

Our “Goofy” Brethren

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I once heard a sermon in which the preacher referred to “some of our goofy brethren.” The more I read of some of the statements and practices common to some brethren nowadays, the more I am inclined to believe he is right. Consider a few of these that have come across my desk over the past few years.

- A Kansas church bulletin carried an article by one of the preachers commending a sister in Costa Rica for whom the preacher had asked the church to pray earlier. The article tells of her winning the National Lottery and the preacher credited prayers of many brethren and the blessing of God for rewarding her exercise in gambling.
- A Kentucky bulletin carried the announcement that Zig Ziglar films would be used for the study material in the Sunday young adult class. Several churches could be cited for use of films and/or books by other denominationalists (James Dobson, Joyce Landorf, et al.).
- Some of the announcements we see make us shake our heads in a combination of amusement and dismay. For example, a bulletin from New Mexico had the following note in it: “**NEEDED!!!** Baby Booties!!! – We are completely out of booties for our Baby Bootie Ministry.”
- In another bulletin from Texas, we noticed a “**Hug Coupon**,” redeemable on demand, free – “Good for one hug, redeemable from any participating human being.”
- A “Youth Rally” poster from Oklahoma announced that the featured speaker’s topic was to be, “Would Jesus Wear Kaepas, Reeboks, or Nikes?”
- The “Family Life Center” (alias, gymnasium) craze has spawned all sorts of weird announcements to be found in church bulletins. Several churches host exercise classes. One Texas church announced a “Volleyball Workshop,” and the fixation on recreation and entertainment is so great in this same church that it had to conduct a special “Skier’s Exercise Class” to get their people ready for the slopes!
- The goofiness that out-goofied all the others (so far – no telling what will come tomorrow) was the church bulletin from Oklahoma that came during a Christmas holiday season with three full pages of parodies on “Christmas” songs, titled “Xmess Music.” One of the “songs” was “What Smell is This?” – an irreverent take-off on the beautiful song about the baby Jesus, “What Child is This?”
- One brother made “the rounds” of “youth rallies” for years with what he called “Gymnastics to the Glory of God.” After a sermon I preached in California a few years ago a young man

handed me his "business card," on which he offered two "services": "Magic for the Master" and "Juggling for Jesus."

On and on we could go with such illustrations of what brethren are offering to a world lost in sin in place of the Gospel. *Goofy* may be too nice a term.

[**Note:** I wrote this article for, and it was published in *The Edifier*, weekly bulletin of Pearl Street Church of Christ, Denton, TX, March 20, 1986, of which I was editor.]

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