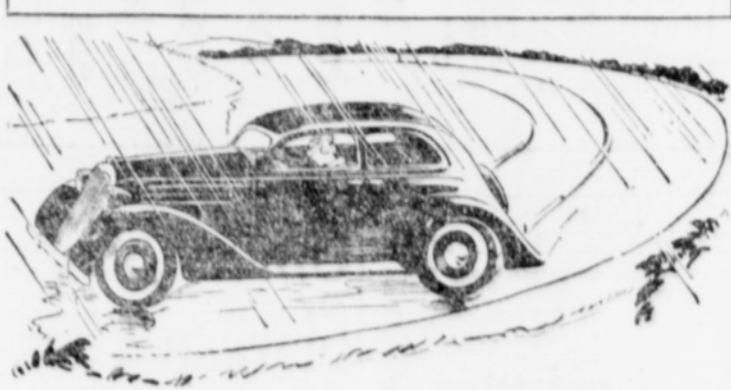
**Divorce Suits Filed**  
Chester H. Foelker vs. Evelyn E. Foelker.  
**Divorce Suits Filed**  
Angie vs. R. D. Butler.  
Subscribe now to the Argus. Rubber stamps and office supplies—Hillsboro Argus.

## Legion Sponsors Dance Saturday; Conference Set

Third in a series of four American Legion sponsored dances at the Shute park auditorium will be held Saturday, according to announcement by Commander Jake Weil at the legion post meeting Tuesday night. The last dance is scheduled for Christmas night. Weil urged co-operation of legionnaires and their friends in making the affairs successful. McDonald of the Navy and His Musical Mariners are furnishing the music. Wilbur Dillon is committee chairman.

Annual district No. 2 legion conference will be held at McMinnville Friday afternoon and evening. A big banquet will be at 6:30 p. m. with plenty of entertainment and a public mass meeting will be held later.

## Sportsmanlike Driving—Avoid Skidding



Skidding is dangerous. It can be prevented by having good tires, good brakes and driving cautiously on wet streets. Don't jam on the brakes too quickly. Apply the brakes slowly. The Sportsmanlike Driver uses the utmost caution.

## Three Cases Noted in Union Conflict

(Continued from page 1)  
stopped. A lot of roofing nails were also found on the premises, having been scattered over the road between the office and the mill, it was disclosed.

held, should be invited to participate in all patriotic holiday observances here.

some time Saturday evening, reports revealed. A brick was used in creating the damage. A man was said to have interviewed Kreitz Saturday about joining a union. When the proprietor refused, the interviewer departed, saying Kreitz would be sorry.

C. I. O. labor forces defeated A. F. of L. backers, 376 to 183, in the election for Inman-Poulsen Lumber company workers held last Thursday in Portland at the call of Governor Charles H. Martin. As a result, C. I. O. will be the bargaining agency in all Inman-Poulsen labor difficulties.

Intended as the first of a series of similar affairs to bring the four-month-old jurisdictional "battle" in Portland's sawmills to an end, the union voting brought out 539 of the 593 employees who were on the Inman-Poulsen payroll last August 14, when mill operations were suspended.

Seven other sawmills in the Portland area, which were also affected by the mid-August shutdown following the national labor relations board's declaration of the C. I. O. as the rightful agency for collective bargaining, still remain closed. Governor Martin's plans, as announced ten days ago in a radio talk, are for other elections among workers of the other mills if the Inman-Poulsen venture proves successful. Martin has promised all the assistance possible to assure continued operation of Inman-Poulsen and other mills which intend to operate. Meanwhile A. F. of L. officials who clapped a boycott on the C. I. O. produced lumber in August, marked time over the new developments.

**At Penney's**

**19 inch Doll**  
She has curls and pearly teeth—sleeping eyes and a voice! Movable head, arms and legs.  
Very slightly soiled  
While they last **50c**

**Repriced to Sell Now—Hurry!**  
VIRGIN WOOL **Blankets**  
Luxurious Rugged Practical **\$7.75**  
Beautiful Pastel Colors.  
72x84 size.  
An Armful of Warmth and Beauty.  
Only 15 available at this price

**Leather Handbags**  
Just about a dozen bags from our regular higher priced lines. Slightly scratched. A wonderful special. Now at only **99c**

**Bargains like these won't last long**  
**DRESSES \$1.44**  
Not House Dresses. Not Print Dresses. These are **STREET DRESSES**—Silks, Rayons, Fall and early winter Dresses that are still highly desirable styles and colors.

**HANDKERCHIEFS**  
Plain white, white with colored emblems, and printed Handkerchiefs. Hundreds of them.  
A Red Hot Value **3 for 10c**

**Join the Crowds! Save at Penney's**  
Lovely Rayon **Gowns, Pajamas 93c**  
An outstanding gift item.  
Women's sizes 15, 16, 17

**Smart Comfort for Women's Feet!**  
**HOUSE SLIPPERS**  
Neat! Dressy! **98c PR.**  
One of the smartest Christmas gifts you can select! The patent leather vamp boasts a pert silk bow. Lined with peach satin! Leather cushion sole and heel. Comfortable!

Folks in Hillsboro and the surrounding communities have flocked to our store. They've found that **Penney's Hillsboro Store** offers exceptional values. They've found that here dollars do double duty, plus a convenient place to shop. Easy parking facilities. They have found a well-stocked store with pleasant, courteous salespeople, to serve them. Penney's will attractively wrap gift purchases free. We will remain open until 9 p. m. this Saturday and also Thursday and Friday nights before Christmas.

**GLAMOROUSLY SHEER!**  
**Gaymode SILK HOSE**  
Perfect quality 3-thread chiffons of tightly twisted silk. Luxury gifts—they're rich and expensive looking, colors are exquisite! Sizes 8 1/2 to 10 1/2.  
**79c PR.**  
• Full Fashioned!  
• Ringless!

**More Proof of Penney's Savings!**  
**LUNCHEON CLOTHS**  
Gay Plaids, Part Linen, Hemmed. Fast Colors.  
Size 52x52. An ideal gift.  
Reduced Now to **45c**

**Prices That Defy Comparison!**  
**Childrens Sweaters**  
All Wool Coat and Slip-over Styles. All Colors.  
Sizes 4, 6, 8, for Boys and Girls.  
RE-PRICED TO **SELL NOW 96c**  
While they last.

**TOYS REDUCED**  
We have re-priced Dolls, Tricycles, Books, Games, that are soiled or that show the effects of handling. They will sell quickly at these new low prices. Hurry!  
**PENNEY'S**  
J. C. PENNEY COMPANY, Incorporated

**FRIDAY SATURDAY**  
**Greeting Cards**  
with Envelopes **5c**  
BOX of 10

**Men's Leather Slippers**  
Brown Elk Romeo  
An unheard of low price. Just 46 pairs. Sizes 6 to 11 **\$1.19**

**Warm, Lined Leather Gloves**  
Remember Dad, Brother, Son or Boy Friend this Christmas with a pair of these fine Gloves. They'll be appreciated. **98c**

**And Here's Another Bargain!**  
**Men's Flannel Shirts**  
A warm Shirt. Well made Full-cut. Brown or Grey **65c**  
WHILE THEY LAST

**A Buy for the Boys**  
**"Popeye" Sweat Shirts**  
White and Colors. Some with Zippers. Not all sizes. While They Last **25c**

**You Cannot Afford to Miss This!**  
**Mens' Suits, Overcoats**  
There are just 11 Suits and 5 Overcoats in this group  
They Are Odd Lots from Our Regular Stock. Prices Slashed **\$12**  
If your size is included, you can save yourself some real money.  
Overcoat Sizes Range from 38 to 44  
Suit Sizes Range from 36 to 46  
Every One a Bargain

**Always Appreciated—Always Needed!**  
**Men's Topflight Shirts**  
A thoughtful gift he can always use! High quality pre-shrunk shirtings in popular patterns. NuCraft non-wilt attached collars make laundering a pleasure! Smart colors! Value-priced for unusual savings!  
**Boxed for Christmas! 98c**

Hillsboro Post, American Legion  
**D-A-N-C-E**  
Dance to the Music of **McDONALD of the NAVY**  
and his **"MUSICAL MARINERS"**  
Admission, each 35c  
Special Exhibition  
**SATURDAY NIGHT**  
And Every Saturday Night Until Further Notice  
**SHUTE PARK AUDITORIUM**