

WHEN YOUR PREACHER LEAVES: Interim Services for Churches Between Ministers

July 2008, #25



Jerrie Barber and John Parker



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Checking References on a Prospective Church – or What Do You Not Like and How Will You Put Up With It?

by Jerrie Barber

Several years ago, an elder from a church searching for a preacher asked me to send a résumé, three tapes, and three references. I told him I would be glad to do that. I then asked him to send me the average attendance and contribution for the past five years, three tapes, and three references.

He asked, “Why do you want me to do that?”

I asked, “Why do you want me to send my information?”

He said, “Because we don’t know you.”

I replied, “I don’t know you. I need that information for the same reason.”

I call this, “equalizing the pressure.” The examination phase should not be one way. A successful try-out is determining if we fit, not getting the invitation to come. If we talk and find out we do not fit and do not work together, we are just as successful as when we talk and determine we fit and decide to work together.

I like to interview the preachers for past twenty years, secretaries, members, members who left congregation happy, members who left congregation unhappy, and preachers for congregations in area.



I prefer discussing in person. Often that is not possible or practical. If not, I call, tell my purpose, and ask for a telephone appointment. I ask for up to an hour of their time, determine when it is convenient, and call back. I establish a rule of confidentiality and proceed to learn what I can that will be helpful in assessing my fit with this congregation.

Questionnaire guidelines that I have used:

[Preacher questionnaire](#)

[Staff questionnaire](#)

Shakespeare Quotations for Ministers, by John Parker

One half of me is yours, the other half yours,
Mine own, I would say; but if mine, then yours.

* * * * *

Myself and what is mine to you and yours
Is now converted.

MERCHANT OF VENICE 3.2

A bride's loving commitment to her new fiancé



Let me choose;
For as I am, I live upon the rack.
MERCHANT OF VENICE 3.2

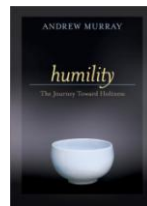
Look on beauty;
And you shall see 'tis purchased by the weight.
MERCHANT OF VENICE 3.2
A cynic's comment that beauty is often determined by the amount of cosmetics applied.

Mustard Seeds from Favorite Books, Jerrie Barber

Humility: The Journey toward Holiness, by Andrew Murray, Copyright © 2001, Bethany House Publishers

“It is no great thing to be humble when you are brought low; but to be humble when you are praised is a great and rare achievement” – Bernard of Clairvaux (page 59).

“Be not angry that you cannot make others as you wish them to be, since you cannot make yourself as you wish yourself to be” – Thomas A Kempis, (page 75).



Smile of the Month

A man walked up to a gentleman standing on a street corner with a dog beside him and said “Does your dog bite?”

“Nope,” he answered.

So the first man reached out to pet the dog, and it growled and tried to chomp off his hand! He turned to the other man and said, “I thought you said your dog doesn’t bite!”

The man looked down at the animal and said, “That ain’t my dog.”

It’s vital that we ask the right questions in life. Asking the wrong ones could cost us a whole lot more than a hand.

How to Get What You Want, by Willard Tate, page 1



Barber Clippings

Our time at Eddyville is swiftly ending. Our last Sunday here will be August 10. The Eddyville elders have invited Jeff Finch from Evansville, Indiana, to be their next preacher. He is a student at Freed-Hardeman University. He will graduate soon and begin graduate studies. He begins his work here August 24.

I have been pleased with the cooperation and encouragement from the brethren here. Gail and I are having groups into our home to eat, evaluate, talk about our departure, and how to encourage the next preacher.

I am blessed by an invitation from another congregation to work with them during their interim. I will begin part-time work with them October 1 and full-time January 1. We plan to announce those plans August 3.

I am available for some speaking appointments on Sundays and Wednesdays August 24 – December 28 of this year.

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John Parker

Jill and I spent the first of June on a tour with a group led by Marlin Connelly to the Bible lands. We visited the areas of Caesarea, Nazareth, the Sea of Galilee, Qumran, the Dead Sea, and Jerusalem and Bethlehem. We had a fine tour and visited many sites on an intensive itinerary. I took around 1,500 digital photos, many of sites I had not visited before. Tourism has been limited in the last five to ten years, so this tour revealed

scenes and information which not as many members of the church have seen. I hope to prepare the photographs for use in churches and schools.

I read a paper at the Christian Scholars Conference at Lipscomb University on the story of King Saul as a possible source for Shakespeare's MACBETH.

Jerrie and I spoke July 3 on interim ministry at the Summer Celebration lectures at Lipscomb.

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