

BY CURT HARLER, EDITOR



Lancaster Farming says...

We can get prayer back in schools

Remember the sign that mysteriously appeared on notice boards in public schools over a decade ago?

"In case of nuclear attack, all regulations against prayer in school temporarily will be suspended," it said.

It was meant to be a semi-humorous stab at the Supreme Court decision which banned prayer from schools.

With the exception of a relative minority of people, there was no humor in the removal of any sort of prayer from schools.

It hardly seems like 17 years since the Supreme Court handed down its verdict, but it has been that long.

But now, for the first time in almost a full generation of school children, there is a movement abroad to get prayer back in the schools.

Earlier this year, in a remarkable turn-around of past votes, both houses of Congress have voted favorably on proposals to reinstate school prayer.

While the votes were not binding on the Senate-House Conference committees, the members of Congress clearly went on record as being in favor of returning some sort of devotion to the schools.

The U.S. Senate vote was 53-40, the House vote 255-122.

Congressmen Holt, a Maryland Democrat, and Crane, an Illinois Republican, have taken the lead in drafting measures which would get the prayer legislation onto the floor.

A relative minority of citizens were able to get prayer removed from school by judicial maneuvering.

President Jimmy Carter, himself a Baptist and brother of an evangelist, does not support returning prayer to schools.

"My preference is that the Congress not get involved in the question of mandating prayer in school," Carter has said.

"I believe the subject of prayer in school ought to be decided between person individually and privately, and God. And the Supreme Court has ruled on this issue," Carter

said—as if that clinched the argument.

Those who feel prayer has a place in schools have their work cut out for them. President Carter outlined the case against prayer quite well.

"I personally don't think the Congress ought to pass any legislation requiring or permitting prayer being required or encouraged in school," said the leader of the country whose motto is "In God We Trust."

"Sometimes a student might object even to so-called voluntary prayer when it is public and coordinated. It might be very embarrassing to a young person to say, 'I want to be excused from the room because I don't want to pray,'" Carter said.

While admitting he did not know all of the Constitutional aspects of this difficult and sensitive question, Carter concluded, "I think it ought to be an individual matter between a person and God."

Farm people don't seem to agree. Many outsiders, attending a rural

PTA meeting or other school-related gathering, would be shocked to hear public prayer start the session. It is, in fact, contrary to the letter of the law.

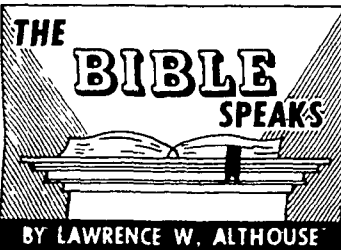
Perhaps the most substantial good to come from the banning of prayer is increased enrollment at church related schools of all denominations—Catholic, Protestant and Jewish.

There are times, then, when our leaders have to be shown where to lead.

Nobody is asking for folding donations for a campaign to get prayer back into schools. All that is needed is pro-prayer action as fervent as action by anti-prayer factions.

Invest 15 cents and 15 minutes. Write your federal legislator. Let him know how you feel about the Holt-Crane proposals. Send along a card to the Chairmen of the Senate and House Judiciary Committees and urge them to report out the school prayer bills.

This is one cause that prayer alone won't win.



THE ADULTRESS

Lesson for February 17, 1980

Background Scripture:
John 8:1-20.

Devotional Reading:
Ephesians 4:25-32.

The scribes and the Pharisees knew their man

all right. This Jesus of Nazareth betrayed a compassionate streak which they could use to catch him on the horns of a dilemma. At last, they had him where they wanted him: he would have to choose between love and law.

They would spring their trap with a woman caught in the act of adultery. This time, they were certain, the Nazarene would not be able to escape their trap with a few clever words as he had before.

What Do You Say?

It is interesting to speculate on how the scribes and Pharisees knew where to find an adulterous woman.

That would seem to be an area of knowledge lying beyond their official expertise. Nevertheless, they found and brought her to Jesus in the outer precincts of the temple. Notice how craftily they bait him: "Teacher, this woman has been caught in the act of adultery. Now in the law Moses commanded us to stone such. What do you say about her?" (8:5). Yes, they knew their man all right.

But Jesus knew them even better than they knew him. He knew that they wanted only to trap him, embarrass him. He also knew that they were convinced that they had him trapped. So, he did

not answer them immediately. Instead, he bent down and began to write with his finger upon the ground. What did he write? We will never know, but it is obvious that his silence only made them even more anxious and confident. They were certain that he did not know how to answer!

When the tension had reached what must have seemed a breaking point, Jesus stood and devastated them, not with an argument, nor a recitation of the law, but with a challenge: "Let him who is without sin among you be the first to throw a stone at her" (8:9).

They Went Away

Jesus knew his adversaries far better than they knew him. He knew what was in their hearts. He knew them, not as exalted religious leaders, but as human beings who are no less dependent upon the mercy of God than the most despised sinner. And because he knew them, he had snared these men with their own trap.

Notice that none of them questioned him or argued with him. None of the accusers tried to justify himself. Without one word, they each slipped away. One thinks of the old saying, "People who live in glass

houses shouldn't throw stones." And as Jesus made it clear, that means all of us, for we all live in glass houses and none of us can afford to "throw stones" at anyone else.

But Jesus also "knew" the adultress. In fact, he did not address her as an adultress, but as "Woman" for he knew that, despite her sin, there was a sinner worth saving, a life worthy to be redeemed: "Neither do I condemn you; go and do not sin again" (8:11).

Whenever Christians are more prone to condemn than to redeem, let us remember those words.



NOW IS THE TIME

By Max Smith, Lancaster County Agricultural Agent
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TO BECOME PESTICIDE RE-CERTIFIED

The Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture has made it very easy for private applicators to become re-certified later this year. Most certificates will expire this September. The attendance at a meeting

where the pesticide program is discussed is all that is necessary. The months of February and March are filled with farmer meetings; producers are urged to attend one of these meetings, fill out the proper re-certification blank, and then be in line for receiving a new certification card this fall. Most sponsors of these meetings will announce a part of the meeting for pesticides and pesticide re-certification. Attend one of these meetings and be in a

position to become re-certified.

TO CONSIDER NO-TILL PLANTINGS

This type of farming may not be for everyone but hundreds of producers have been successful during the past decade. Many crops can be planted into existing sod or vegetation with good results. The use of herbicides is very important to kill existing growth and to control weeds. Improved soil erosion control has always been in favor of no-till

planting methods. In addition, at the present time the saving of fuel has been experienced using the no-till method as compared to the conventional tillage programs. This system might be one way to get the cross planted with less time and expense.

TO UTILIZE LIME FOR BETTER WEED CONTROL

Perhaps you never heard the suggestion to use lime for weed control; however, indirectly lime is important

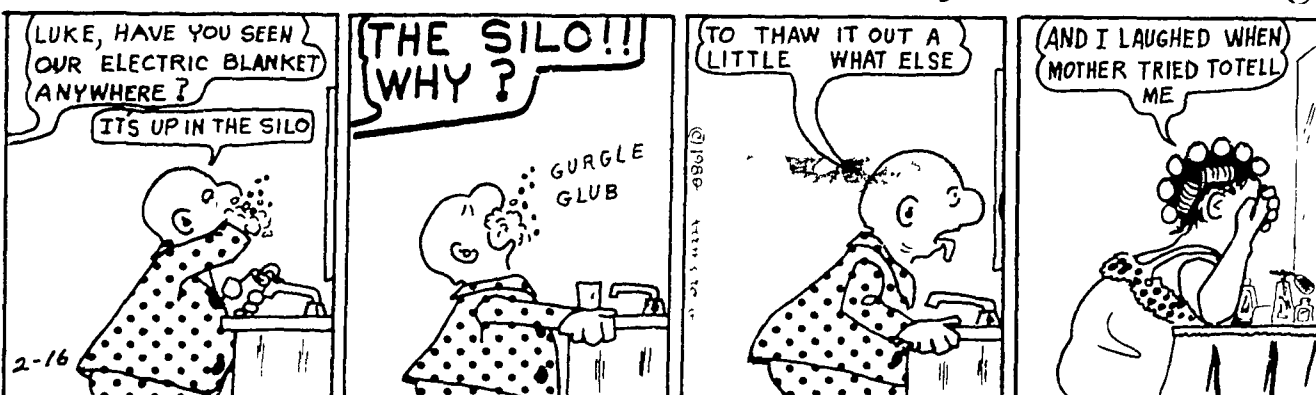
to get good herbicide weed control. Both research work and farm experience has indicated that herbicides will not control weeds very good in sour soils. Therefore, for best weed control with chemicals the soil lime requirement must be satisfied. Many poor weed control experiences have been reported on sour soils. A complete soil test will reveal the amount of lime needed. A well limed soil will give dozens of other better results in addition to herbicide action.

TO KEEP SMALL CHILDREN AND MACHINERY SEPARATE

The spring cropping season will be getting started in another month

Under current farming methods various pieces of farm machinery will be put into operation and things will be really moving. Small children like to become a part of this action and ask to ride on machinery, or even operate some of the smaller tractors and etc. It might take nerve to refuse them at times; however, for their own protection they should not become involved. Many serious accidents have happened because "Dad" or "Grandad" took them along. Where there is small children all machinery operators should be especially careful of their exact location. Farm machinery and small children do not mix.

RURAL ROUTE



By Tom Armstrong

Farm Calendar

Monday, February 18
Adams Co Extension Farm Estate Planning Meeting; 9:30 a.m.; West Street Branch Gettysburg National Bank.
Maryland Agriculture Week,

continues through the 23rd
Tuesday, February 19
Lancaster County Crops and Soils Day; 8:30 a.m.
Farm and Home Center.

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