

Living to Win

December 15, 2002
Volume 7, Number 12
Christian Educational Ministries

Personal from . . . *Ronald L. Dart*

The Performance Church

Something important is happening to the way we design our churches. Obviously, how we lay out the interior of a church is heavily influenced by what we plan to do there. But the design of a church says even more about it's people, their values, their dogma, their feelings about God.

Take the Baptist church, for example. The most important place in any church is opposite the entrance. Whatever is there is not only the first thing you see when you step inside, it is what you stare at throughout the service. In most Baptist churches, you will see there a full immersion baptistry, sometimes with a mural behind it (the Jordan River is a favorite scene). Baptism is central to their faith, so it is usually a public service performed in full view of the congregation. In front of the baptistry will be the choir and, like most Protestant churches, a central pulpit emphasizing the importance of preaching.

Where the baptistry sits in a Baptist church, the First Parish Church in Plymouth Massachusetts has three stained glass windows. They depict civil liberty, religious liberty, and the signing of the Mayflower Compact. Religious freedom was so precious it was given the place of

honor in this, one of the first churches in the New World.

The Friends meeting houses make no such display, being quite plain and having no decoration or ornamentation. No bells are rung, no music is played, no pastor preaches from the pulpit. The members sit in silent communion in which truth is sought from the "Inner Light." The silence is broken whenever a Friend rises to give a message to the assembly from his own meditations. There is no clerical class. The elders sit on plain benches facing the congregation.

The Mormons exalt music in their Salt Lake City Tabernacle. When you walk inside, you are immediately aware of the great pipe organ and the choir that dominate the structure. If you have a guide, he will demonstrate the truly incredible acoustics of the tabernacle. A love of sound is apparent in the structure and reflected in the liturgy.

In a Jewish synagogue, the Torah occupies the place of honor and is the focal point of the synagogue service. There is a podium for the reading of the Law and a place for the Rabbi to teach. Singers are set off to the side and screened from view. At the climax of the service, the Law is reverently taken from its place, opened, and read with great respect

continued on page 2. . .

Facts You Need

Christian Educational Ministries is a nonprofit service organization. It is sponsored by the free-will tithes and offerings of people like you who want to have a part in promoting the Gospel. Opportunities are available to sponsor a *Born to Win* radio program in your area. If you are interested in reaching your community with these insightful and vital messages, contact Larry Watkins at 1-888-BIBLE 44 or e-mail him at lsw@cemnetwork.com (Christian Educational ministries as a 501(c)(3) religious organization, has been granted tax exempt status by the Internal Revenue Service and all donations are tax deductible.)

Inside This Issue

<i>Financial Statement</i>	3
<i>Radio Update</i>	3
<i>FREE Tape Offer</i>	3
<i>Calendar of Events</i>	4
<i>Broadcast Schedule</i>	4

Continued from page 1 . . .

and solemnity. Afterward it is returned to its curtained enclosure, but even then you are aware of its presence.

In a Catholic church, the altar is the center of attention. As the priest performs the sacrifice of the Mass, he has his back to the congregation much of the time. All attention is focused on the altar. The pulpit is placed to one side emphasizing that it is second in importance to the sacrifice of the Mass.

In a great cathedral, no effort is spared to create a work of art to surround the altar and to create a place of beauty with great symbolic meaning to the worshiper. In some measure it is an adaptation of Greek values. Maximus of Tyre wrote: "The Greek custom is to portray the gods by the most beautiful things in the world—pure material, the human form and consummate craft. The idea of those who make divine images in human form is entirely reasonable, since of all things the spirit of man is nearest to the gods and most god-like."

Statuary, tapestry, and paintings were all a part of the liturgy of the church and reflected the world view of those who put them there. As the Mormon Church appeals to the ear, the Catholic Church appeals to the eye.

While church design may reflect radically different doctrines and values of different denominations of Christians, most churches still have worship as their central purpose.

But from the beginning, the earliest Christians looked at all this very differently. In the first place, the Temple was still the place of worship and the place of prayer (Acts 2:46, 3:1). God could be worshiped anywhere (John 4:21-24), but if there was a place, it was the Temple, not a church.

The first assemblies of Christians were modeled after the synagogue with heavy emphasis on teaching and fellowship. Attention was to be given to reading, exhortation, and doctrine (1 Timothy 4:13). Edification was more important than the display of spiritual gifts (1 Corinthians 14:26). Most Christian assemblies were "house churches," that is they met in the home in an atmosphere conducive to teaching and fellowship. They were not temples with priests and elaborate ceremonies. That came much later when the church became wealthy and powerful and the clergy became a separate class. Then great basilicas and cathedrals were built which incorporated the idea of separation of clergy and laity in their design.

But in our own day another great change in church design is taking place. It is television that is bringing it about.

The idea of promulgating the Gospel by electronic media is nearly as old as the medium itself. In the early 1930s several evangelists were making the attempt to go national on radio. Herbert W. Armstrong started the Radio Church of God soon after Robert Fuller began producing The Old Fashioned Revival Hour. Even "First Mate Bob and the Good Ship Grace" could be heard widely across the country.

When television was in its infancy, churches were already eyeing the medium with a view to the power it offered. Soon churches all over the country began incorporating video cameras and microwave links to their local stations. People all over the country could stay at home and go to church at the same time.

As new buildings were built, television facilities were included in the design, and the layout of the sanctuary

itself changed to accommodate the electronic eye. Talented people began improving the visual quality of the presentation. Pulpits were reduced in size, made transparent, or disappeared altogether to allow movement by the preacher. Since television was a visual medium with mediocre sound quality, even church music had to become more visual—it had to move.

Hence, many churches today have become "performance" churches. Television favors the performing preacher who paces back and forth, dances, and even strides up into the crowds as he preaches. This may be the reason all the biggest "televangelists" are Pentecostal.

Now, in place of a baptistry, a stained glass window, or an altar, many churches have a stage. In the new church, the center of attention is the performer. He or she is greeted with applause, performs for the crowd, and may leave the stage to a standing ovation.

Even the salaries have become entertainers salaries. If you are wondering how they could justify salaries like that, then you obviously don't understand that they look at themselves as entertainers—they are *stars*. In their own eyes, they consider themselves performers like Jay Leno or Oprah Winfrey.

One of the early church fathers, writing at the end of the second century, called the church the "Theatre of the pious." But he spoke of a stage where the play was the passion of Jesus and the players were mere pawns. Like Shakespeare, he would have said, "The *play's* the thing." When

continued on page 3. . .

Continued from page 2 . . .

Paul described the Gospel as a precious treasure, he explained the relationship of the preacher to the Gospel thus: "But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, to show that the transcendent power belongs to God and not to us" (2 Corinthians 4:7).

I can't help wondering if some of us might do well to try a "house church" for a while. It might do us good to go where people break bread together and where good solid teaching is to be found. Maybe we could get our perspective back and see the relative value of a multimillion dollar cathedral on the one hand and the care of the sick and infirm on the other. There is, after all, more than one way to glorify God.

Ronald L. Dart

CHRISTIAN EDUCATIONAL MINISTRIES
STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS
FOR THE THREE MONTHS ENDED
OCTOBER 30, 2002

RECEIPTS	
CONTRIBUTIONS	\$253248.62
CEM BOOKSTORE	13796.53
YOUTH MINISTRY	2165.60
INTEREST INCOME	4800.83
	\$274011.58
EXPENSES:	
A/V SUPPLIES	\$7014.36
RENTS	7500.00
OFFICE & ADM. EXPENSES	3596.48
MAILING EXPENSES	4506.06
POSTAGE	21212.61
PRINTING	12979.83
RADIO EXPENSES	136299.44
TELEPHONE & UTILITIES	2476.12
YOUTH MINISTRIES	3891.41
CONFERENCES	628.80
CEM BOOKSTORE	1503.05
FOREIGN OPERATIONS	2112.77
EMPLOYEE BENEFITS	18284.73
WAGES & PAYROLL TAXES	79131.60
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES	301137.26
DECREASE IN FUND BALANCE	(\$ 27125.68)
2002 FEAST OF TABERNACLES STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS	
TOTAL OFFERING	\$41076.64
TOTAL EXPENSES	34663.01
FUND SURPLUS	\$ 6413.63

Radio Update

Please note the following new stations:

Birmingham, AL

WDJC 850 AM
Daily at 11:15 a.m. &
Saturday at 10:30 a.m.

Mobile, AL

WMOB 1360 AM
Daily at 9:00 a.m. & 6:00 p.m.
Saturday at 1:00 p.m. &
Sunday at 2:00 p.m.

Deland, FL

WYND 1310 AM
Daily at 6:00 a.m. & 4:00 p.m.
Saturday at 12:30 p.m. &
Sunday at 7:00 a.m.

Blaine, WA*

KARI 550 AM
Daily at 4:00 p.m. &
Saturday at 7:00 a.m.
*Covers Vancouver, BC

Please note the following new times:

Denver, CO

KLT 670 AM
Daily at 1:30 p.m. &
Saturday at 9:30 p.m.

Little Rock, AR

KAAY 1090 AM
Daily at 5:15 a.m.

When God Speaks

When the last words of the Ten Commandments rolled down Mount Sinai and the last echoes faded away, they left the people standing at the foot of the mountain a total wreck. The earth had moved beneath their feet. The mountain had smoked like an active volcano. The air had been split by lighting and thunder. And the words had been preceded by an ear splitting blast on a trumpet. Bowels had been loosed by the experience.

Moses tells us what the people's reaction was: "And all the people saw the thunderings, and the lightnings, and the noise of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking: and when the people saw it, they removed, and stood afar off. And they said unto Moses, Speak thou with us, and we will hear: but let not God speak with us, lest we die" (Exodus 20:18-26).

Most of us think we would like for God to speak to us, but one wonders how we would handle the experience. But there is a question people rarely raise at this point. Why did God speak to them from heaven? Why did He not merely give the tablets to Moses privately and let Moses speak to the people as they wished?

This question and more is answered in the last program in the Ten Commandments series (which is yet to air on radio). Program number 15 explains why God did it that way and reveals important implications even for the New Covenant. To receive a copy of "Ten Commandments #15, When God Speaks," Just check the box on the return card and send it back to us. The tape is free.

Daily Radio

The *Born to Win* broadcast can be heard daily on these stations:

- Birmingham, Alabama**
11:15 a.m. daily - WDJC 850 AM
- Huntsville, Alabama**
3:30 p.m. daily - WBXR 1140 AM
- Mobile, Alabama**
9:00 a.m. & 6:00 p.m. daily
WMOB 1360 AM
- Montgomery, Alabama**
8:30 a.m. daily - WAPZ 1250 AM
- Jonesboro, Arkansas**
6:30 p.m. daily - KBTM 1230 AM
- Little Rock, Arkansas**
5:30 p.m. & 5:15 a.m. daily
KAAY 1090 AM
- Oakdale, California**
1:00 p.m. daily - KCBC 770 AM
- Denver, Colorado**
5:00 a.m. & 1:30 p.m. daily
KLT 670 AM
- Deland, Florida**
6:00 a.m. & 4:00 p.m. daily
KLT 670 AM
- Pensacola, Florida**
7:00 a.m. daily - WASG 550 AM
7:00 a.m. daily - WZNO 1230 AM
- Atlanta, Georgia**
10:30 a.m. daily - WGKA 1190 AM
- Augusta, Georgia**
5:30 p.m. & 10:45 a.m. daily
WFAM 1050 AM
- Morrow, Georgia**
7:30 a.m. & 7 p.m. daily
WSSA 1570 AM
- Kansas City, Kansas**
4:00 p.m. daily - KCNW 1380 AM
- Richmond, Kentucky**
12:30 p.m. daily - WCBR 1110 AM
- Gretna, Louisiana**
4:30 a.m. daily - WLNO 1060 AM
- Denton, Maryland**
8:30 a.m. & 3:00 p.m. daily
WKDI 840 AM
- Jackson, Mississippi**
7:00 a.m. daily - WTWZ 1120 AM
- Omaha, Nebraska**
3:30 p.m. daily - KLNG 1560 AM
- Buffalo, New York**
4:30 a.m. daily - WDCX 99.5 FM
- Asheville, North Carolina**
4:00 p.m. daily - WSKY 1230 AM
- Mount Olive, North Carolina**
11:00 a.m. daily - WDJS 1430 AM
- Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania**
4:30 p.m. daily - WWNL 1080 AM
- Anderson, South Carolina**
9:00 a.m. daily - WRIX 1020 AM

Calendar Of Events

January 18th - Dallas/Fort Worth, Texas **Meet The Teacher**

The North Texas Church of God is sponsoring a "Meet the Teacher" in Fort Worth at the Oak Hill Presbyterian Church, 2200 Oak Hill Rd, in Fort Worth. The meeting will begin at 2:00 in the afternoon. For more information, please contact Ralph Collins at 817.246.1874 or by e-mail at RALPHANDBECKY@aol.com or call Faye Brown at the CEM office 1 888-BIBLE 44 or e-mail faye@cemnetwork.com.

Daily Radio

The *Born to Win* broadcast can be heard daily on these stations:

- Charleston, South Carolina**
4:30 p.m. & 7:30 p.m. daily
WZJY 1480 AM
- Greenville, South Carolina**
4:30 p.m. daily - WELP 1360 AM
- Chattanooga, Tennessee**
5:00 p.m. daily - WLMR 1450 AM
- Knoxville, Tennessee**
5:00 p.m. daily - WITA 1490 AM
- Dallas, Texas**
10:30 a.m. daily - KSKY 660 AM
- The following stations
broadcast daily at 2:30 p.m.**
- Moses Lake, Washington**
KTAC 93.9 FM
- Pasco, Washington**
KGDN 101.3 FM
- Spokane, Washington**
KSPO 106.5 FM
- Wenatchee, Washington**
KTBI 810 AM
- Yakima, Washington**
KYAK 930 AM



Tune in for the latest weekly broadcast.

December 14 - December 20
Christian Origins 77

December 21 - December 27
Too Late for Christmas

December 28 - January 3
Christian Origins 78

January 4 - January 10
Is Hilter Dead?

January 11 - January 17
Abortion War

Christian Educational Ministries



Post Office Box 560
Whitehouse, Texas 75791
phone: 903.509.2999
fax: 903.509.1139
e-mail: adm@cemnetwork.com
website: www.cemnetwork.com

That the man of God may be proficient and equipped for every good work.