

A Tribute to Mrs. McPheeters

(Given at the memorial service by Dr. W. D. Turkington.)

One of God's wise men, writing under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, left us words which relate very specifically to the life of the loved one and friend whom we honor today in this memorial service. These words form a question: "Who can find a virtuous woman?" Other translations use the adjectives *worthy* and *good*. The questioner then answers his own question in a four-fold manner. First, the virtuous woman is one who does good and not evil. This is typical of all her relationships, beginning with her relation to her husband and family but extending further to include all whom she meets. At this point let it be said that only Dr. McPheeters knows fully how Ethel McPheeters has stood helpfully and in faith at his side--through good days and bad, in sickness, in health, and in the midst of many and often almost crushing burdens of a full and busy life.

The wise man further answers his question by saying, "The law of kindness is on her tongue." What a characterization is this!" And how true this is of the one whom we pause to honor today. Back of a tongue which always spoke words of kindness lay a kind heart. Again our inspired writer says that the virtuous woman is characterized by a concern for her household. In the case of Ethel McPheeters this concern found expression in a love and a service which was unstinted and unceasing. This concern was put into words in her closing moments of consciousness when she said to those who now mourn her passing, "I love you all."

The final characterization of the good woman is that she is a woman who knows the Lord and who exemplifies the fear of the Lord, which is the beginning of wisdom. It was this knowledge of the Lord which formed the basis of all which Ethel McPheeters was and did. In her later years this found particular and crucial expression in her deep love and concern for Asbury Theological Seminary, on whose campus we meet today. It was this reflex love for our institution which led her, during her last hours in this world, to arouse to consciousness

and to pronounce a blessing on all whom she loved--"God bless you all." We, each of us, are the heirs of the blessing and inspiration afforded by the presence among us, though now withdrawn into the Eternal City, of this virtuous and worthy and good woman, Ethel McPheeters.