

CHURCH MARQUEES

by Tom Wacaster

The June 2007 issue of Reader's Digest had a two page article titled, "It's A Sign!" in which a half dozen or so church "message boards" were featured for the interest of its readers. "At churches across America, some messages have to be seen to be believed!" is how the lead-in statement read. It caught my eye, so I read on: "You spot them along highways and byways, those sturdy little signs standing outside houses of worship, sharing information and exhortation - and occasionally, a delightfully light touch." Out of the six messages the RD article featured, here were my favorite three:

"Walmart isn't the only saving place in town"
"It wasn't the apple it was the pair"
"Don't give up, Moses was once a basket case"

You can learn a lot about an institution by what is displayed on the marquee sign out front, if perchance they happen to have one. I heard of a muffler shop that had the following on their marquee: *"No appointment necessary; we'll hear you coming."* One sign in front of an optometrist's office read: *"If you don't see what you're looking for, you've come to the right place."* One of my favorite appeared at the Electric office: *"We would be delighted if you send in your bill. However, if you don't, you will be."*

Message boards can also be used to teach important lessons, and when plain and pointed, can drive a point home. One congregation of the Lord's church in south Texas put the following on their marquee: *"Be not deceived: neither fornicators...nor effeminate, nor homosexuals shall inherit the kingdom of God."* That sign generated a lot of interest, as well as phone calls and threatened law suits.

While traveling to Virginia this past month, I came across the following three marquee messages that spoke volumes about the churches out front of which they stood:

At a Baptist church: *"NASCAR legend Morgan Shepherd speaking tonight"*
At a Pentecostal church: *"Skate board ministry, Thursday nights at 7:00"*
At an Evangelical church: *"Shorts and Sandals? No problem"*

If each of the congregations of the churches of Christ were to place such marquees in front of their building adequately depicting the "heart" of that congregation, I wonder what we might find:

"Marriage and Divorce: Like Whataburger, you can have it your way"
"Worship services to suit every life-style!"
"If you don't like our eldership now, cast your vote in this coming November election!"
"Unity in diversity - the key to maintaining union in the bond of compromise"
"Upcoming workshop: How to chizzle the name 'Church of Christ' off your building and avoid damaging the bricks"
"Class on the Holy Spirit: If you don't choose to come, He'll directly influence you to come - either way, we'll see you there"

Yes, I wonder!