

How Much Do We Pay?

Just 20 years ago, "environment" was little more than a word in the dictionary, except to a few scientists and others in specialized fields. But population and industrial growth, along with the growing tendency of people to cluster together in massive urban centers, has made environment a household word.

Environment has literally become a matter of life and death in some areas and is becoming so in others.

The problem, the subject of a nationwide teach-in April 22, largely stems from the sheer numbers of people. The country's population now increases each year by the millions — at a rate each year comparable to the total national population in the early days of the country. We now think of the world population in terms of billions.

Costs Business

It should be recognized that in many instances if a company or industry had stepped too far ahead of its time in installing antipollution devices, even if they had been available, the firm would have priced itself out of the market. Fighting pollution on the scale the public now considers necessary is very, very costly for businesses.

As an official of one company comments, "If we do not heed the public demands for environmental conservation, a hostile business environment could have a drastic effect on our market position." This company has become a leader in environmental improvements both for economic and aesthetic reasons.

But its management points out that "progress in environmental control cannot be achieved without enormous expenditures of money. These costs will inevitably be borne by . . . (the public) in higher taxes . . . and in higher prices . . ."

Removing Lead

Automobiles are the nation's biggest source of air pollution. Lead-free gasoline would help cut down on this pollution.

But a changeover to lead-free gas would force the petroleum industry to make a capital investment of \$4 billion in new refinery equipment.

As a result of the \$4 billion expendi-

ture, consumer prices for gas would rise about two cents per gallon. That would be more than a five per cent increase in gasoline costs. Since the average family spends several hundred dollars a year on gas, the removal of lead would cost several dollars per person each year.

And that's just one of many possible steps to improve the environment. Cost of a reasonably clean environment, including both air and water, could easily run several hundred dollars per person each year. A clean environment could easily take a significant portion of each family's income and severely restrict the amount left over for other uses.

We'll Pay

This is a point which should not be forgotten in the discussion on improving the quality of the environment. You and I will pay for it, every bit of it, in the form of higher costs for the things we buy.

If the government does it, we'll pay in higher taxes. If business does it, we'll pay in higher costs for products we use. Either way, we'll pay.

Because cleaning up the environment is so costly for us, we need to weigh carefully how much of our time and resources we want to spend on the effort.

We need to decide how fast we want to proceed. The faster a thing is done the more it generally costs.

How Much?

We need to decide what priority the environment should have in relation to all the other needs and luxuries we're constantly spending money on. Money spent on the environment isn't available for other things.

All this, however, is not an argument against a clean environment. We all need an alive and healthy environment. A healthy environment, like a healthy body, is essential; it is a natural right; without it nothing else matters.

The point is that all such things cost and we are going to pay the price. The real issue is:

How clean is clean enough and how much do we want to pay?

Food Service Costs

The Economic Research Service of the USDA has issued a leaflet entitled "What Makes Food Prices?" to help explain the elemental facts of marketing and prices.

There are many factors besides inflation that determine the relationship between pocketbooks and supermarkets.

"Today," says the leaflet, "we can buy more foods throughout the year than ever before, thanks to canning, freezing and other ways of keeping foods. Seasons don't exist in food stores. We expect to buy lettuce, tomatoes, fresh fruit and other vegetables in January, the same as we do in August — even though they cost a little more. Many of the things we eat are brought thousands of miles from warmer climates during off seasons — because people want them."

Another factor in food prices is that more

foods are pre-washed, pre-peeled, pre-cooked, pre-mixed and pre-packaged — preparation that costs more, but provides a convenience for which consumers are willing to pay.

It costs about \$60 billion a year to prepare, transport and distribute food to local stores. About 45 per cent of this sum goes to pay the five million people employed by the food industry. The supermarket ends up with a profit of about a penny per dollar of sales.


The leaflet also points out, about one-fifth of most people's grocery bill isn't groceries at all. It is something to wear, read, listen to or clean with.

Altogether, it means that while the shopper groans about high food costs, the complainer often unjustly includes non-food items in the family food budget and ignores the extent to which basic, inexpensive food items are by-passed in favor of food service.

People are "living high off the hog." They're buying service, instead of food.

The truth is that if we're willing to buy in season and forego strawberries and lettuce in winter, if we're willing to buy in bulk and go the trouble of doing our own packaging, cutting and freezing, if we're willing to forego some of the fancy, high-cost foods, in short, if we're willing to just buy food without all the costly services, it really doesn't cost much, it doesn't take a very large portion of our incomes to eat quality food.

But most of us don't just buy food — we buy service and complain about the high cost of food.



NOW IS THE TIME . . .

By Max Smith
Lancaster County Agent

To Use Pesticides Carefully

As warmer weather brings out dormant insects, diseases, and other pests that attack both plant and animal life, pesticides play a larger role. When we refer to pesticides we mean all chemicals used for controlling all destructive forms of plant and animal life. All gardeners and farmers are urged to follow pesticide labels and instructions very carefully. The misuse of pesticides has caused most of the trouble we hear about today.

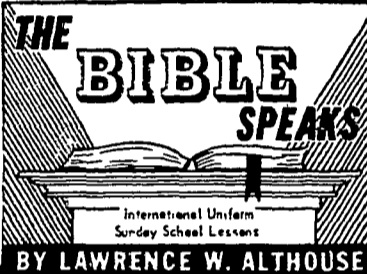
To Practice Farm Vacation Safty

A farm vacation is fast becoming an inexpensive means of relaxation for urban families. The farm owner should make sure his guests have a safe vacation in the country. Visiting youngsters should be warned about the danger of machinery, livestock


electric fences, farm ponds and other attractions that are strange to them. Be sure that any accidents is not due to your negligence. Insurance coverage is essential.

To Prevent Herbicide Injury

The control of weeds has always been a major farm or garden chore. With the introduction of chemicals to kill weeds, the control appears easier but more dangerous if care is not exercised. The materials to be used on certain crops may injure others; spray equipment may need to be thoroughly cleaned and soaked in order to prevent damage to the next crop. The drift of the spray to nearby crops and trees is often serious. All spray operators are urged to be very careful. Tobacco, legumes, grape vines, shade trees, and most garden and flower plants are easily injured by many herbicides.




THE BIBLE SPEAKS
International Uniform Sunday School Lessons
BY LAWRENCE W. ALTHOUSE



THE THUNDER OF DEEDS
Lesson for May 10, 1970

Background Scripture: Acts 13 through 14.
Devotional Reading: Acts 10:34-43.

If we are going to communicate the Christian message today, we must concentrate less on words and more on deeds. This is because many people will no longer listen to preaching. Those who need the message, for the most part, will not come to our churches. Most of them ignore street-corner preaching and even mass rallies. The same is true of tracts, Bibles, and other



Rev. Althouse books.

Loud deeds

The only thing that will gain their attention will be deeds of witness that speak so loudly that they cannot be ignored. They are used to words, both printed and spoken, and have taught themselves to ignore them. They are conditioned to doubt and disbelieve all claims, particularly those that promise "a better way of life."

What reaches these people then? Often the only thing that will communicate the gospel of Jesus Christ is an unselfish act of service, help rendered without the expectation of receiving something tangible in return. Whenever we see people "put themselves out" for others, we are tempted to ask "why?"

Church people in a particular city may run a downtown coffee house for young adults or youth. Knowing that most people do not ordinarily give freely of their time and effort, many patrons will want to know "why?" A group of women may spend one day a week at the local mental hospital, doing what they can to bring some personal warmth into the lives of patients. These acts can be far more effective in speaking of God's love than all the sermons, tracts, signboards, or advertisements. If people are going to hear the

Christian message today, it will be, not because of our words, but because of our involvement in mission.

The beginning of mission

How does mission begin? Acts 13, the story of the beginning of Paul's so-called "first missionary journey," provides us with some counsel. First of all, they asked for guidance. The church at Antioch was gathered together for worship. They were fasting, a sign that they were seeking God's guidance. At last the sought-after counsel came: "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul (Paul) for the work to which I have called them" (Acts 13:2).

Secondly, they accepted God's guidance. When God showed them what he wanted them to do, they accepted the task.

Thirdly, they set apart people for the task. It is not enough to recognize our particular mission, specific persons must be designated to do specific tasks.

Finally, they were sent forth. One does not get the impression that, once Paul and Barnabas had gone, the church at Antioch forgot about them. We can imagine that they followed them with their prayers and possibly even material help.

If we ask him

Perhaps these four steps can be instructive for us too. We too need to seek God's guidance and ask where he wants us to witness today. We may be assured that if we ask him he will surely show us. Our answer may come in the form of someone's request for help, or we may discover a situation of specific need. Sometimes we will see that a project is required, while at others we will recognize that it is simply an individual act of witness that is called for.

If we feel God has not shown us any field for witness, it really means that we have been unwilling to accept what he has already shown us. Perhaps he shows us a task that may seem unpleasant. We may dismiss it, thinking, "Surely He doesn't expect me to do that?" Or we may see a project that seems beyond our capacities and assume that it will have to wait for a more extraordinary Christian. What we must learn is that if God shows us these tasks, it is only because he intends for us to do them.

Then it will be that the thunder of our deeds will speak more loudly for Christ than all our words.

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