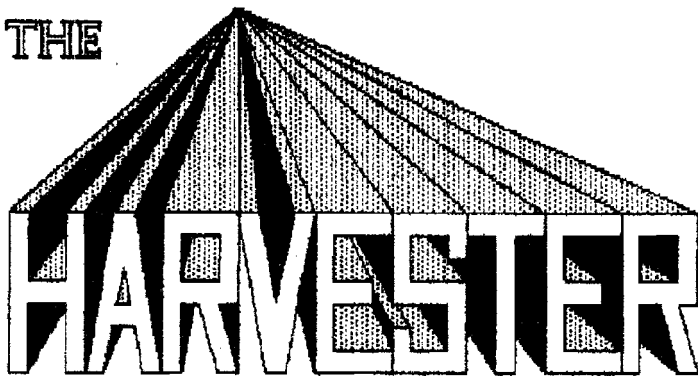


THE



*"The harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth laborers into his harvest" (Luke 10:2)*

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## UNCOMMON COURTESY

What happened to the days when even complete strangers treated each other with respect and common courtesy? The days when people would hold the door open for each other at the store? The days when people weren't continually pulling out in front of you on the highway? The days when children were taught to say 'sir' and 'ma'am' to all adults? The days when someone who dialed a wrong number would actually apologize rather than slamming the phone in your face, as though it's your fault? It seems that

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everyone today is at best indifferent, if not down-right disrespectful, to strangers.

Often on Sunday mornings I travel to a neighboring congregation which is about 70 miles from my home. This trip takes me through a very rural area of south Mississippi where I have observed something very interesting. Being from a fairly large city I am not at all used to a stranger waving at me as we pass each other on the road. But I have found that when you get out into the country this is not the case at all. On a typical Sunday morning I will have several people wave at me. The interesting thing is to notice the type of people who wave and those who don't.

I have gotten to the point where I almost know beforehand if a driver will wave by the type of automobile he is driving and the clothes he is wearing. If you see a nice looking late model car with a family in it dressed for church you needn't even bother looking at them because they won't even acknowledge your existence. But if you see a beat-up old pick-up driven by a farmer wearing overalls, or in the winter a pick-up driven by a hunter wearing his orange hat, neither of whom probably have any intention of going to church, you might as well get ready to wave back because they are going to wave at you.

Doesn't it seem strange that people going to church don't act as friendly as those who aren't going to church? I don't really think that the difference in these people is whether or not they attend church. The biggest difference is their

attitudes. The people in the nice car heading to the big church in town probably make a good living (judging by the car and clothes) and have what I will call 'city-folk attitudes.' The old farmer and the hunter are both content to be known as common folk and have what I will call 'country-folk attitudes.'

Many people speak of the differences in the way people behave in the South versus the North. There is no doubt that, as a whole, people in the South are the friendliest and nicest in the country. But this doesn't mean we have a monopoly on good people. I have been all over this country and I have found good and bad people just about everywhere.

There is one thing I noticed, though, that I don't hear people talk about all that much. I have found that, much more pronounced than the differences in the North and South, is the differences between people who live in a big city versus those who live in the country. The average farmer will be nice regardless of whether he lives in Mississippi, Montana or even upstate New York. The average city dweller will be more indifferent or even abrasive if he lives in Boston, Los Angeles or even Atlanta.

If you coop-up even the best person in a big city for a long enough period of time he will begin to show the effects of it. I just don't think people are meant to be squeezed together like rats. Eventually you begin to suffocate and you just plain get tired of seeing so many people. That's when you start treating strangers,

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and even friends, rudely. But when a man lives in wide open spaces and isn't constantly surrounded by crowds of people he learns to appreciate others much more. He doesn't mind waving or saying 'hi' to a complete stranger.

I have noticed too that Christians are much more likely to come from the country. One need only look at the distribution of churches to see that. Practically any city you can think of with a population over 100,000 is fortunate to have one congregation in it. Yet rural areas with only a fraction of the population may have churches scattered all over the place. And churches in the country tend to be more conservative than those in cities.

Again it is the attitude of people which lies at the heart of this. Most people living in a city find the Lord's church too simple and unappealing. They want something with a large fancy building, and all sorts of modern trappings and innovations. People from the country are better able to see through all this and look more at the spiritual aspect of things.

Before I make everyone in the cities mad at me, I must say that I do know many fine Christians who live in large cities, but they are the exception. As a rule city dwellers are less friendly and less spiritually inclined. Living a Christian life is certainly possible in a city, but it is a little more difficult than in the country. I am not advocating that everyone should move to the country, but we should all be careful. City life, and the attitude it fosters, can rob us of our patience and our respect for our fellow man. The rat race can take its toll on any of us. We must be vigilant so that this does not happen.

Having seen my share of urban sprawl and beautiful rolling countryside I know one thing for certain. When we get to Heaven we will find that it is a whole lot more like Greene County, Mississippi than New York or Chicago.

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[Editor's Note: The above article was written by the author when he lived in Mobile, Alabama.]

## **THE UNSAVED MUST DO WHAT?**

**Hear** (Rom. 10:13-19)

**Believe** (Heb. 11:6; Acts 16:31)

**Repent** (Luke 24:47; Acts 17:30)

**Confess** (Rom. 10:9-10; Acts 8:37)

**Be Baptized** (Matt. 28:19-20; Gal. 3:27;  
Mark 16:16; Act 2:38)

## SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES

1. Who did Moses commission as his replacement?

2. When twelve thousand Israelite soldiers attacked and killed all the Midianites, how many Israelites were killed?

3. When Peter was asked if he loved Jesus and he answered, yes, what did Jesus tell him to do?

4. Paul said that he could not boast about preaching because he was under what to preach?

5. What was Ezekiel to do with the scroll that the Lord gave him?

ANSWERS NEXT MONTH ...

and remember last month's questions?

1. Which of Solomon's officials rebelled against him? JEROBOAM (1 Ki. 11:26)

2. What country is the setting for the book of Daniel? BABYLON (Dan. 1:1-4)

3. When he spoke of Christ's coming in his epistle, what had Peter not followed? CUNNINGLY DEvised FABLES (2 Pet. 1:16)

4. Those who mourn will what? COMFORTED (Matt. 5:4)

5. According to Deuteronomy, what two materials were not to be woven together? LINEN AND WOOL (Deut. 22:11)

## THE NAME GOD GAVE US

Through His prophet Isaiah, God declared that His people would later be called by a new name. "...and thou shalt be called by a new name, which the mouth of the Lord shall name" (Isa. 62:2). "And ye shall leave your name for a curse unto my chosen: for the Lord God shall slay thee, and call his servants by another name" (Isa. 65:15). Referring to Acts 11:26 we find that the new name God gave to His people was "Christian." This name in itself describes someone "belonging to Christ, the Son of God." So why is it that many religious movements wear another name?

It is interesting to note that many of the great religious leaders of the Reformation movement desired the name of "Christian" only for God's people. Charles Spurgeon, one of the greatest Baptist preachers ever known, declared: *"I look forward with pleasure to the day when there will not be a Baptist living! I hope that the Baptist name will soon perish, but let Christ's name last forever"* [Spurgeon Memorial Library, Vol. 1, page 168]. John Wesley, one of the great Protestant reformers and founder of the Methodist Church, said, *"Would to God that all party names, and unscriptural phrases and forms which have divided the Christian world, were forgot"* [Universal Knowledge, Vol. 9, page 540]. Furthermore, he stated, *"that the very name <Methodist> might never be mentioned more, but be burned in eternal oblivion."* Another great religious leader who insisted on wearing only the name CHRISTIAN was Martin Luther, founder of the Lutheran Church.

(continued from page 7)

*"I pray you to leave my name alone, and call not yourselves Lutherans, but Christians. Who is Luther? My doctrine is not mine. I have not been crucified for anyone. St. Paul (1 Cor. 1:13) would not that any should call themselves for Paul, nor of Peter, but of Christ. How then, does it befit me, a miserable bag of dust and ashes, to give my name to the children of Christ? Cease my dear friends, to cling to these party names, and distinctions; away with them all; and let us call ourselves only Christians, after Him from whom our doctrine comes"* [Life of Luther, by Stork, page 289].

Some people think it is acceptable to be called by a hyphenated Christian name, e.g., Presbyterian-Christian or Episcopalian-Christian. "At least we are calling ourselves Christians," they insist. But in America all American citizens are simply Americans; not German-Americans, or Japanese-Americans, but Americans! Likewise God's people should be called Christians; not Baptist-Christians, Methodist-Christians, Lutheran-Christians or Campbellite-Christians; but, CHRISTIANS only!

If there will ever be any unity among all believers in Christ, it will have to be under the name of "Christian." Members of different denominations will never agree to accept any one denominational name, but all should be willing to be called "Christians." It is the name God gave us and the only name we should ever wear!

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