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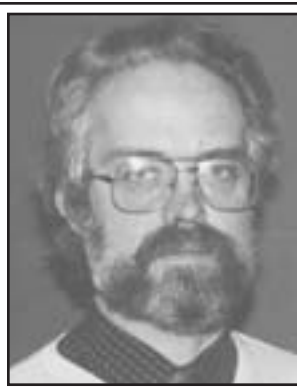
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**Bill's
Bulletin
Board**

By Bill Rea

"Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers; but his delight is in the law of the Lord and on his law he meditates day and night."

Psalms 1: 1-2

A couple of years ago in this spot in the paper, I was discussing some issue and I included a statement to the effect that I did not consider myself to be a religious man.

A week or so later, I received an e-mail on an unrelated matter from the minister of one of the local churches in King, and there was a post script added to the end of the message, words to the effect of, "I think you are a religious man."

That got me to thinking about the definition of the term "religious."

I guess it's subject to personal interpretation, along with a realization that it takes little in the way of profound faith to show up at a church every Sunday morning. There were people who thought my late father was religious, but the truth is someone had to die, get married or be baptized to get my old man into a

pew. Beyond that, the fact he ever entered a church at all was mainly because there was one near our house, and that's where the voting stations usually were on election day (he did vote).

I am much the same, at least where attending church is concerned. My wife and I usually attend services Christmas Eve at the church she went to most of her life (and where we were married). I also sometimes attend one local church or another in the course of my job, covering events of note. I know many of the clergy in King Township, and I have been in just about all the churches in the area. I think I'm on good terms with these people. One of the local ministers even officiated at my wedding nine years ago this coming July (this was before either of us were working in this area).

But I don't regularly attend any church, and I'm not affiliated with a congregation. I set down these words with neither pride nor shame. It is not a boast or an admission. It is fact, nothing more. And it is set down in the knowledge that things are always subject to change, including my reli-

gion, or lack of it.

I always thought that not attending church was a sign of not being religious, but as I stated above, it takes no great statement of faith to get inside a church. And it is a fact that spending one hour per week in church is not going to erase what one does in the other 167 hours.

So considering my church affiliation (or lack thereof), I was a little taken aback when I received an assignment during the last week from a member of the local clergy, asking for my thoughts on the Biblical passage that appears at the top of this piece. I was told to have 50 words ready by this past Friday morning.

In the first place, a 50-word critique of a 46-word Biblical quotation is scarcely realistic, but I did my best. I was away from home for a couple of days last week, but was able to lay my hands on a Bible and take down the passage in question, confirming I had the right one when I got home (yes, I do own a Bible - there are actually two in our house, as I discovered while retrieving the one I knew was there).

After some brief reflection, I was able to hastily set down some thoughts. You must understand this was done on what was supposed to be a day off for me (I can hear a collective gasp among many of you, astonished at the thought that I actually took a day off) and Beth had other things for me to do, apart from devoting part of my supposed down time to something she perceived as being sort of work related.

Thus the product of my labours wasn't the best written work I've ever done.

I should also point out that as of this writing (Sunday morning, which is another explanation of why I'm not in church), I'm still not sure of the purpose of this assignment. I have no reason to be suspicious, but I think I have every right to be curious. As well, the minister who commissioned this project does know me and knows what I do for a living, so it's quite possible there was an expectation that I would use this task as inspiration for a column.

So after some more reflection, I have decided to present the conclusions I submitted by e-mail here, unedited:

There are at least two ways to come at this.

On the one hand, it seems to advocate sitting back and contently basking in one's own self-righteousness, and not being judgmental. There's also the admonition to mind one's own business and not butt into the affairs of others suggested there too. There is considerable justification for that, since one person's good work would be another person's sin, even granting the premise that all are acting with good will. And even minor disagreements on such issues can escalate. The King City sewer issue is a perfect example. Define "wicked" and define "sinner," since most of us sin or are wicked in response to the circumstances in which we find ourselves, rather than some desire to do wrong.

On the other hand, that

notion has a philosophic flaw, in terms of the notion that evil triumphs when men of good will do nothing. Or more to the Biblical point, one might think of an occasion when a man washed his hands, and what took place as a result.

It is not in the nature of people to sit back and be quiet when they think something is wrong. There have been too many incidents in history in which too many people did nothing or too little, and those episodes are almost always viewed with shame.

So it all boils down to what is sinful and wicked, and when does one have the right and obligation to sit down and do nothing, or stand up and intervene.

Those must be issues of personal choice.

Philosophers have been looking, unsuccessfully, for those answers since they invented philosophy.

And there is my response, and therein lies a question of when someone should mind his or her own business, and when should someone act.

And how far should honourable and honest people take their disagreements with other honourable and honest people?

And who is it who defines who is honourable and honest. There are many people who think they are honourable and honest, but who act in dishonourable ways and could not be trusted as far as I could throw my car. But then, am I being judgmental?

I don't know if even a religious person could answer those questions.

Editorial

Merger of two Chambers will mean stronger economic voice for King

It's in the nature of people to embrace change with some reluctance. Thus we can understand why some people might not be too enthused about the proposal to unify the two Chambers of Commerce into one body.

As Barb Davis, president of the Nobleton Schomberg District Chamber accurately observed last week, there will always be some who disagree.

But on the other hand, the merger will represent a pooling of talent, combining into one voice to speak on behalf of the business community in King. Jamie Smyth, King's economic development officer, pointed out that is a benefit.

Despite that, the concern among some over the poten-

tial loss of local identity if the merger goes through is understandable, although we suspect it might be a little over-blown. The fact is the people currently heading up the two Chambers in King are neither stupid or blind. They know as well as anyone that King is a collection of communities, each one with its own separate history, attitudes, commerce and issues. Sewers may be the big issue in one village, while traffic patterns are top of mind in another. And these heavy issues change with the passage of time.

With that in mind, we have every reason to believe these differences will be respected. Indeed, no one could seriously believe such a merger could work if they

were not.

People are always going to be somewhat parochial when it comes to their village, and there's no reason why that should change. But there's also no reason why that should stand in the way of progress. Individual characteristics and flavours can be maintained in a merger. It might take a bit of work,

Letter to the Editor

CCKT opposed to variance

The following letter, addressed to Mayor Margaret Black and King Township council, was submitted to the Sentinel for publication.

This letter is to express our disagreement of Concerned Citizens of King Township with the

but it is doable.

Look at King; a collection of communities that still manages to function, even if there is the odd bit of internal controversy and bickering. Our country was made up of two founding peoples, yet Canada some how continues; frequently despite Canadians. Closer to anyone's home, has there

ever been a marriage between to completely identical and compatible people?

As in any union, the differences here can be sorted out, eventually.

As Maureen Richardson, president of the King Township Chamber put it, "Everything will evolve and we'll just keep working away."

granted a minor variance was reviewed and approved at the Committee of Adjustment's Nov. 16 meeting.

We are in strong disagreement with the approval for several reasons.

See 'Bid' on page 5

The application to be