

DEAR MR. PUBLISHER,  
BY **PARSON JONES**

Dear Mr. Publisher:

I had a chance to go back to school and do some refresher courses. My wife said I oughta go on account of all the changes that had taken place since I graduated. Well sir, I thought about it a long time and finally decided not to go. It's a fact that things have changed a heap. That's the problem - things are changing so fast, that by the time I got out, what I learned would be out-dated. Or as the old slogan goes, "the faster I would run the be-hinder I would get".

Changes? Man alive! Since I left school so many changes have taken place in religion that it may even be confusing to the Lord.

First there was the scientific age where everything had to be reasonable. They called it the age of "Modern man". So they went through the Bible with a slide rule and threw out everything that didn't fit. Feeding the 5,000 and walking on the water didn't really happen - they were just little stories to tell a point. Walking on water was somehow more offensive than the atom bomb.

Next came the age of "secular man". I think they called it "man come of age". Folks didn't need God and the church any more, cause they'd shed their knee britches and was wearing long pants. We were gonna build heaven right here on earth with a few computers and a little American know-how. Bob! That one blowed up in our face.

Then we turned to another fad - "the youthful man". Religious thought must now be geared to folks under 35 years of age. Music, theology, the hole works has gotta get young. If Jesus came back today he'd have to put hair-coloring on his beard.

Mr. Publisher, from the way things are going, the next phase will be called "hopeless man", and I got a suspicion it's right around the corner.

Well, I gotta close for now and do a little praying. I've about come to the conclusion that if the Lord don't straighten us out we ain't gonna be straightened out. Like the song says, "Oh Lord, Come On Down". So long.

Parson Jones

**Letter To  
The Editor**

Dear Editor:

I would like to comment on the excellent job which the Chamber of Commerce is doing in Yancey County. I would not care to live in a town without a good Chamber of Commerce and am appreciative of the fact that Burnsville is fortunate enough to have one.

Very truly,  
H.B. Rawls

**VIEWPOINT**

THE FACTS ABOUT MEDICAL CARE

By Jesse Helms

We stopped briefly a few weeks back in a small but thriving community in eastern North Carolina and, in conversation with one of the town leaders, the subject of medical care came up. Across the street, a man appearing to be in his late sixties scurried to his automobile. Our friend pointed. That, he said, is the only doctor in town. And then he added: "I don't know what we would do if anything happened to him."

The point, of course, is that something will happen to the doctor sooner or later. Then what? It is a problem that countless small communities, and some not so small, are already experiencing.

A week or so ago, a prominent North Carolina physician, Dr. Amos Johnson of Garland, testified before a subcommittee of the United States Senate. It is possible that Dr. Johnson's testimony will prove to be an irritant to some of his colleagues in the medical profession. Still, his credentials cannot be denied. Amos Johnson, now in his sixties, has spent a lifetime in vigorous service to the people around him. He is a past president of the Medical Society of North Carolina; he is also a past president of the American Academy of General Practice. He calls himself a "country doctor"—but it is entirely possible that he is ten jumps ahead of the nation's bureaucracy, in both government and the medical profession, in detecting the flaws in the course medicine in America is pursuing today.

Dr. Johnson has taken note of various estimates about the shortage of hospital space. Some "experts" have declared, for example, that the country needs, or will shortly need twice as many hospital beds as it now has. Dr. Johnson suspects that we may already have twice as many as we really need—if existing

ideas about treatment of patients were changed! The result, he says, would be better treatment of the ill, at vastly less cost.

In the first place, he contends, too many people are sent to the hospital, and too many stay there too long. This, he says frankly, may largely be a matter of convenience to physicians. The physicians reason that Medicare, hospital insurance, even welfare funds, will take care of the patients' bills. So off the patient goes, to the hospital.

It is not really a justified condemnation of often over-burdened physicians, however. There simply are not enough doctors to go around—not, that is, the right kind of doctors.

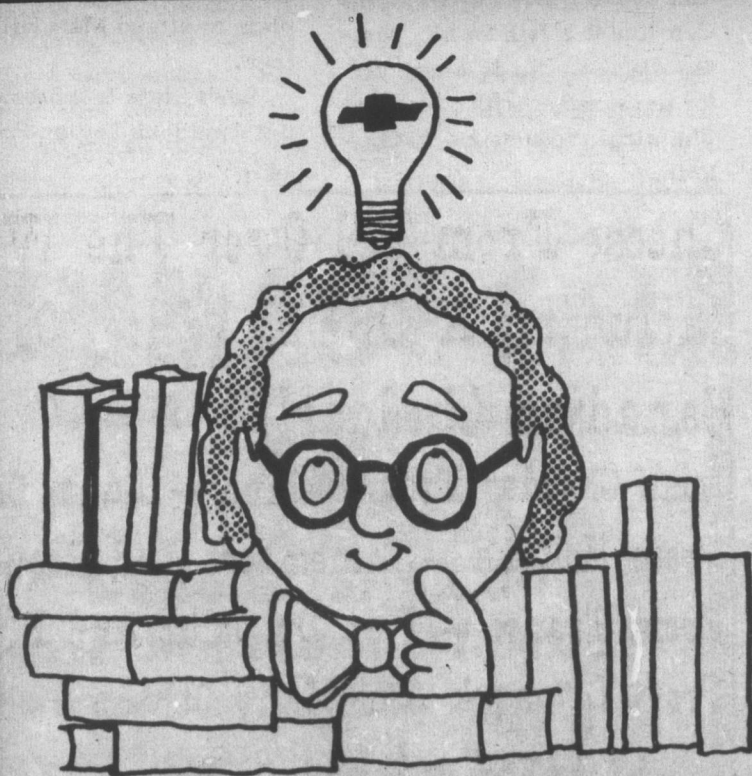
In his testimony before the Senate subcommittee, Dr. Johnson contended that medical schools are operating precisely in reverse of the needs of the people in turning out graduates. Eighty-five percent of the illnesses that beset mankind, says Dr. Johnson, could be successfully treated by family physicians, generally without sending the patient to the hospital at all. Yet only 15% of today's medical school graduates have been trained as family physicians. The other 85% have been trained as specialists.

Thus, he says, 15% of the physicians are being called upon to treat 85% of the illnesses—and 85% of the physicians spend their time treating 15% of the illnesses.

Dr. Johnson insists that all of this is a problem that will not go away simply as the result of the Congress appropriating more money for medical care. In fact, he cautions, the spending of more money may simply make the problem worse by causing an increase in the cost of medical care.—American Way Features

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