

Fulton County Gospel News

"The Churches of Christ Salute You"

Publication No. 211780

Second Class Postage Paid At Mammoth Spring, AR

Volume 19

Mammoth Spring, Arkansas 72554

September, 1985

No. 9

Encouragement

By David Riley

There is a line in the Song of Solomon, that great book of love poetry in the Old Testament, where the spellbound bridegroom said to the bride, "*You are all fair, my love; there is no flaw in you.*" (Song of Solomon 4:7). In this collection of love poems, the young man and the young woman seem to live in a world of perfection. She sings his praises, and he sings hers. They are obviously two people very much in love with each other. One can read the Song of Solomon from beginning to end, and he will find no word of criticism. There is nothing but praise.

Over and over again the Bible instructs the disciples of Christ (you and I) about how we are to love each other. Read I Peter 1:22, Romans 13:8-10, James 2:8, I John 3:16-18, and John 13:34. These passages picture a community of people who are obviously very much in love with each other.

This sincere, fervent love for each other causes us to always do the best for one another. That's the Key! It will cause us to seek out the needs in each others lives. It will cause us to correct each other when we are wrong. But, it will always be done in love. (Ephesians 4:15).

Our brotherhood has become very adapt at pointing out each others failures. I make mistakes. I need correcting. But, I also need encouraging from time to time. How about you? I believe the New Testament makes plain, that this love the disciples of Christ have for one another will cause them to en-

courage each other. Read Galatians 6:1-2 (What is the law of Christ?; see Galatians 5:14, John 13:34, and James 2:8); Romans 15:1-2; II Tim. 2:24-26; and I John 4:21.

Read again the Song of Solomon from beginning to end and you will find no word of criticism between the two who were obviously deeply in love with one another. There was nothing but praise. Brethern, correct me when I'm wrong, but don't forget to encourage me once in a while too.

Seems Somebody Should Say Something

By Bill Graddy

Frustration appears to be the rule instead of the exception among even the elite of the church today. To whatever degree we lack courage and are losing heart (Galatians 6:9), preaching has always pleased God to the salvation of His creatures (I Corinthians 1:21).

"Is there any word from the Lord?" (Jeremiah 37:17). Yes, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good work" (II Tim. 3:16,17). How many of us, like Pilate, have washed our hands in the bowl of do nothing, write nothing, and preach nothing? (Matthew 27:24).

What is the word of the Lord? "When I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die: and thou givest him not warning, nor speakest to warn the wicked from his wicked

way, to save his life; the same wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand. Yet if thou warn the wicked, and he turn not from his wickedness, nor from his wicked way, he shall die in his iniquity; but thou hast delivered thy soul" (Ezekiel 3:18-19). One deduction is, Christians must preach, print, and publish the gospel, warning the brethren of the "issues" of the day that will cause us to take our eyes off our goal - Heaven.

We, Christians, hopefully, know the difference between the school and the church, but when we use "Clower-eternal-optimism for Christian faith" we wonder! If Jerry Clower, a Baptist, can come to "our" campuses and inspire parents to give more for educating our children, how long will it be until we ask him to help inspire us to increase our contribution at church? We use Dobson's films why not use Jerry in person? After all we have been bombarded with how influential "our" schools are and can be!

Don't we have any men among us who can take the Bible and inspire us to help support the education of our children? Must we go to "the plains of Ono?" (Neh. 6; Rom. 15:4). Do we use Zig Ziglar, a Baptist, because God has spoken to him, as he so claims?

Although "our" schools are not of divine origin and we may choose to educate our children as we prefer, we do claim that the Scriptures are our guidelines to keep them "Christian" and will only use Christians as teachers. We devoutly proclaim that no non-Christian will ever teach in "our" schools, yet when it comes to raising money to support them and inspire parents who are Christians to pay for them,

FULTON COUNTY GOSPEL NEWS
 . . . is a monthly publication distributed free of charge to any who care to receive it. We will be happy to add any names to the regular mailing list. If you send in a name be SURE to include the Zip Code Number. It must be with each address according to the Postal regulations. This paper is supported by unsolicited contributions for which we are grateful. If you care to know the financial status and expenses, that information will be furnished upon request. Mail all address corrections to:
FULTON COUNTY GOSPEL NEWS
 P. O. Box 251
 Mammoth Spring, Arkansas 72554
 EDITOR Mike Pace
 Publication No. 211780

we use non-Christians. "O consistency thou art a jewel."

It was said of Mr. Clower, "Get him talking about God and His people and getting because you've given to Christian education, and the result is unbelievable." (The Lipscomb News, September, 1984). Ten of "our" schools across the nation have used Mr. Clower twelve times for this endeavor, Mr. Ziglar is being used to inspire Partners In Progress, October 9, 1984, at the Camelot Hotel in Little Rock, Ark.

Is it true that so called "Christian" education has the best of both worlds, the secular and the spiritual?

JESUS' STYLE OF EVANGELISM

By Bruce Wadzeck

Jesus is our role model for the Church in every area, which includes evangelism (I Peter 1:26). Much of the literature and teaching on evangelism patterns itself after secular salesman techniques. The other common model for our style of outreach tends to be other religious groups' evangelistic techniques. While we should learn from every source possible and there are good principles in every area, we must remember Jesus has set an example

for us that we should follow in his footsteps.

In the Gospel of John, chapter four, Jesus encountered the woman at the well. It provides a classic example of how to reach out to an irreligious person. There are always barriers that we have to overcome to communicate to irreligious people. Jesus crossed the racial/religious prejudice barriers between Jews and Samaritans and the social barrier of male/female relationships of the day. There are some basic principles in this vivid account that are applicable to twentieth century irreligious people.

First of all, irreligious people are suspicious of the intentions of everyone. They think we want their money and will try to manipulate them in some potentially harmful way. It may take time to overcome these suspicions and build trust upon which we can share the good news. Jesus initiated the contact by saying in effect: "Please help me." Too often, we want to be the helper but not the helped. Typically irreligious people will resist our attempts to help them, but may respond to our requests for help. Ask your irreligious neighbor to help you with the car or gardening problems. We must open up the lines of communication by getting involved in a natural way to overcome suspicion.

Second, Jesus just happened to meet this woman at the well and took advantage of this normal encounter. This wasn't an evangelistic campaign in Samaria where they were door-knocking at wells. We need to learn to make the most of every one of our daily encounters with people to share the message.

Third, Jesus used an everyday language, conversational style of communication. He turned the natural setting of needing well water to live into a symbol of the gift of eternal life. We need to learn to turn daily conversations about sports, weather, national events and international events into natural openers to talking about spiritual matters.

Fourth, Jesus talked first of the positive hope of the gift of God before he convicted the woman of sin. Irreligious people tend to be pessimistic and negative and need to be introduced to the positive potential of hope that life can change. Expect them to pretend they don't need the gift of God. They are afraid of admitting their needs for fear of failure and possible manipulation.

Fifth, Jesus proceeded to pinpoint the woman's need of this gift. He did this by making a request she go get her husband. Five possible rejections in marriage and presently just living with a man, speaks volumes in terms of pain and disappointment. If we are alert to the people about us, we can note the clear cut needs of God in their life. When we show some insight into the pain in their life like Jesus, they will be convicted of their sin and our competency to help.

Sixth, once you have the confidence of an irreligious person, you will discover that they have some legitimate questions about contemporary religious groups' beliefs. She was confused over the Jewish and Samaritan religious worship setting. Jesus took this question seriously and proceeded to give her a concise answer. The denominational teachings on a variety of subjects has irreligious people so confused that whatever spiritual interest they have is quickly quenched.

Seventh, after all these barriers have been crossed, it is time to introduce the irreligious person to the Messiah (John 4:25, 26). The person of Jesus is much misunderstood in our society, but when the Biblical Jesus is presented, he will draw people to himself.

Eighth, who would have picked this woman as the one to share the good news with her community? An irreligious person who becomes excited about Jesus or a new convert can share their story with others (John 4:39). Then they can point others to someone who can produce faith with Jesus' words (John 4:41-42).

These opportunities may occur

while riding a bus, waiting in line or working on projects at work. Others will be over a longer time period in which we build a friendship with neighbors, relatives or work associates. The eight principles exemplified by Jesus in John 4, will be valid in all these situations. Jesus has already set a clear example. The only question is whether we will walk in his footsteps!

Ordinary People

By Buddy Borland

How many times have you wished you had the skills that others possess? During an outstanding Bible class or a dynamic worship service, you close your eyes and picture yourself as a powerful song leader or an effective Bible teacher helping others to find Jesus. Many times you have said in utter frustration, "If only I could . . ."

"If only . . ." Does that sound familiar? You dream of being a more gifted servant of the Lord and participating in some spectacular way, but it seems that that special gift or opportunity just passes you by. Often this brings on guilt and depression. Many times you have excused yourself from some task by saying, "I can't, I'm just an ordinary person."

Join the crowd! This old world is full of ordinary people. Don't give up and feel guilty because you are ordinary. God must have a special feeling for people like us; after all, He made so many of us! Keep your eyes open and stay alert for that special opportunity for ordinary people and watch your talents grow quickly.

Perhaps right now you are not gifted in an area that receives a lot of public attention. Since God has given all his children something

special called "gifts", discover yours and put it to use. It may be that all you can do is cook, and you think that is just ordinary. Well, why not use that gift to show hospitality to lonely people, prepare food for the sick and shut-ins, and the bereaved.

So what if you can't preach, teach, or exhort? You are good with your hands. Did you know that there is a special place for people like you in the church? Things are always getting broken. Elderly people often get to the point they are unable to repair things in their homes. Just think how helpful you could be in such circumstances! Your gift makes you very important. You can perform many worthwhile jobs by using your 'ordinary' gift.

So many ordinary people intend to serve the Lord some day. They are waiting for something unusual to happen to them and then they will go to work for Jesus. Listen up, Ordinary Person! You have an opportunity to serve God every day, just as you are. Serving the Lord is the faithful, day-to-day use of our gifts. Stop thinking about what you would do if you had more talent, and start today using what you have! Churches would die, souls would be lost, this world would be in a much bigger mess, if we ordinary people quit doing what we can!

When we stop to think about it, much of our lives are affected and influenced by ordinary people doing what they do best. Often it is some ordinary person who exhorts a friend and encourages those who have failed. It is the ordinary person who sees the value of a child, the faith of the elderly, and the determination of the handicapped.

This church has been built up by ordinary people just like you! We are where we are today because you have been faithful to do your best and accept any challenge

placed before you. We are not one bit concerned about whether we will be able to achieve our goals for this or any other year, because we know that our "ordinary" members will arise and meet the challenge head-on. God gives victory to ordinary people who do their best.

You know what I've just discovered? I've just discovered that ordinary people are most extraordinary!

WHY IT IS IMPORTANT TO GO TO WORSHIP

By J. Wayne Kilpatrick

None among us would think that an hour of worship on Sunday morning is an acceptable substitute for a daily walk with the Lord. Yet many among us seem not to understand how important church attendance is to the Christian life. In Hebrews 10:25, the writer says, "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching." Church attendance is a command. Christians belong to each other and they need each other. There is strength and encouragement in the fellowship of God's people.

Isaiah, chapter six, contains some important lessons regarding the importance of going to worship. Just what occurred when Isaiah went into the temple? For one thing, **he saw the Lord**. He looked beyond the other people in the building and saw God on his throne. Surely, we don't have such dazzling visions today, but we can still see the Lord as we meet with God's people. The singing, praying, studying, giving, and communing with the Lord in the Lord's Supper – all of these can lift our eyes from this world with its problems and focus them on the King in heaven.

Next, Isaiah **saw himself**. Many Christians seem to be arrogant and look down on fellow Christians who occasionally stumble and fall. They perceive of themselves as much too spiritual for such obvious sins. They are made to feel proud as they compare themselves with themselves. However, when one goes into the church building with the express purpose of worshipping God and expressing love to Him, he not only sees God, but himself as well. The glory and purity of the Lord reveals our shame and sin. Isaiah cried out, "Woe is me! What a sinner I am!" It is so easy to be convicted about other people's sins, and never see our own shortcomings! Show me a man who has seen the Lord, high and lifted up, and I will show you a man who sees himself.

Thank God, the experience did not stop there, for Isaiah **saw the need**. He saw a world lost in sins and needing the message of the Lord. He heard the voice of God saying, "Who shall I send, and who will go for us?" Then he committed himself to the task by saying, "Here am I; send me." He went into the temple a sinner and came out a soul winner! God interrupted the "worship service" to send his angels down to make a winner of souls out of Isaiah! For, after all, any experience with the Lord (if it is real) will make better soul winners out of us.

Now don't you see why it is important for you to go to God's house?

CONTRIBUTIONS

INDIVIDUALS

Marvin Powell	\$20.00
Clyde & Delphia Smith	32.00
Ruthie Russell	10.00
Mrs. L. A. Morrison	20.00
Carrie Anderson	10.00

CONGREGATIONS

Jeff Church of Christ	10.00
Agnos Church of Christ	5.00
Garfield Church of Christ	15.00
Gamaliel Church of Christ	10.00
Big Pond Church of Christ	12.00
Elizabeth Church of Christ	10.00
Church of Christ, Marionville, Mo.	10.00

How To Become A Christian

The most important question ever asked is: "**What must I do to be saved?**" (Acts 16:30). Then the HOW becomes equally as important. Notice the step by step process. First, we must have faith in the Author and Finisher of our faith, Jesus Christ. (Heb. 12:2). This faith comes by the hearing of the Word of God. (Rom. 10:17). "But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." (Heb. 11:6). With the belief and trust that Jesus is the Redeemer, we must repent of sins. "And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men everywhere to repent." (Acts 17:30). In repentance, we turn from sin, **STOP** serving Satan and **START** serving the Lord. (Matthew 3:8;

Luke 13:3). With this new attitude we are ready to confess our faith, "That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." (Romans 10:9-10). Read Matthew 10:32-33. Acknowledge our faith, repentance and confession, the last step into Christ is baptism. "For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ." (Gal. 3:27). Read Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38. Now that our past sins have been forgiven, the Lord has added us to His church and we are Christians. (Acts 2:47 and Acts 11:26).

BECOME A CHRISTIAN

Mail all address changes to:
CHURCH OF CHRIST
P. O. BOX 251
MAMMOTH SPRING, AR 72554