

Church Hopping

by Steve Higginbotham
MercEmail, April 2005

Have you heard about the man who was the only survivor of a shipwreck? He swam ashore to an uncharted island and lived there for the next five years. Finally, sailors spotted the smoke of his campfire and rescued him from the island. As they were leaving the island, one of the sailors and the rescued man stood on the back of the boat, gazing at the tiny island that had sustained this man for the past five years. The sailor interrupted the reflective silence by asking the man what the three huts were for. The man said, "The first hut was my home. The second hut was where I went to church. And the third hut was where I used to go to church before I got mad and left."

The sad thing about this story is that it is an accurate caricature of what so many people are doing today. When a person gets his feelings hurt, he leaves for another congregation. When a person is offended, he leaves for another congregation. When a person doesn't get his way, he leaves for another congregation. Instead of working through difficulty, being patient, practicing forgiveness and brotherly kindness, and being dependable, people use their membership, and the threat of leaving, as a form of bribery to get their way. When they don't get their way, off they go to another congregation to exchange their old problems for a set of new ones yet to be realized. Then the process begins again.

I wonder if much of the "church hopping" we see today would cease if people were more concerned about what they can contribute to a congregation rather than focusing upon what a congregation can do for them. I believe we would all be better off if we would focus "less of self, and more on Thee."

- via Bridge St. Church of Christ, New Martinsville, WV (submitted)

Prescription for the Blues

One day when I was worried and feeling very blue,
I read a small prescription that I will share with you.

It said, "When you're discouraged, don't sit and fret and frown,
Just get a piece of paper and write your blessings down."

I thought that there was nothing for me to write about,
But long before I finished . . . My pen ran out.

- Author Unknown -



Our faith should be our steering wheel not our spare tire - C. L. Wheeler

News & Notes

SYMPATHY: To Arlen Webb at the sudden passing of a nephew in Idaho.

CARE & SHARE BEARS: Each Tuesday at 9:00 a.m. Any of the ladies are welcome to help with this work.

PANTRY: Soup & crackers. Please help restock the pantry.

ENCOURAGE: Ruth Brewer, Yvonne Price.

THOSE WITH PHYSICAL PROBLEMS: Weirton Medical Center: Mabel Sprout. At Home: Fred Rayl, Rich Robinson, Michelle Hanlon, Dan Williams, Yvonne Price, Blondenia Orr, Jenny Rhodes, Pauline Clutter, Bette Gentry. Others confined to their homes and in nursing homes are listed on the bulletin board.

LECTURES & MEETINGS:

Ohio Valley	Aug. 18-21	(Harmar Hill) Marietta, OH
East Liverpool	Sept. 7-10	Terry Varner
CHESTER	Sept. 28-Oct. 2	Steve Higginbotham

SEE ONLY CHRIST

You are familiar, no doubt, with one of the most famous paintings ever done by any artist: The Last Supper by Leonardo da Vinci, that classic portrayal of Christ and the twelve apostles at the table.

Many students of art history believe that the painting, when first created, was somewhat different from the version which we now see. There was initially, it is believed, an exquisite lace border on the tablecloth. When, immediately upon completion, da Vinci invited a group of art students to view his masterpiece, they were immensely impressed by the delicate design of that lace-work. They studied it intently and praised it highly. Upon seeing the reaction of these young men, the artist took up a brush, dipped it, and made a few long strokes across the canvas, obliterating the lace. Then, with uncontrollable feeling, he shouted, "Now, look at the face of Christ!"

How easily we take our view off of Christ and put it upon some nice distraction. The Hebrew writer urged "fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God" (Heb. 12:2).

Let us fix our eyes upon Him. Let us see His beauty, His love, His grace and His commitment to us. Then let us walk in His steps (1 Pet. 2:21-25).

Phil Sanders, *In Search of the Lord*, Edmond, OK - via *Bulletin Digest*

