



Report From Washington By Rep. Walter B. Jones

This column could be properly titled "Pollution—Supreme Court—Executive Branch," for these are the important subjects of the week. The House action ending the week of May 16 ran the gamut from making legal the flying of kites in the District of Columbia to approving a Presidential reorganization plan, which many of us believe will completely change the operations and the conduct of the executive branch of government. In now employed by the executive addition, it will bypass the authority of the Bureau of the Budget—a department of government which has served both the public and the Congress well. The plan calls for the creation of an office of management and budget, guide, it is impossible to estimate what this amount would ultimately be.

The motion on this important question was to disapprove the recommendation, which means that a yes vote was voting against the plan, while a no vote was voting for the plan. On final passage, all North Carolina Democrats voted against the plan, while the North Carolina Republican members voted to approve the plan. The motion to defeat the plan failed by 29 votes.

Some two years ago, much was said about removing some of the Washington centralization and giving back powers to the various states. Certainly the reorganization plan which creates another block in a bungling bureaucracy is contrary to this philosophy.

Pollution — in the ever-growing concern regarding this important subject, the House took another positive action which I was happy to support. The President's budget request for water and sewer assistance improvements to the municipalities of this nation was for \$150 million. Along with others I joined in a successful effort which will increase this to \$500 million for the next fiscal year. It continues to be important that the Congress carefully consider priorities. We need to be concerned about the preservation and cleanliness of the earth far more than investigating the contours of the moon.

The Senate finally confirmed the ninth member of the Supreme Court — Harold Blackmun. Since he was from the state of Minnesota and not from the South, few if any questions were asked in the Judiciary Committee hearings, and none whatsoever on the Senate floor, as to his qualifications or his personal life.

A genius is a rare specimen who can listen to three ladies explain a bridge hand they played two days earlier and come up, not with the solution, but an understanding of what happened.

Make Going To Church A Habit

CONFRONTING THE WORLD WITH THE GOSPEL

International Sunday School Lesson for May 24

Memory Selection: "Sanctify the Lord God in your hearts; and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear."—1 Peter 3:15.

Lesson Text: Acts 17:16-38; 19:21-41; 1 Peter 3:13-17.

Our studies today lie in the field of Paul's second missionary journey, and his witnessing in Athens, seat of culture and sophistication. And, while he was not persecuted there for his teachings, he nevertheless came across an indifference and degree of superstition that was staggering. What was worse, for Paul, was that it was frustrating.

These attitudes posed a threat, then, as they do today, to effective witnessing and the spreading of the Word.

But the outreaching of Christian doctrines could not be stopped. Those tenets of faith had overcome greater obstacles—and will continue to do so while men of Paul's dedication, determination and character walk the earth.

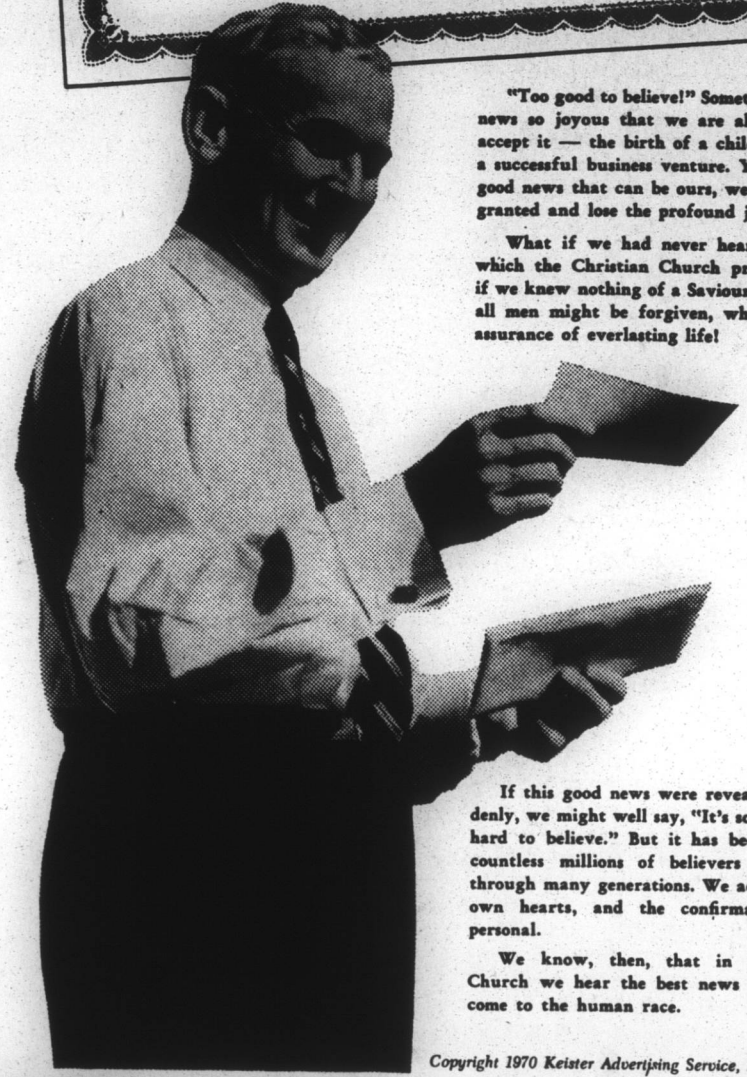
Idolatry had been encountered by Paul before, on his missionary journeys, but never on such a scale as in the city of Athens; what he probably found to be the most shocking thing of all was that, centered in Athens, were great minds, capable of logic, and he could not conceive of the free-wheeling acceptance of idolatry, with its roots in superstition, by men of such caliber as he met. And, somewhat paradoxically, this same logic worked against this new religion he preached—for his listeners found it hard to accept the Resurrection, and Paul, in his wisdom, knew that Christianity could not be proved, but rather, accepted by faith. Thus we find Paul, presenting the Gospel to agnostics, declaring, rather than demonstrating.

And, although Paul's missionary attempt in Athens could not be regarded as an unqualified success, nevertheless he did win over a number of converts—one of whom was Dionysius, a member of the city council. But he also made enemies among the silversmiths, who made a very lucrative living from fashioning shrines to the goddess Diana. Seeing their livelihood threatened, these craftsmen raised a hue and cry; in this they were aided and abetted by the city fathers—for the city benefitted, also, from the sale of their handiwork. How far-reaching in the life of people the Gospel can be. It challenges financial, religious and nationalistic patterns—and does so today, no less than it did in earlier days.

Paul, indeed, had many obstacles to overcome; but he was a concerned man, he saw a sick world, badly in need of the salvation Christ alone can offer; he saw a redeemable world, and bent his energies to that end. He was not a man in possession of certain convictions—he was a man possessed by his convictions.

He was also an astute man. He knew that

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"Too good to believe!" Sometimes we receive news so joyous that we are almost afraid to accept it — the birth of a child, a crisis past, a successful business venture. Yet the greatest good news that can be ours, we often take for granted and lose the profound joy of it.

What if we had never heard the message which the Christian Church proclaims? What if we knew nothing of a Saviour who died that all men might be forgiven, who gives us the assurance of everlasting life!

If this good news were revealed to us suddenly, we might well say, "It's so good that it's hard to believe." But it has been verified by countless millions of believers in all lands, through many generations. We accept it in our own hearts, and the confirmation becomes personal.

We know, then, that in the Christian Church we hear the best news that has ever come to the human race.

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Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Acts • Acts	Galatians • Galatians	Isaiah • Acts	Acts • Acts	Acts • Acts	Acts • Acts	Acts • Acts
2:1-12	2:29-41	5:18-26	49:5-13	10:30-48	13:1-4	16:6-15
Scriptures selected by the American Bible Society						14:21-27

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