

Weekly Legislative Summary

This is another of a series of weekly summaries prepared by the legislative staff of the Institute of Government on the work of the North Carolina General Assembly of 1969. It is confined to discussions of matters of general interest.

A First Reading on the 1969 Session (Part I)
With 33 weekday sessions behind it, the General Assembly is probably about one-third of the way around its 1969 orbit. We are devoting this week's and next week's summaries to a progress report on the measures that have been placed before the Assembly to date.

Taxes and Spending
By common consent the Governor's budget is the starting point for new tax and spending proposals. But every session this basic source is augmented by an array of proposals from other quarters, in response to pressures and needs that for one reason or another are not reflected in the Governor's plans. This year is no exception—since opening day a steady trickle of bills has been introduced for taxes or appropriations not covered in the Governor's budget message.

Some 20 separate appropriations bills have been introduced so far this year in addition to the general appropriations bills. If past patterns can be credited, the fate of most of these proposals will be decided in the Appropriations Committees—which will either incorporate the recommendations in one of the general appropriations bills or reject them, thereby likely sealing their doom. One bill alone, the proposal to bring teachers' salaries immediately to the national average, would add over \$100 million to the Governor's budget. The

total amount of the other separate appropriations bills is in the neighborhood of \$2 million for one-shot appropriations, and (among bills proposing new spending in successive years) \$10 million for the first year of the biennium and \$15 million for the second year. These sums can be expected to swell considerably in the coming weeks as more separate funding bills are introduced. Accounting for a substantial part of the current totals are proposals for public school kindergartens, local library support, renovation of the Governor Morehead School (and starting-up costs for the State Zoo, the darling of the 1969 session—a measure already fondly embraced by the Governor, an interim study commission and a large number of solons who co-signed the bill in both houses. Other beneficiaries of this largesse include local festivals celebrating flowers or fruit (apples, blueberries, tomatoes and rhododendron); the renovation and maintenance of historic sites; local forest fire fighting supplements, and support of cultural attractions such as the N. C. Symphony or State Theater.

A bumper crop of tax proposals has already ensured the Finance Committees of the House and Senate ample nourishment for the spring months. The larders of these committees now are loaded with such delicacies as a 5c-per-pack cigarette tax bill, earmarked for the public schools (Rep. Vogler); a non-earmarked 5c-per-pack cigarette tax bill (Sen. Moore and Rep. Baugh); a 1c-per-bottle soft drinks tax bill, earmarked for public schools (Sen. Nielson); a combined 2c-per-pack cigarette tax and 1c-per-bottle soft drink tax bill, billed as a possible alternative to the Governor's tobacco tax proposal

(Rep. Martin), and a "sin tax" proposed this week by Sen. Nielson, to place a graduated excise tax on movies, ranging from 5c-per-customer for family fare movies to 50c-per-customer for movies rated off-limits for teenagers. Also pending is an assortment of alcoholic beverage tax proposals—ranging from an increase of the liquor tax from 12 per cent to 22 per cent (Sen. Bowles); and a 5c-per-bottle tax increase on alcoholic beverages for the benefit of alcoholic rehabilitation and education (Sen. James and Rep. DeBruhl); to doubling of the surtaxes on beer and wine (Sen. Nielson).

Constitutional Amendments
During the past year a blue-ribbon State Constitution Study Commission, appointed by Gov. Moore and chaired by former Chief Justice Denny, made a thorough study of the North Carolina Constitution. Its recommendations to the General Assembly include an omnibus overhaul of the Constitution, as well as a number of potentially controversial individual amendments. This week the chairmen of the Senate and House committees on constitutional amendments, Sen. Allsbrook and Rep. Andrews, introduced the omnibus bill, consisting of a comprehensive editorial revision of the Constitution to remove outmoded provisions, improve organization, and make other changes largely editorial in nature. The remaining recommendations of the Study Commission—including veto power for the Governor, a two-term limit for the Governor and Lt. Governor, and a reduction in number of the Council of State and of elective state offices—have not yet been formally introduced. The indicated opposition of Sen. Allsbrook and other legislators to some of these individual amendments has somewhat beclouded their prospects.

Local Government
Legislation concerning local government has held the limelight much of the time during the early weeks of the session. This unusual focus on local government has been stimulated by the home rule proposals of the Local Government Study Commission, involving recommendations to repeal local exemptions from general enabling laws, to let localities determine their own government organization and the salaries of their officials, and to authorize county commissioners to adopt regulatory ordinances.

Much of the Study Commission program remains in committee, but the bill on county ordinance-making has passed the House with amendments and is awaiting Senate consideration next week. In the process of its consideration many questions involving state and local relationships have been seriously examined and debated for the first time in recent legislative annals. In addition, a Study Commission recommendation for restructuring of legislative standing committees on local government has been adopted, resulting in a reduction from three committees to one in each house and in the creation of subcommittees on statewide bills and local bills. Yet to be introduced is a bill embodying a proposed state division or department of local affairs, as recommended by the Study Commission and approved in principle by Governor Scott.

Full-fledged debates on local bills—generally something of a legislative oddity—have also occurred more than once during the early weeks of this session. Today the Senate passed after debate the bill to permit the Town of Scotland Neck to vote itself a separate administrative school unit, previously the object of heated discussion in the House. Both houses heaved collective sighs of relief earlier this week, as two highly partisan measures involving the composition of the Cherokee County Board of Com-

Make Church-Going A Habit . . .

WHAT PRICE DISCIPLESHIP?

International Sunday School Lesson for March 9

Memory Selection: "Whoever will save his life shall lose it; but whoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's, the same shall save it." March 8:35.

Lesson Text: Mark 10.

In today's lesson we see—very clearly—that discipleship requires a complete self-denial evidenced in obedient and heartfelt service in regard to God's will.

That this is not an easy undertaking, we must readily admit. The way of the cross was not easy for the Son of God—omnipotent Being that He was. And on a relative plain, what the sincerely confessed Christian faces is just as demanding, just as hard to face.

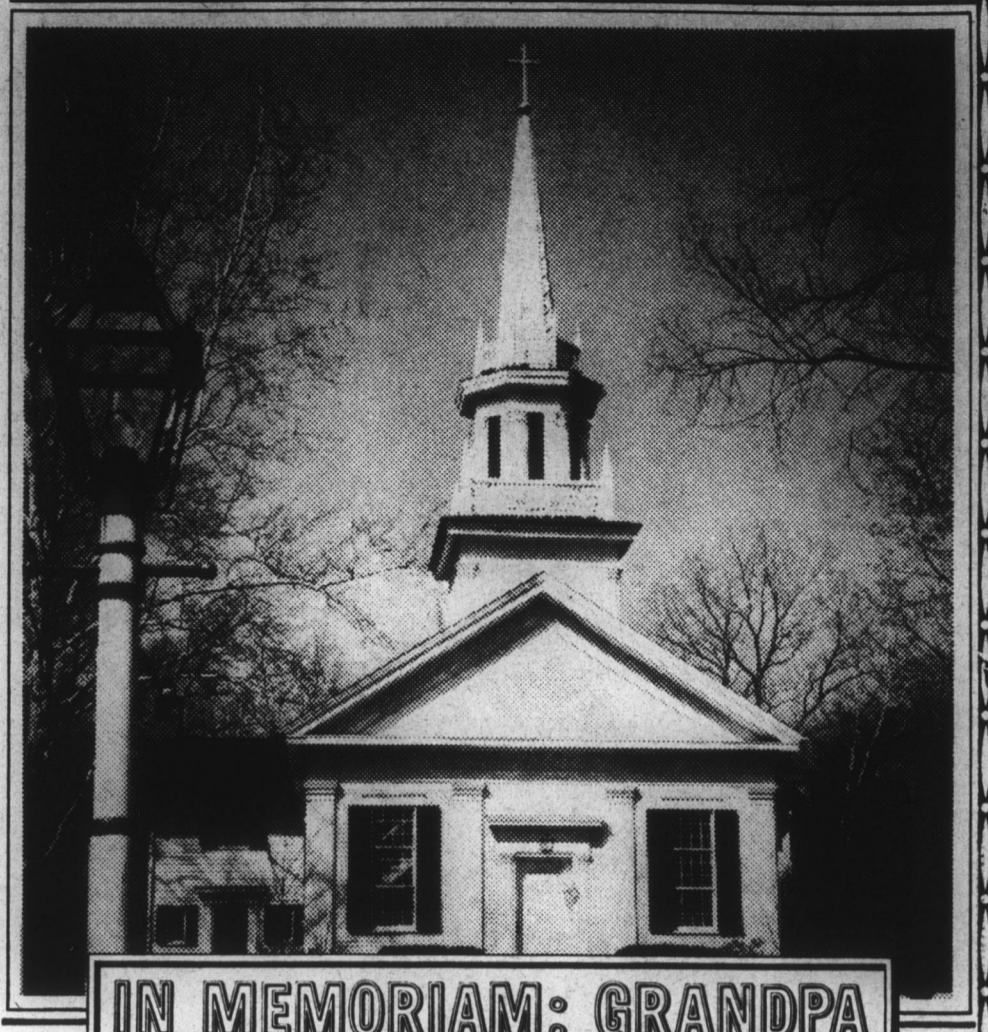
Selfishness is one of the cardinal sins of mankind—in any guise or form. The only thing that can be said of it is that it is human.

In the competitive age in which we live we tend to become possessed by our "possessions." The dollar looms large in the minds of the "haves-nots"—mainly because the lack of money only too often means a very real deprivation in necessities; but it, ironically enough, looms even larger in the minds of those who enjoy the amenities of life without stint—whether by inheritance or by ability. Possibly because "keeping up with the Joneses" has now become an accepted way of life in this affluent country of ours. Creature comforts—and public esteem—mean much to the human being who has tasted these things, whereas the person who has not—who is concerned with merely existing or providing bare necessities for his family—is (perforce) more hardy by nature—more self-disciplined.

A good example is contained in the verses we are studying today—the story of the rich young man who professed undying loyalty to Christ, and who asked "Master—what must I do?"

Christ's answer was uncompromising; He bade the young man: "Give away your earthly possessions—follow Me." And we see the young man go away, greatly troubled; we see that he is, in reality, more concerned with his present world than with the next. Profession of faith came easily to him—but an ACTIVE profession of faith and trust undermined the familiar world in which he moved. For transient comfort in this world (encompassing a minute particle of time) he renounced life everlasting in the next. Short-sighted? Yes! But, before we judge him, ought we not to take a good, close look at OURSELVES? Suppose—just suppose—we are established in a very comfortable way of life that has been attained by self-discipline and long application to a profession, and Christ came along and said: "Renounce all that you have, and follow me." Who among us would not look doubtfully at what is in the hand—and look askance at what "is in the bush?" "Judge not—that ye be not judged."

All too often, possessions keep people from
Continued on Page 3



IN MEMORIAM: GRANDPA

Exodus 20:1-17
Deuteronomy 6:4-9
Matthew 5:1-16
Matthew 5:17-20
Matthew 5:21-26
Matthew 5:27-32
Matthew 5:33-37



They sent all the way to Boston for that special piece of glass. Look closely, and you may see it in the east front window. From inside you can read the inscription: "In Memoriam . . ." and then his name.

Grandpa called himself "a retired handy-man." But in those days lumber was cheap and labor wasn't. So when they said "we can't afford to build a church," Grandpa disagreed.

"Get me the boards and a few strong fellows to set the beams. I'll build your church," said Grandpa!

Before he finished, there were fifty men and lots of dollars to help him. You can see why they sent all the way to Boston for a piece of glass.

Grandpa is gone. Yet the Christian who is eager to put his faith into action is still able to share God's blessings with hundreds of his neighbors . . . and posterity as well!

Scriptures selected by the American Bible Society

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