



OPINION

An Alternative

Few of us would be so naive to believe that because we live on a farm or in a rural area our young people don't experience the same problems as some of the troubled youth from the more urban areas.

We'd like to believe that on the street corners of our small towns, or on the steps of the local hangout or inside the homes of neighbors, families and friends, our young people are entertaining themselves with harmless fun.

We'd like to think that when they go out with their friends that at least some of what they have been told by parents and teachers or seen on TV or read about the tragedy of drug and alcohol abuse has been absorbed. We'd like to think that when they find themselves in a precarious situation, surrounded by their peers, being pushed to try whatever is on hand, that they will have the courage to 'just say no' even if it means being humiliated, embarrassed or even ostracized from the group.

We'd like to think that our children, our grandchildren, our sisters, our brothers, our nieces and nephews, and all the young people we know would never take part in any of this debilitating abuse which seems to be plaguing youth and adults alike across the country.

We are half way through the fair season. Parents and 4-H leaders are midway through a season when most of their time is spent carting often times reluctant animals and young people across the county and across the state. They spend hours either in the hot sun or pouring rain holding animals for the next class. And sometimes those efforts of parents and leaders seem unappreciated.

But when you see young people putting hours into brushing and clipping their steer or dairy heifer or sheep, when you see them take some of the abuse which a 1,200 pound Angus-Chianina or 125-pound ram can deliver, when you see a teenage girl give a hug and a consoling word to her tenth placed Jersey heifer, that's a big thank you.

Thanks to the efforts of parents and 4-H leaders and friends of 4-H these young people are doing something constructive with their time. They are learning to care for someone other than themselves. They are learning how to take pride in what they do and pride in themselves.

They are learning how to win and how to lose and to do both gracefully.

We are not so naive to think that our children growing up in a rural environment will not experience the peer pressures that other young people do, but, we believe, with the help of parents and 4-H leaders and all those who work so hard to organize the shows our kids have an alternative.

Keep up the good work.



NOW IS THE TIME

By Jay Irwin
Lancaster County Agriculture Agent

To Be Safe During This Busy Season

We are entering one of the busiest and most hazardous times of the year... silo filling and corn picking time. Blend into that time wheat and barley planting and the last cutting of alfalfa. This means a lot of farm machinery will be on our highways during semi-dark or dark hours.

Slow moving vehicles such as farm equipment traveling on highways presents a real traffic hazard. The motorist must recognize that a tractor traveling at 10 to 15 miles per hour is almost standing still compared to a 55 mph car. Most highway drivers have never driven a farm machine on the highway and simply do not realize how slow they do travel.

Proper identification and warning is real important. Let's keep alert during this busy fall season both on the highway and in the fields.

To Consider the Need for Extra Silage

If you need more forage this winter consider harvesting more corn silage and using it as a partial substitute for hay, haylage or rye-lage in the ration. The extra silage could also be sold as a valuable cash crop. To accomplish this, you may need additional storage, perhaps in the form of a bag or stack. If so, do you have all your supplies and is your custom operator lined up now so you'll be ready when the time comes. Also consider how you will remove the silage from this storage. Will it be used to refill present structures, or will you be feeding it out daily. This could determine where to locate the storage. Remember, when silage is transferred, and goes through a second fermentation, there is some loss of feed nutrients. Thus, it may be more desirable to feed out of the storage on a daily basis.

To Consider Newspaper for Bedding

Many communities have a paper disposal problem. An alternative to dumping waste paper into landfills is to use newspaper as bedding material for dairy cattle, livestock, poultry and small animals.

Some communities are separating, shredding and baling paper. At the farm, these bales are usually put through a bedding chopper or a bale buster to end up with paper particles that are small enough to work through gutter

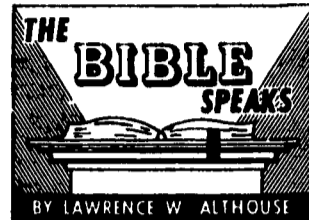
gratings, and small enough to prevent animals from tracking it around. Some farmers place bundles of tied paper into bedding choppers and have been quite satisfied with the results. For more information, call the Lancaster County Solid Waste Authority at 717-397-9968 or Penn State Cooperative Extension Dairy Agent, Glenn Shirk at 717-394-6851.

This sorghum-like grass is a problem on many fields in this part of the state. There are cases where nothing is being done to control this weed; for those I would remind you that Johnsongrass is listed as a noxious weed in Pennsylvania. In corn there is little that can be done at this time of year except cut the seed-heads off

and burn them. It'll require treatment at planting time.

However, in other fields such as small grains, where the growth of Johnsongrass reaches 2 1/2 to 3 feet... in the boot stage... the plants may be sprayed with Roundup. These plants are very heavy seed producers; a few plants allowed to go to seed this fall will mean hundreds of plants next summer. Johnsongrass is fast growing and will crowd out most farm crops. We urge landowners to make every effort to eliminate Johnsongrass from their farm. The 1989-90 Agronomy Guide lists control information.

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COMPENSATIONS
August 27, 1989

Background Scripture: Ruth 4.

Devotional Reading: Revelation 3:7-13.

Perhaps you have noticed in reading the Book of Ruth that God is rarely mentioned in this story. He is mentioned casually a few times by Naomi and once by Ruth -- "your people shall be my people, and your God my God"-- but it is only when Naomi returns to Bethlehem that God is really brought into the story: "Do not call me Naomi, call me Mara ("bitter"), for the Almighty has dealt very bitterly with me. I went away full, and the Lord has brought me back empty. Why call me Naomi ("pleasant") when the Lord has afflicted me and the Almighty has brought calamity upon me" (1:20,21). God becomes very real in the story only when Naomi bitterly complains about her losses.

Before you judge Naomi too harshly, put yourself in her shoes: wouldn't you be bitter if you had lost, not one, but two sons and your husband in a rather short interval of time? Naomi was blessed with a wonderful daughter-in-law, but her losses were so great that she could not allow herself to appreciate that. You and I ought to be able to understand that, in that we often fail to count the blessings we have because we are too distraught over the blessings we do not have.

HOW THE MATTER TURNS OUT

Note that none of the resolution of the problem seems to have anything to do with God either. It is Ruth's decision to glean in the fields and it is Naomi's advice on how to handle Boaz that appear to change their fortunes. No one has a vision from God or hears a heavenly voice. It is Boaz's admi-

ration for and later his attraction to Ruth that turn Naomi's bitterness into joy. Even the problem of the kinsman who had the first right of refusal to Ruth's hand is solved without divine intervention.

But, just as Naomi felt free to complain about the Lord's treatment of her, so she freely gave him the praise when it seemed that the fortunes were turning: "Blessed be he (Boaz) by the Lord, whose kindness has not forsaken the living or the dead!" (2:20). Naomi was delighted and thankful to God that Boaz was showing exceptional interest in Ruth. And when, at last, Ruth is married to Boaz and they have a son, the women of Bethlehem say to her: "Blessed be the Lord who has not left you this day without next of kin; and may his name be renowned in Israel! He shall be to you a restorer of life and a nourisher of your old age" (4:14,15). **THE PRESENCE OF LOVE**

So, although God is mentioned very little in this story, still he is a very important part of it. Just because his name was not frequently invoked, doesn't mean that the principal characters were unmindful of Him. Neither is the word "love" mentioned in the story but one time: when the women of Bethlehem speak of "your daughter-in-law who loves you, who is more to you than seven sons..." (4:15). Yet, love is very much present: in the commitment of Ruth to Naomi, in the attraction between Ruth and Boaz, in Naomi's appreciation of Ruth, and in everyone's assumption that the good fortune of Naomi, Ruth and Boaz is the result, not of blind chance, but of the love of God. And, although the word "love" is not mentioned, who can fail to see the love when the writer says "Than Naomi took the child and laid him at her bosom, and became his nurse?" (4:16).

Like Naomi, there may be many times in our lives when we have cause to feel bitter. But let us never become so hurt that we fail to see the compensations which God will provide for us, if we will accept them.

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Farm Calendar



Saturday, August 26
Pennsylvania Shorthorn Show, Hookstown fairgrounds, Hookstown, 1:00 p.m.
Maryland State Fair, state fairgrounds, Timonium, Md.; runs through September 4.
Sunday, August 27
National Livestock & Meat Board summer meeting, Charleston, S.C.; runs through August 29.
Monday, August 28
Southcentral District 4-H Dairy Show, Farm Show Complex, Harrisburg, 9:00 a.m.
Indiana County Fair, Indiana; runs

through September 2.
West End Fair, Gilbert; runs through September 2.
Tuesday, August 29
Centre County Holstein Show, Centre County fairgrounds, Centre Hall, 9:30 a.m.
Mid-Atlantic Soybean Association summer meeting, Wye Institute, Wye Mills, Md., 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.
Flemington Fair, Flemington, N.J.; runs through September 4.
Allentown Fair, Allentown; runs through September 4.
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