OPINION

Shot In The Foot

In Lancaster recently, two brothers with bad blood between them had an argument in a bar. The fight became so intense that one brother went for his pistol and resumed the verbal attack on his brother.

To prove he was powerful and meant business, the brother with the gun wasted a bullet into the ground as a scare tactic. But in the process he shot his own foot and had to be treated by a local physican.

Sometimes when we make judgments about people, right or wrong, the criticism we verbalize about others comes back to do us harm. In fact, St. Matthew suggests that we should not judge others so that we may not be judged and criticized in return. He says that the same measure we use to deal out to others will be dealt out again to us.

A more modern saying is that what goes around comes around again or the American Indian's proverb that you should not criticize persons until you have walked a day in their moccasins.

Sometimes we cut off our nose to spite our face. Or we actually cripple ourselves when we try to enforce our wills on others.

Farm Calendar

Saturday, March 14

Fifth Toastmaster Meeting, Lancaster Farm and Home Center, 8:30 a.m.

Regional tree fruit meeting, Schuylkill County.

Western Pennsylvania Bred Gilt Sale, New Wilmington Livestock Auction.

Pennsylvania Shorthorn and Polled Shorthorn Association, Garden Gate Restaurant, 6:15 p.m.

Sunday, March 15
Pennsylvania 4-H Week

Pennsylvania 4-H Week, through March 22.

Monday, March 16
Pennsylvania 4-H Week

Boom sprayer calibration meeting, Penns Valley Area H.S., Spring Mills, 8 p.m.

Sullivan County zoning input meeting, Laporte Meth. Home, 7 p.m.

Tuesday, March 17
St. Patrick's Day!
Pennsylvania 4-H Week

Southcentral Cattlemen's Association annual banquet, East Berlin Fire Hall, 7 p.m.

Delmarva Safety Seminar, Wicomico Youth and Civic Center, Salisbury, Md., through March 18.

Centre County 4-H Leaders Banquet, Nittany Lion Inn, University Park, 7 p.m.

Southeast Regional Christmas Tree Meeting, Schuylkill Haven, Morgan Auditorium, 7 p.m.

Lehigh County Small Scale Farming Workshop, Lehigh County Agricultural Center, 7:30 p.m.

Chester-Montgomery Local District 1, Moorehead's Catering Service Banquet Hall, Trappe, noon.

Morgantown Local District 8, Elverson Fire Company, 7 p.m.

Agronomy Day, Wysox Fire Hall, 9 a.m.

Pennsylvania Forest Stewardship Program, Claverack Building, Montrose, 7:30 p.m.

Christmas Tree Growers Meeting, Penn State Schuylkill Campus, 7 p.m.

Composting Dead Birds, Adams County Extension Office, 7:30 p.m.

Chester County Holstein Club Tour to Franklin and Cumberland Counties, meets Dick Hostetter farm, 7:15 a.m.

Southwestern Pa. Pork Producers meeting, Alwine Civic Center, Greensburg, 9:30 a.m.-2:45 p.m.

Wednesday, March 18
Pennsylvania 4-H Week

Susquehanna and Wyoming County corn meeting, Claverack Building, Montrose, 10 a.m.-3 p.m.

Tri-County Agronomy School, Gratz Community Fire Hall, Gratz, 9:30 a.m.-3 p.m.

Dairy Day, Bloomsburg Fairgrounds Office Building, 9:30 a.m.-3 p.m.

PDPP promotional meeting, Northwest District, Clarion Clipper, Clarion, 9:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m.

Cumberland County Holstein Club annual meeting and banquet, Penn Township Fire Hall, Huntsdale.

NOW IS THE TIME

By John Schwartz
Lancaster County Agricultural Agent

To Prepare Pastures For Spring

Before long, cattle and other livestock will be turned out to pasture. Before you do this, you may need to do some preliminary work.

You will want to check and mend fences as needed and pick up any debris that has been tossed into the pasture. To improve the productivity of the pasture, you should lime and fertilize according to soil test.

Liming will encourage grass growth which will reduce amount of weeds. By liming, not overgrazing the pasture, and mowing the pasture on a regular basis, should give you a very productive pasture.

You might want to consider rotational grazing as a method to improve grass production from your pasture.

To Understand Weed Control

Robert Anderson, extension agronomy agent, recently identified several factors which contribute to poor weed control.

Several of these factors are date of planting and herbicide application date, occurrence of rainfall, and the rate and type of herbicide used.

Rain is needed to move most preemergence herbicides into the soil profile where weeds will be germinating. A general rule is that 0.25 to 0.50 inch of rain within five days of application will accomplish this and activate the herbicide.

However, this may vary depending upon the solubility of the herbicide, date of last tillage operation, soil temperature, soil moisture, and weed species in question.

Another factor which cause poor weed control is the lack of a crop canopy. A dense crop canopy will hinder weeds from germinating.

To Develop Weed Control Strategies

By knowing the reasons why herbicides fail, you may now develop strategies on how to improve weed control under adverse conditions.

If a herbicide was applied and rainfall did not come in the five-day critical period, a timely rotary hoeing or harrowing may be used to activate the herbicide by moving the herbicide into the soil profile.

This mechanical mixing would have also destroyed the weeds which had already germinated. With the poor weed control from last year's drought, you should expect a larger than average weed crop from the increased number of seeds produced.

In fields with poor weed control, use herbicides rated as excellent for control of those weeds and use the correct rate of application. Remember, when using herbicides, always read the label and follow all directions.

Feather Prof's Footnote: "Pray for a good harvest, but keep hoeing."

United Dairy Cooperative Service, Inc. annual meeting, Seneca Falls, New York, 10:30 a.m.

Pesticide update training, Penn State Fruit Research Lab, Biglerville, 1 p.m. and 7:30 p.m.

Dairy Computer Workshop, York Co. extension office, 7 p.m.

Wyoming Co. corn meeting, Dept. of Ag, Tunkhannock, 10 a.m.

Hort Seminar, Franklin Regional H.S., Murrysville, 7:30 p.m.-9:30 p.m., continues March 25 and April 1.

Thursday, March 19
Pennsylvania 4-H Week

York County pesticide recertification meeting, Pleasant Acres Complex, 7 p.m.-9 p.m., repeats March 20.

York County Farmland Trust sec-

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THE BIBLE SPEAKS

BY LAWRENCE W. ALTHOUSE

WAIT A MINUTE, JESUS!

Background Scripture: Mark 7:24-37.

Devotional Reading: Amos 5:4-15.

The story of Jesus and the Syrophoenician woman in Mark 5 is a troubling one. The problem is how to understand Jesus' sharp rejection of the woman and her request for him to heal her daughter who was "possessed by an unclean spirit" — **Let the children first be fed, for it is not right to take the children's bread and throw it to the dogs"! (7:27). It is bad enough that Jesus turned down her humanitarian request, but we cannot help but be shocked when he likens the woman and her daughter to "dogs"!**

What is the explanation? Scholars offer several. One explanation is that Jesus really meant what he said, that he did not want to minister to the gentiles and that he shared the common Jewish perception that non-Jews were "dogs" by comparison. This explanation has the weight of the obvious, for it is precisely what Mark tells us that Jesus said. Another explanation is that Jesus would not have responded like this — not if the picture that we have of him in the rest of the New Testament is at all accurate — but these words attributed to him by Mark represent the prejudice against gentiles that existed in the very earliest church.

TO MIMIC & MOCK

The third alternative — which is the only one that is comfortable to me — is that Jesus used these words to mimic and mock the popular sentiments of the day, perhaps even the prevailing sentiments of his apostles, or that he used these words to engage the woman in a purposeful dialogue. In a sense, he could be baiting her, to see just how much faith could be mustered by this gentile. Her response to his refusal would tell him a lot about her. There are several passages in the gospels in which this playful, badgering style of Jesus is evident and I believe that is what is involved in this incident.

And what did Jesus learn through this interchange? That gentiles can be just as persistent and ingenious in responding to the promises of the gospel. Jesus has made several efforts to demonstrate to his followers that even believing Samaritans could be closer to the kingdom than themselves if they failed to respond in faith. This woman, a Syrian woman from the Phoenician coast, wasn't even a Samaritan, but a pagan Greek. Although she had not the benefit of the Jewish faith, her love for her baby and her personal belief in Jesus made the difference.

There are times when we need to do just what she did: to stubbornly persist with Jesus when the answer we're getting doesn't seem to be the answer we should be getting. Whether or not she realized that Jesus was jousting with her, she persists without bitterness: "Yes, Lord; yet even the dogs under the table eat the children's crumbs" (7:28).

A TIME FOR HONESTY

I don't know how this woman knew that Jesus was more compassionate than he appeared to be at this moment. I know because, when I read of Jesus in the rest of the gospels, I see a Jesus who would not turn her away and who would never regard her and her child as "dogs." So, if from our reading of the New Testament and sharing with other Christian people tells us that the answer we seem to be getting from Jesus is not congruent with what we know of him, it is time for us to be honest and say, "Wait a minute, Jesus, surely that is not what you mean to say to me!"

If we do, Jesus will not be angered by our persistence, nor insulted at our honesty.

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