

THE REFLECTOR

March 1975

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THE REFLECTOR

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SUNDAYS:

Bible Classes 9:45 a. m.

Worship 10:45 a. m.

Worship 7:00 p. m.

WEDNESDAYS:

Bible Classes 7:30 p. m.

In Absence of Elders

by ROBERT TURNER

When Paul told Titus to "ordain elders in every city as I had appointed thee:" and then gave qualifying marks of these Bishops (1: 5-9), it seems evident that in the absence of qualified men, there should be no "ordaining." Brethren logically affirm the existence and functioning of local churches prior to the appointment of overseers (Acts 14:23, and a "business meeting of the men of the church" has become the traditional substitute for "scriptural organization." But brethren tend to misuse "organized" and "unorganized" status.

There being no hierarchy among the saints (Matt. 23:8), and each saint being a "priest" (1 Pet. 2:5, 9); bishops are not "officials" in the usual ecclesiastic sense. Therefore all scriptural elements of "organization" are present when the men of the congregation meet, plan and execute in orderly fashion the scriptural functions of saints working collectively. Perhaps "scripturally unorganized", etc. is justified as an euphony, but it may have caused some to develop an erroneous concept of organization and "officialdom" in the local church.

Qualified bishops exercise an experienced oversight and "shepherding" of the flock that is missing in a church operated by "business meetings" but the latter is no less a church. In fact, in this preliminary and developmental stage the brethren may learn some vital lessons about working together, submitting to one another, appreciating the problems of planning and financing the Lord's work. More members may be involved in drawing up the "common mind" by

which the team will operate--with attendant greater confusion, less "getting to the point" and less promptness--but once a plan is approved, there is no less need for all members to drop individual preferences, and work together toward the common goal.

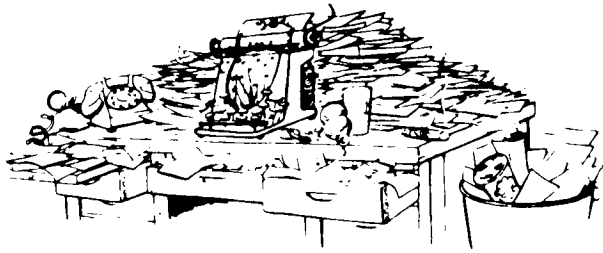
Some seem to think that in absence of elders "the women" and "all members" can be heard. I believe that with elders all should be heard. The basic characteristics of successful "team work" are not changed whether the signals are called in the turmoil of inexperienced "business meetings" or by seasoned qualified bishops. All good overseers have learned that information, consultation and a fair hearing of all is essential to confidence, and real "working together." But women are no more leaders "over men" (1 Cor. 11:3; Titus 2:12), and children and novices are no more qualified to direct affairs of the church in the absence of bishops than they are in their presence.

"We are members one of another" (Eph. 4:25), and are ever "submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God" (5:21), with the service of our Lord Jesus Christ as the controlling factor in our conduct. This principle forbids all "one-man, one vote" politicking to "have our way" in the church. The executive (police) force of Christianity is each saint's humble submission to God's will, in recognition of His love, and our need for Him (2 Cor. 5:14). Self is buried.

And submission to God's will means that we work diligently toward the day of "elders in every church."

END

EDITOR'S DESK



Edward O. Bragwell

Irresponsible Love

"Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. . . And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." -- Matt. 22: 37, 39.

The Protestant world has been told for sometime that if one loves God that it makes very little difference what he does in religion. This may have grown out of an over-reaction to sectarian strife of the past. At any rate, such an idea is the dominant idea among Protestants today.

It says, in effect, that one does not have to be concerned with the PLAN of salvation, just love Jesus. It does not matter what one does in worship, so long as it is done with love for God. One should not concern himself about where he attends church (if at all), so long as he feels love in his heart for God. "Set rules" for religious service is frowned upon by most. You believe as you wish, worship as and where you please and I can do as I please as long as we both love God.

The fact that real love demands following rules (commands) has been carelessly discarded. (Read 1 John 5:2, 3). One can refuse bap-

tism (Mk. 16:16), if he loves God. One can completely forsake public worship (Heb. 10:25), if he loves the Lord. One can add anything to worship, such as instruments of music, even though vocal music is the only music authorized in the New Testament-- if he professes love for Jesus. This brand of love has been pressed vividly into the minds of Protestant children.

The younger generation may well just be applying the "anything-as-long-as-you-love" philosophy that their parents have relative to God to their relationships to man. Their parents are appalled at the loose moral code advocated by so many of their children. Yet, the parents themselves may have unwittingly sown the seed. The youngsters have just applied the principle to their moral life that their parents applied to their spiritual life. After all, if their parents could throw the rules out and still love God--why could they not dismiss the rules and still love their neighbor? Does not love for God (one's spiritual life) demand going by the rules as much as love for neighbor (one's moral life)?

So, what difference does it make if one defiles the purity of his (or her) sweetheart, if love is present?

Oh, yes, the rules say that sex is for marriage (Heb. 13:5; 1 Cor. 7:2) -- but if there is love, why be bound by rules? Why should one respect the rights of any other human being, after all, he does not really hate anyone. If he wishes to become a leech on society, so what? He loves every human being, if you don't believe it just ask him or notice his slogans pasted around. And so it goes. But, have not his parents said all along that "love is the thing" as it pertains to spiritual life and specific codes of conduct in one's religious life are of minor consideration? Why can not the same rule be used for moral life?

Might not younger folks have just carried the matter one logical step further than their parents were willing to go? If you are telling your child that it does not matter whether he is baptized, so long as he loves God--do not be too surprised if he tells you that it does not matter whether he is married to his partner so long as he loves her. Irresponsible love is wrong whether it is in moral or spiritual conduct. True love demands following the commands of God both in spiritual and moral behavior.

END

Sanctified Mississippi Brethren

BY LOWELL BLASINGAME

The following interesting, maybe I should say embarrassing, report was recently carried in a local newspaper. "Action got under way last night in the newly formed interdenominational basket ball league. Calvary Baptist Church beat the devil out of Southside Church of Christ, 53 to 50. Games are presently being scheduled for Monday and Thursday nights in the CAB building on Mound Street according to Joe Edd Morris, associate pastor of the First United Methodist Church." (Daily Sentinel Star, Grenada, Miss., 1/7/75).

There you have it! Calvary Baptist "beat the devil" out of Southside Church of Christ! I suppose, in view of this, that it would now be safe to assume that these brethren are wholly sanctified and ought to be eternally grateful to Calvary Baptist for beating "the devil" out of them.

I understand that some of these brethren have denied that they were sponsored by Southside church and have said that they played only as individuals from Southside. Let's assume that this is true. What now

happens to the argument formerly made for some of their projects that "whatever the individual Christian does, the church either does or can do". Is it still so, brethren? If it is, why try to make the distinction between a Southside sponsored ball team and some individuals from Southside church playing as a team? Second, consider your responsibility as a member of the Lord's church to present the right image of the church to others. (2 Cor. 3:2). The newspaper reporter, and I think that I would be safe in saying that 90% of the readers, saw you as part "of the newly formed interdenominational basket ball league". How do you propose to convince others that Southside Church of Christ is not a denomination when there is a team of players from it identified as a part of an "interdenominational basket ball league"?

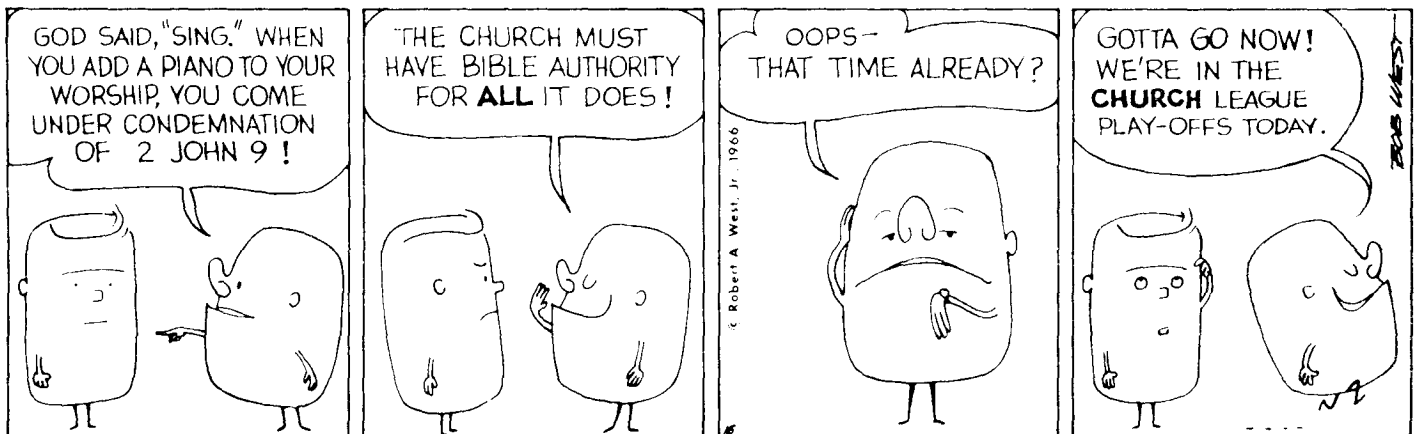
Man is a social creature and I do not deny his need for recreation. However, the absence of Scriptural authority for the church to provide it illustrates that it is not a part of the divine mission and

work that the Lord gave the church. When brethren act in a way that leaves either that impression or the impression that the Lord's church is a part of an interdenominational group, they become subject to the Lord's indictment (John 8:44) and deserve to have "the devil" beaten out of them— even by Calvary Baptist Church!

I lived and preached in Grenada more than eleven years during which time I was of assistance to many of these same brethren by performing wedding ceremonies and helping bury their loved ones. During that same period I was removed from a local radio program because I refused to allow myself and the church for which I preached to be identified as a part of the Grenada County Ministerial Association. These brethren complimented, encouraged and stood by me then. There are yet warm feelings that I hold for them but it is a source of grief to see them turn aside from the way of the Lord and serve the gold calves of denominationalism.

END

THEOPHILUS



Every faithful gospel preacher has among his outlines a sermon on "Worldliness", and like Calvin Coolidge's preacher, he's agin it. But I am reminded of the question I was asked once by a little boy following a sermon in which I pointed out that the Bible says that we are not to love the world. The lad wanted to know, "Why not? After all, did not God make the world with its beautiful flowers, trees, birds, and the like?" A real good question, and one which brings me to the point of this article.

One way to obtain an interesting study of words is to see how a particular word began with one meaning and then this meaning gave rise to another meaning which in turn developed into still another related meaning, and so on. Frequently, the original meaning will continue to be used along with the various other meanings and perhaps all of them used contemporaneously. Such a word is kosmos. This word (kosmos) appears about 190 times in the NT and is usually translated "world", but it is "world" with different connotations.

Basically and maybe originally, the word kosmos means "well arranged, orderly", though I do not think this usage is found in the NT. (The nearest thing to it seems to be the cognate word kosmos (1 Tim. 3:2) or the verb kosmeo (Mt. 25:7). Trench thinks the word originally meant "ornament" and came to mean "orderly", but in either case, the word did come to mean ornament and is so used to speak of a woman's adorning in 1 Peter 3:2. (See footnote).

From the idea of ornamental and orderly it is easy to see how kosmos came to be applied to the material universe of the sun, moon, and stars, but especially of the earth (Col. 1:16; Mark 16:15). But since this earth is the sphere in which man lives and of which he is the center, it is an easy transi-

tion from earth (kosmos) to the men of the earth. Hence, kosmos came

W O R D S

Hiram Hutto

"World"

to be applied to men in numerous passages (Cf. Matt. 5:14 and 16).

One does not need to be a Solomon to know most men are sinners, evil, and alienated from God (all the kosmos being under the power of the evil one. (1 John 5:19), so that the word came to be used of "men separated from God (1 Cor. 11:32 and numerous other passages).

It is a very small jump from evil men to evil in general, and ultimately the word is used with this shade of meaning. "Love not the

world (kosmos) neither the things that are in the world" (1 John 2:15 ff).

Other meanings can be found as in James 3:1 where the tongue is said to be a "world (kosmos) of iniquity" with the probable meaning of a large amount, as in our expression 'There is a world of difference...'. but the ones given seem to be the most important. Summarizing, we have kosmos meaning:

1. Well arranged.
2. An ornament.
3. The physical world.
4. The men of the planet-man-kind.
5. the evil men.
6. Evil, in general.

FOOTNOTE: It just occurred to me while preparing this article that an interesting rendering would result if the word "kosmos" were translated by the word "world" even in 1 Peter 3:2 where women are told, "whose adorning (kosmos) let it not be the outward...but the inward". By such a translation we would have concerning women, "whose world let it not be the outward of hair-styling, jewelry, clothes, but let their world be the inward",--and that makes a lot of sense.

END

Get it Straight

A dual was fought by James Shott and John Nott. Nott was shot, and Shott was not. In this case it is better to be Shott than Nott. There was a rumor that Nott was not shot, but Shott insisted that he himself was not. It may be that the shot Shott shot shot Nott, or since accidents with firearms will happen,

maybe the shot Shott shot shot Shott himself. We think, however, that the shot Shott shot shot Shott. Or was it that the shot Shott shot shot not Shott, but Nott? Moral: Be sure you have the correct story before repeating it!

--Selected

Who Then Are Christians?

There is much confusion in the world today about who is a Christian. In this respect the confusion of ancient Babel is still modern history. The word "Christian" appears only three times in the N. T.--Acts 11:26; 26:28; 1 Pet. 4:16. In each of these cases the word appears as a noun, never as a verb. In each of these cases it belongs to individuals. By Divine authority there is no such thing as a "Christian nation" or a "Christian church." It is no more correct to refer to the Lord's body as a "Christian church" than a "Saint church" or "Disciple church," for like the words "disciples" and "saint", "Christian" refers only to individuals in the Lord's church (Acts 11:26; Phil. 1:1).

Who then are Christians? It is well for us to look at the question from a negative standpoint. If we can first determine who is not a Christian we can better determine who is a Christian.

WHO ARE NOT CHRISTIANS?

Not all "good people" are Christians. Some confuse the meaning of the term "Christian" with morality. To be sure, Christians must be moral people. Paul admonishes us to "abtain from every form of evil" (1 Thess. 5:22).

Peter says, "for hereunto were ye called; because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, that ye should follow his steps: who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth" (1 Pet. 2:21-22). All Christians are to be good moral people but not all good

by ROBERT TUTEN

moral people are Christians. Morality alone never made any one a Christian. Cornelius was a good man described in the Bible as "devout", "feared God with all his house," "gave much alms to the people," and "prayed to God always" (Acts 10:1-8). This man even saw an angel but the angel told him to send for Peter who would "speak unto thee words, whereby thou shalt be saved, thou and all thy house" (Acts 11:14). Cornelius had not been saved, therefore, he was not a Christian.

Not just a religious person is a Christian. One can be religious and still not be a Christian. The Athenians of Acts 17 were worshippers of idols and did not believe in the true God (v. 23) not the resurrection (v. 32). Yet Paul said, "Ye men of Athens, in all things I perceive that ye are very religious" (v. 22). Many people in heathen lands are religious but they are not Christians. One can worship and be religious without being a Christian but one must worship God to be a Christian.

Not all church members are Christians. One cannot be a Christian without being a member of the Lord's body the church since all the saved are, by God, added to the church when they obey the gospel (Acts 2:41, 47). One can, however, belong to some church and still not be a Christian. "Joining" a church does not make one a Christian. Living "in a church" does not make one a Christian.

Old Testament characters were not Christians. Abraham is called "the father of the faithful" but he was not a Christian. Moses was chosen of God to lead His people from Egyptian bondage, but he was not a Christian. "The disciples were called Christians first at Antioch" (Acts 11:26).

WHO THEN ARE CHRISTIANS?

A Christian is one who has been "born anew;" one who has been "born of water and the Spirit" (John 3:5). A Christian is one who "is a new creature" (2 Cor. 5:17), one who has been baptized into Christ, and living the new life in him (Rom. 6:3, 4; Gal. 3:27).

A Christian is a "dead man." He is one who has been "crucified with Christ" (Gal. 2:20). Christians are "baptized into his death," they are "buried therefore with him through baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we also might walk in newness of life" (Rom. 6:3, 4).

A Christian is a "living man." Christians have died to sin and have been raised to a new life. "We who died to sin, how shall we any longer live therein?" (Rom. 6:2). Christians are dead to sin, but alive to God; Christians have been "buried with him in baptism," wherein they are "also raised with him through faith in the working of God, who raised him from the dead" (Col. 2:12). "If ye then were raised together with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated on the right hand

of God" (Col. 3:1).

A Christian is a citizen of the kingdom of God. He has been translated out of darkness "into the kingdom of the Son of his love" (Col. 1:13). A Christian has responsibilities as a citizen in the kingdom of God.

Finally, a Christian is a mem-

ber of the body of Christ. They are members one of another. "So we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and severally members one of another" (Rom. 12:5), "Now ye are the body of Christ, and severly members thereof" (1 Cor. 12:27). Christians are so related Christ and to each other that "whe-

ther one member suffereth, all the members suffer with it; or one member is honored, all the members rejoice with it" (1 Cor. 12:26). Christians have no denominational allegiance or loyalty; they belong only to Christ.

Are you a Christian?

END

Church Kitchens, Gyms, Etc.

ASSEMBLE FOR ITEMS OF WORSHIP

Hebrews 10:25
Acts 20:7
1 Cor. 14:15
1 Cor. 16:2
Col. 3:16
Eph. 5:19

PREACH TEACH

Matt. 28:18
1 Tim. 3:15
1 Thess. 1:8
Phil. 4:15-17

SOCIAL- RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES

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I. A PLACE (rent, borrow, buy or build)

1. LIGHTING
2. SEATING
3. COMFORTS: heating, cooling, restrooms, water.
4. Stands, tables etc.

II. MATERIALS

1. Song books
2. Communion ware

I. A PLACE (rent, borrow, buy or build)

1. LIGHTING
2. SEATING
3. COMFORTS: Heating, cooling, restrooms, water.
4. PULPIT STAND, ETC.

II. MATERIALS

1. Workbooks--tracts
2. Black board
3. projector--memeo.
4. Public address.

I. A PLACE (rent, buy, borrow, build)

1. Kitchen-Camp
2. Dining room
3. lighting
4. Comforts: Heating, cooling, restrooms, water, etc.

II. MATERIALS

1. FOOD
2. Cooking ware
3. Tableware
4. Games

WE DO NOT ASK FOR THE PASSAGE THAT SPECIFICALLY NAMES THESE ITEMS -- JUST THE PASSAGE THAT AUTHORIZES THE AREA OF ACTIVITY FOR THE CHURCH THAT INCLUDES THESE ITEMS.

The Whirlybird Ministry

by JIMMY THOMAS

Last Sunday this reporter visited the new modern Sky High Congregation in Mod Pad City. We talked with Orville Jetson, youthful Educational Minister, about their innovative Helicopter Ministry.

"We have nearly doubled our Sunday School enrollment with this new 'Heavenly Copter Beam,'" exulted Jetson, as he waved toward the church's bright psychedelic helicopter perched nearby.

"What led you to start such a novel ministry as this?" I asked.

"Man, this is the 'in-thing'," he replied. "A few months ago a group of our visionary young people visited the 'Great Cathedral of Tomorrow' and the 'Temple of Where it is Happening' and were completely sold on their 'Whirlybird Ministry.' The church that is without a copter is just not with it."

"How did you get the word around at first about this new service?"

"It was easy. We just swirled over the schools and play grounds dropping big orange banners which read: 'Wave Me Sunday For A Free Flight To Sunday School.' You should have seen it from up there Sunday morning. It looked like Neyland Stadium on the day before."

"Have you found it necessary to offer any extra enticements now that the new of this fad has worn off somewhat?"

"It is always important that we give rewards. If we didn't these kids would run off to some denomination if it promised more. We give a prize of some kind each week --copter balloons, paper windmill caps, thirlypops, egg-beater shakes, chopper tater fries, and whirlyburgers. Last week we gave

out copter banks for them to keep their new dimes and nickels in which we also give to all riders every week. As the Lord said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive'."

"How much is all this costing?"

"A bundle you can bet. But is worth every grand."

"Have any of your members objected to this type of promotion in religion?"

"You always have a few old cranks who can't stand progress. But I think we have about run most of them off to the Antis by now."

"I hear that a few parents have objected to four letter words that have appeared on the restroom walls and to the finger signs and other behavior of some children that you have brought in."

"What do they expect? Kids hear and see these things in school on TV, everywhere. How can the church win the world if we are so different?"

"Is it true that a defensive tackle for a pro team was driven out of a Junior class that he was attempting to teach by some unruly youngsters?"

"Well, you know how it is. Sometimes you get teachers who are not prepared to cope with difficult situations. The ones we have now know how to talk the kids language."

"Tell me now about your new book."

"Yes, I am really proud of it. It is entitled 'Chopping The Clouds For Jesus.' I am now writing another called, 'Up, Up, And Away.' These books, along with my starter kit of banners, buttons, pictures, gifts, etc., will soon have any church in orbit."

"It seems, then, that your

'Whirlybird Ministry' is a big success."

"Fantastic is the word. I am humbled by my great accomplishments."

"Are these churches still using traditional methods falling behind?"

"Definitely. Our first Sunday up, the Baptist's old fashioned bus was only half full. After our Halloween 'Hay Ride In the Sky' they were down to about a dozen. We expect them to park it after our Christmas 'Sleigh Ride On the Clouds.'"

"I hear that they are getting a blimp, like Goodyear's."

"Oh me, we will really have to come up with something way-out to top that! Maybe we can get a flying saucer next!"

"What is this stunt you plan to do today?"

"Well, other Copter Captains have tried a variety of things to keep up interest, but I want to be different. Swallowing gold fish, letting the kids squirt you with water pistols or plaster your face with a pie, are all old-hat. I promised that if we broke out attendance record today that I would swing by the hair of my head as the copter hovers over the parking lot."

"With locks as long as yours, you should have no trouble doing that."

"Right. But you know this promotion has really turned the trick. Look at all these people out here today to learn about Christ. The mayor, chief of police and about half the town are here. Of course many of them didn't make it in time for worship; but isn't it wonderful that they came."

"Aren't you afraid to do this?"

"No sacrifice is too great for my Jesus."

With that the young minister climbed aboard for his daring fete. As the helicopter twisted upward a long streamer unfurled behind which read, "We Love Little Children."

In a few minutes all cheered as the brave youth dangled by his hair higher than the trees. One little boy remarked to his buddy, I wish I was up there with a pair of scissors." A man mused, "What will they do next?" And a little old lady passing by muttered, "This is for the birds."

(In case some of you have not caught on yet, this is intended as a humorous fictitious satire on the silly and foolish fad that is now sweeping liberal churches, called the "Bus Ministry." Before you call up to tell me off, if you only use your bus to bring people to worship who otherwise could not come, then you are not hit, but if you give prizes or other like gimmicks are used, then howl; but I want scripture, not "sweet cuts.")

END

APRIL

Day	O.T.	N.T.
1	Judg. 6,7	Lk. 8:1-24
2	Judg. 8,9	Lk. 8:27-56
3	Judg. 10,11	Lk. 9:1-36
4	Judg. 12-14	Lk. 9:37-62
5	Judg. 15-17	Lk. 10:1-24
6	Judg. 18,19	Lk. 10:25-40
7	Judg. 20,21	Lk. 11:1-28
8	Ruth	Lk. 11:29-54
9	1 Sam. 1-3	Lk. 12:1-34
10	1 Sam. 4-6	Lk. 12:35-59
11	1 Sam. 7,9	Lk. 13:1-21
12	1 Sam. 10-12	Lk. 13:22-35
13	1 Sam. 13,14	Lk. 14:1-24
14	1 Sam. 15,16	Lk. 14:25-35
15	1 Sam. 17,18	Lk. 15:1-10
16	1 Sam. 19-21	Lk. 15:11-32
17	1 Sam. 22-24	Lk. 16:1-18
18	1 Sam. 25,26	Lk. 16:19-31
19	1 Sam. 27-29	Lk. 17:1-19
20	1 Sam. 30,31	Lk. 17:20-37
21	11 Sam. 1-3	Lk. 18:1-17
22	11 Sam. 4-6	Lk. 18:18-43
23	11 Sam. 7-9	Lk. 19:1-28
24	11 Sam. 10-12	Lk. 19:29-48
25	11 Sam. 13,14	Lk. 20:1-26
26	11 Sam. 15,16	Lk. 20:27-47
27	11 Sam. 17,18	Lk. 21:1-19
28	11 Sam. 19,20	Lk. 21:20-38
29	11 Sam. 21,22	Lk. 22:1-30
30	11 Sam. 23,24	Lk. 22:31-53

"Don't Bug Me Details"

by W. R. JONES

Once upon a time there was a certain centipede with a serious problem, he had arthritis. Let's face it, a centipede couldn't have anything much worse than this. So, he went to the wise old owl for a solution. This wise old owl listened to his plight and advised him to return the next day and he would have the answer to his problem. The next day found him back to hear the wise old owl's advice. "You must be turned into a snake," said the owl, "for a snake has no legs, and this will eliminate your arthritis." "Great," exclaimed the centipede, and he went away rejoicing. Later, after the excitement wore off, he started wondering how this great change could be accomplished. The next day he approached the wise old owl and explained that he had encountered a problem. "And what is that?" the owl asked. "Well, sir, how do I get turned into a snake?" To which the owl responded, "man don't bug me with details, I'm just a planner."

This reminds me of some church members who spend all their time planning, but never get around to the details of doing the work. People of this stripe always feel that "reorganization and revamping the program" will solve the problem and release the pressures of duty. Occasionally, this is really needed and it pays off, but most of the time it accomplishes nothing more than a temporary respite from the real work that needs to be done. Most of the time what is needed is not more planning, but more people dedicated to working the plan we have. Let each individual in church determine in his heart to

do what he can for the Cause of Christ, and then DO IT! If you want to serve badly enough, you will find a good plan for the fulfillment of your desires. Jesus said, "I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day; the night cometh, when no man can work." John 9:4.

[EDITOR'S NOTE: I can understand that centipede's frustration. Over the years, I have sat in on "idea sessions" on personal work, Bible classes, etc., and listened to enthusiastic planners tell of their answers(?) to the problems associated with these things. Man, did they sound good -- on paper! But, if they "really work" as well as the planners say, I have wondered, why the congregations where these planners work still have many of the same problems the others with less novel programs have--and often some problems others don't have. So, may enthusiastic "planning brethren" will forgive me if I just "plug along" with the plan we have, trying to get brethren to work it. No, I am not opposed to "new" ideas within the bounds of scriptural work—but pardon me, if I don't get too worked up over every plan that sounds good on paper.]

We Are Sorry!

Because of the unexpected number of requests for the enlarged REFLECTOR, we have no back issues to spare. We simply underestimated the number of new requests and under printed. We will try to do better in the future.

Remember the REFLECTOR is free for the asking, and as a friend (I think) told me, "worth every penny of it."

Spirit Witness

by ROBERT WELCH

Have you been taught to expect the Holy Spirit to come upon you and mysteriously move within you that you are to be a child of God or that you already are one of his children? This is the kind of testimony that a majority of religious people are told to expect from the Holy Spirit. The Scriptures contain the testimony of the Spirit. They declare that this is how he bears witness. Yet these false teachers will tell you that he bears witness in some other way and will then have the audacity to tell you that is so declared in the Scriptures. The following passage shows how he bears witness to us:

"And the Holy Spirit also bears witness to us; for after he hath said, This is the covenant that I will make with them/ After those days, saith the Lord/ I will put my laws on their heart,/ And upon their mind also will I write them" (Hebrews 10:15, 16).

The quotation in the passage is from Jeremiah 31:33. The Lord made the declaration. He made it through the prophet Jeremiah. But how did he cause Jeremiah to so speak? And how is this word the witness of the Holy Spirit? Here is the answer: "For no prophecy ever came by the will of man; but menspake from God, being moved by the Holy Spirit." (2 Pet. 1:21). The Holy Spirit bears witness to us through the word of the apostles and prophets, inspired men.

When I drink some hot liquid, I know that it is hot because with my nerve system I feel it. When shaving I know that I am cut because I feel it. Is this the kind of witness the Spirit gives the sinner and the child of God? That is the

impression that men would have us to expect. They found no such doctrine in the Bible. Only psychopaths think the Spirit has operated on them in such fashion. It is no wonder that others become disappointed and reject the whole system when they have waited for such testimony and it has not come.

The hot liquid cannot speak. The keen edge of the razor cannot speak. "But the Spirit speaketh expressly" (1 Tim. 4:1). He speaks through the prophets (Eph. 3:5). And this is how he bears witness.

"The Spirit himself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are children of God" (Rom. 8:15). This is not left to my feelings. The Spirit addresses the intelligent person, who can receive and understand the testimony and can intelligently and understandingly respond to that testimony. The Spirit tells men how to be saved and how to live righteously by faith (Rom. 1:16, 17). The man knows when he has obeyed the teaching, thus the Holy Spirit and the man's spirit testify that he is

saved. The child of God knows when he is living righteously according to the word which the Spirit has given, thus the Spirit and the man's spirit bear witness to his righteousness. When the Spirit tells us something, we do not need to be hit with a brick or with some personal impact to make us know. We, as rational beings who understand speech, the highest form of communication, accept the witness borne to us in the Spirit's word.

"And it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is the truth. For there are three who bear witness, the Spirit, and the water, and the blood; and the three agree in one." (1 John 5:7, 8). Our purpose here is not to deal with the manner in which the water and the blood bear witness, but to further emphasize the manner of the Spirit's witness. Since the passage declares that the Spirit is the truth, we can readily perceive that by the truth the Spirit bears witness. Let us believe his testimony.

END

"I Am Just A Housewife"

by LEONA ROCHELLE

I am a housewife, mother of four children, grandmother of five. I am middle-aged, frankly so, slightly overweight and only moderately attractive. I hold no college degrees; I would be lost in the fast-moving world of business. But I am not neurotic, I am not frustrated, and I do not take tranquilizers!

Often when I finish reading an article telling what's wrong with the average housewife, I'm downright disgusted and I'm surprised that I've ever had the sense to come in out of the rain. According to writers of these articles I should be mired down in self-pity, constantly running to men of medicine for pills that do not help,

seeking a cure for ills that do not exist.

How can I be happy when I have none of the things I'm told are necessary for me to lead a full life, to know myself and to become a whole person? I feel that I have a duty to be happy, and obligation to myself as well as to those around me. An optimistic attitude of mind is essential to my well being. Power, peace and healing are the natural products of a happy disposition, and a single spiritual idea can give poise and confidence.

Happiness does not in any measure depend upon material possessions. I've never owned a Renault, but I've walked with my children to the top of a high hill to look down on the breath-taking scene below and the splendor of a winter sunset. I've never been to the opera, but I've listened to the songs of birds, and chirping of the crickets in clover and the sighing of the wind in the pines. I've never been applauded by the masses, but I've shared with God the wonderful miracle of creation and I've had the thrill of hearing a tiny lisping voice whispering "you are the bestest muvver (or grandmuvver) in the whole world."

Does it really matter that I did not go to high school? My formal schooling was abruptly halted when I was 12 years old, but I have the ability to greet each dawn with a smile and with eagerness for the opportunities the day contains. I have the intelligence to approach my work, even the doing of tiresome and monotonous chores, with willing hands, and an open mind; and I can face the night with gladness, with tiredness of body that woos me to sleep, happy in the knowledge that I have spent wisely this God-given day.

Life has not been easy for me, I've weathered several major illnesses, among them cancer and two heart attacks. I've held a sick baby in my arms all night, not just

one night, but many, expecting every breath to be her last. I've walked the floors for hours while my husband lay under the surgeon's knife hoping and praying that something could be done before his life-blood all drained away. I've stood helplessly by and watched my home and all my earthly possessions burn.

I am only 17 years older than my oldest child, and I never read Dr. Spock. So what? She could not have grown into a finer person had I been 30 and held a dozen degrees. Oh, yes, she and the three younger ones often wore clothes to school that were made of feed sacks, but no one knew. I learned early to use my hands and my little girls' dresses were the envy of their classmates. The fact that their clothes were homemade did not keep any of them from being among the top 10 percent of their respective classes, scholastically.

Often it seemed to me that I was spending years just washing and ironing. But my clothesline was an inspiration; little girl dresses became rainbows and little boy trousers were wind-filled balloons, and I've had many poems published that I composed while hanging the wash on the line. The money received from the sale of these poems was often used to buy insulin

So what if I don't have a college degree? Once I was told that the greatest university in the world was not enclosed by four walls, but by an inquiring mind, a loving heart, a willingness, an eagerness to learn a deep faith in God. To these I would add a good dictionary and access to a public library.

I do not feel that I am indispensable. Certainly my part in the great drama of life is small, like a pebble carelessly tossed into a whirling pool for a moment only the rhythm is disturbed. When I

am dead the snow will still fall in the winter, trees will still bud and put out new life in the springtime, autumn will follow summer and the leaves will drift noiselessly down as they have for unnumbered centuries; but I have not lived in vain.

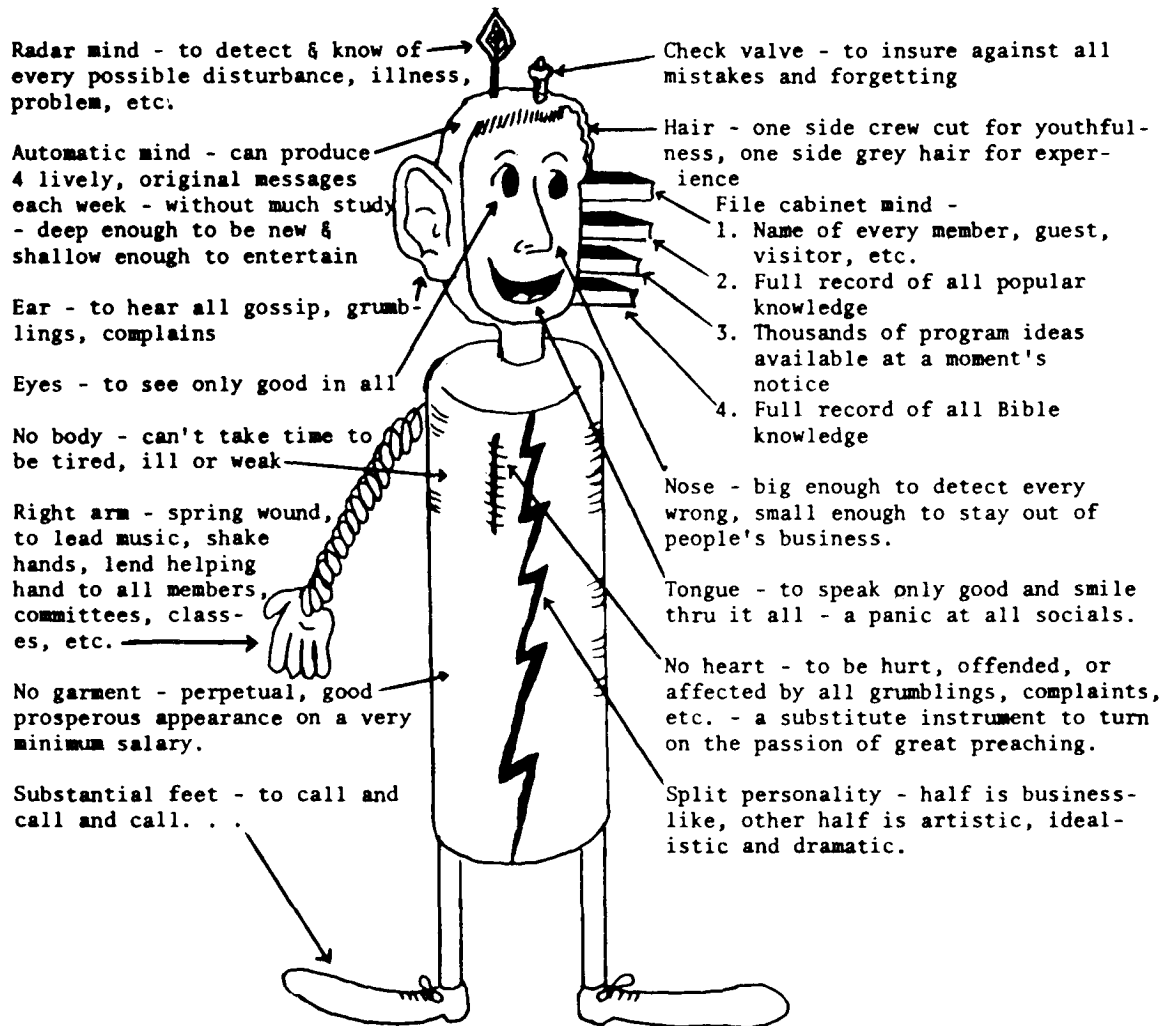
For a little time my children will grieve for me, but I would not have their grief to last too long. I would have them think of me as walking the hills of Heaven, greeting old friends and making new ones, looking for my share of gold, not in shining pavements but in blossoming daffodils or goldenrod, happy in the presence of my God.

The landscapes I paint give pleasure to me and mine, I know I'll leave behind no great masterpiece of art, no deathless prose, no soul-stirring poem. But I will leave behind children and grandchildren with a deep and sincere faith in God and an appreciation of all His handiwork. I know that often when they see a lovely sunset, or stark bare tree branches etched against a winter sky, or the heart-stopping beauty of wild plum trees in bloom, or wild geese flying over, or smell the pungent odor of burning leaves, or freshly turned loam, they will pause and say: "Mother loved this so." And for a moment I'll live again.

God in His infinite wisdom, knowing my capabilities and my limitations, chose for me this station and this time. He has granted me leisure to sit and look at the wonders of the robin and the sparrow as they labor to build their nest; I've observed their loving care as they fed their babies and taught them to fly. I've watched a fern uncurl, a flower unfold, a tiny seed pushing its way up through the moist earth, and in all of these things I've caught a glimpse of the unseen Hand of God.

I'm just a house wife, but if I had my life to live over and could choose my position in the world, I would choose no other way! END

Blueprint For *The Ideal Preacher*



Note: Duplicate of above desirable so he can be in more than one place at a time