

## A Plea for Prayer

*With scores of young Orthodox Presbyterians serving in the armed forces throughout the world, a reminder of the importance of prayer support is always in order. The Rev. Robert Atwell (Grace Church, Westfield, N. J.) received the following letter from Tommy Width (son of Pat and Ruth Width) and secured Tom's permission for its use in the Guardian.*

"I want so much to make known to everyone why our Lord has put me in the United States Army. As most of you know, I have had my disappointments here. From pilot to clerk was a strong blow, but it doesn't really matter. Every experience I have had has served to draw me closer to God and to make me realize more fully just what his awesome power and love can do with a life.

"More than once, I have wept in praise to God for all of the graciousness he has extended to me. From the smallest request to the greatest, he has refused me nothing. It is impossible to grasp why he should so love such a miserable sinner. I am constantly overwhelmed with the message of salvation and what simple belief in the living Jesus can do. I have found new fulfillment in everything I attempt, because I know that I am being led by the Almighty Saviour.

"I may possibly be going to Vietnam very soon, and I find such peace in knowing that I have nothing to fear from other men. It is so easy to sin in the atmosphere of the military service. Others must live with their sins, but I am cleansed of mine through a simple prayer of earnest confession.

"God has also drawn me ever so much closer to my family. Oh, what a blessing Christian parents are!! There are so many men here who haven't the faintest idea of what a wonderful home is, and I've been blessed with the best home and the warmest love all of my life.

"In the past few months, God has given me an entirely new outlook upon just where I stand in his kingdom and upon my own salvation. At times in the past, I have wondered how some people could be so ardently devoted to God and his Son. I was indeed Thomas the Doubter. I needed some demonstration of God's power. Well, his demonstration, here in the Army, has been thoroughly convincing. I have truly seen the holes in Jesus' hands and thrust my hand into his riven side! What a wonderful Saviour!!"

Yours in the love of Christ,

TOM WIDTH

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Tom, already a flying enthusiast, went into the Army with his heart set on the pilot training program. Though he stood near the top of his class he was "washed out" for slight physical defects — though it now appears probable that these don't even exist. He has not lacked for interesting experiences, including picking up snack money by demonstrations of needle-swallowing magic — which earned him a command performance before a General.

Though his MOS (military occupation specialty) is as a clerk, he planned a secondary MOS in "home missions." Six of the men agreed to a Bible discussion in the company reading room if Tom would lead it. Fourteen showed for each of the first two classes and one boy, for whom Tom had particularly asked prayers, professed Christ as his personal Saviour. A test a few days later found this boy, who had failed four successive tests, ranking second in that test (Tom was first).

*Don't forget to write your friends in the service. Tom's address is:*

Pvt. E-2 Width RA 11 759 522  
Co. B, 2nd Bn, 1st Bde, Class 31-68  
Fort Huachuca, Arizona 85613

After the first Bible study Tom wrote a Westfield neighbor:

"I noted many verses in John and Romans and everyone seemed to be in an open, waiting-to-accept frame of mind. Oh, Mrs. Cox, it was so wonderful how the Lord worked with that group of men! He made everything fall into place. During the meeting I found the Lord popping words into my mouth that I hadn't even thought about before. The discussion went on for three and a half hours. When I went to bed that night, and started thinking about all of the lost people around me, I almost cried with thankfulness for my own salvation. It is such a great gift, and God picked me to bestow it upon. I can't help but say constantly, 'What a wonderful Saviour!'"

Now it appears that the C. O. has ordered the class discontinued as "too distracting" and Mrs. Cox has written a letter of earnest and eloquent protest to the Commander-in-chief of our armed forces, the President.

Grace Church congregation asks the *Guardian* community of readers to join in prayer for God's blessing upon the witness of Tommy Width and all our Christian men in the armed services. You know many others. Remember them by name before God's throne.

—ROBERT L. ATWELL



Robert L. Atwell, Host Pastor  
35th General Assembly