

The World's Greatest Furniture Salesman

By JONATHAN PHILLIPS
Mega-Columnist

If you grow up in North Carolina, certain things are shoved down your throat until you either swallow them or choke on them.

Take, for example, University of North Carolina basketball. You hear so much ballyhoo from the press, the UNC fans, and the Tar Heel publicists that you either jump on the bandwagon or learn to hate the blue-clad warriors that bear your state's name.

Personally, I choked on it. That, of course, turned out to be an unwise (but psychologically irreversible) situation in light of the Chapel Hill outfit's athletic successes in recent years.

What makes it so strange is that another goody that was shoved down my throat during life in N.C. I swallowed. It is one that 'most everyone else chokes on.

We're talking, of course, about furniture store commercials.

Could you live for any amount of time in Eastern N.C., have any exposure at all to local tee vee and radio, and not hear time and time again about furniture stores in New Bern, Havelock, Goldsboro, and the cut-rate easy-credit furniture capital of the free world, Jacksonville?

Is there anyone in the region who hasn't at least heard of the Rose Brothers, the Three Room Group Man, and easy credit for military personnel E-1 and up?

Is there anyone east of Raleigh for whom locations such as Bell Fork Road and LeJeune Boulevard won't ring a bell? Is there anyone in Craven County who hasn't had the urge to not only touch Will C's pickup truck, but to drive it axle-deep into mud on Dover Pocosin?

I doubt it.

If you're livin' it up down east, you're also being bombarded with easy-credit furniture commercials.

They drive most folks crazy. Most would rather sit through their eight-year-old niece's piano recital than to hear again about the latest Second-Tuesday-of-the-Month-Founders-Day-Last-Chance-of-Your-Entire-Life Sale.

For some reason I became a connoisseur of these obnoxious commercials.

If I had a pickup truck, I'd drive it to the wrong side of the tracks and put a Tiger Top on it.

I love to see Itchy Popkin, perhaps the richest wimp in Onslow County, spinning around inside one of his bargain-priced washing machines.

I sometimes wish that I was brave or fool or thrifty enough to show up at a furniture store at 4 a.m. to see just who takes advantage of these all-night small appliance closeouts.

Maybe I should see a doctor. The national college basketball champions get on my nerves. Itchy Popkin doesn't.

If Dean Smith's boys are tops in roundball, however, the furniture commercials also have, in my opinion, their champion.

You've heard him, whoever he is, on the radio and television commercials for Furniture Fair. This guy is the all-time furniture and appliance hypemaster. He doesn't need to ride in a washing machine, and in fact we never see him.

He just has a clear, deep, persistent pitchman's voice that, in its own insincere way, can attach more importance to a furniture sale than to a meeting of the UN Security Council.

Several times a month, with this gentlemen spreading the word, Furniture Fair would cook up, through some amazing circumstances, the most amazing sales, with bargain deals that allegedly leave customers with jaws hanging agape. And all with easy credit.

And my unseen announcer hero would turn each of these one-in-a-million savings events into Patton crossing the Rhine, Caruso singing at the Met, or Armstrong strolling on the moon.

Service Together



Lela Barrow

According to Webster's Dictionary "service" means the performance of labor, menial, assistance, kindness, etc. The Bible-Romans 12: "Present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. Be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God. Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love. Live peaceably with all men."

Service Together means: United, mutual, brotherly love, thinking alike. There is a destiny that makes us brothers: None goes his way alone—all that we send into the lives of others comes back into our lives. The saying "United we stand." To accomplish anything worthwhile we have to work together. We are just as strong as the links in a chain—when one is broken the chain is useless 'till it is mended. Let God be the Golden Chain, through Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit, keep us safe together in His Service.

There is Divine Service: Unless we perform Divine Service willingly with every act of our life, we never perform it at all. It is well to think well: it is Divine to act well. Our worth is determined by the good deeds we do. Thank God every morning when you get up that you have something to do, which must be done, whether you like it or not. Being forced to work and forced to do your best, will breed in you temperance, self-control, strength of will, and a hundred other virtues which the idle never know. It also breeds love and mercy for a sufferer who needs you. You may go empty-handed, not knowing anything to do or say—God knows how helpless you feel and He helps you perform the deeds and speak words of comfort. This

is Divine Service St. Paul received at Athens. He was not the man to stand still and let idol worship take power. He acted in the power of his Master's message to meet man's soul.

Service Together brings reward: Working selfishly—alone brings unhappiness. Esau and Jacob, through their divided natures, could not work together. Therefore Esau sold his birthright for a mess of venison; Jacob through deceiving his father had to leave home to go in a foreign country. Had they been close together in love, as "brotherly-love", they could have stayed home and made their parents happy.

Service, to a just cause, rewards the worker with more real happiness and satisfaction than any other venture in life; but cooperation can make success; a divided home, church, community, nation pulling apart fails. It takes a lot of people working together to make a success of one perfect whole. Joy comes not to him who seeks it alone, but to him who seeks it for others. An interested church is an active church, a serving church and a christian church. A man's religion may be strengthened by joining a live church—But your religion must be a part of you, something you feel in your heart and practice in your life.

"Two and two make four—that is mathematics; hydrogen and oxygen form water—that is chemistry; Christ crucified is the power of God unto salvation—that is revelation. Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved" copied.

The Bible tells us of so many deeds of kindness Christ performed in his life—the added beauty of inconspicuous acts—such as talking to the woman at the well; shedding a tear at the grave of Lazarus; loving little children. We can't all be priests, missionaries or presidents but there are many little acts of kindness we can do for others. I especially like to cook something good and take to people who are sick and lonely. A card or letter brightens a day—lets the person know they are loved. That is service together.

Dear Editor:

Are you a widow or widower? If so, I know you are very lonely and in much need of friends that are in the same condition as yourself.

I would like to invite you out to Theos, an organization recently formed to help you cope with your loss and meet others who need your views on coping with a life alone. Who knows maybe you will find another partner. Only God holds the future in

his hand. We meet once a month at Garber Methodist Church, on Country Club Road, and that is the last Monday in each month. We are having a covered dish supper at our next meeting and would love to have each of you lonely people join us for a joyful evening.

Thank you.
Ruth Morris, D.D.
Rt. 2, Vanceboro, N.C.

Renew your subscription to the Highlights

So here I was, going through the motions in Jersey. On the radio comes a familiar voice.

It was him.

I shook my head, blinked my eyes, and pinched myself. I went to the sink and splashed cold water into my face. And listened again.

No doubt about it. It was him.

There's an outfit called Seaman's, which is a chain of New Jersey and New York furniture stores. As you could perhaps guess, they were on the verge of a sale whose historical significance would surely rival the fall of Rome.

At first I was disappointed to apparently discover that the world's greatest furniture and appliance salesman was undoubtedly with an advertising agency and not associated strictly with Furniture Fair.

But then I decided that the Seaman's ads were a nice little touch of home.

Now if only Warehouse Sales would open up on the wrong side of the tracks in Newark and Itchy Popkin would ride a washing machine into Piscataway. I'd be all set.

*Ho, Brothers, it's the hand clasp and the good word and the smile
That does the most and helps the most,
to make the world worth while;
It's all of us together, or it's only you and I—
A ringing song of friendship,
and a word or two of cheer,
Then all the world is gladder, and the bending sky is clear.
It's you and I together—and we're Brothers one and all
Whenever, through good fellowship we hear the subtle call,
Whenever, in the ruck of things we feel the helping hand
Or see the deeper glow that none but we may understand,
Then all the world is good to us and all is worth the while;
Ho, Brothers, it's the hand clasp and the good word and the smile!*

copied

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