

## Two Interesting Viewpoints

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Within a few days of each other I received two very different and very interesting evaluations of our efforts in the community in which I was working at the time. Both were from women who were not members of the congregation of the Lord's church with which I was working at the time. I hope you will also find these conversations interesting.

The first was from a woman who came into my study very upset with me personally and with the local church in general because I had taken a position on a community issue with which she disagreed. She was judging the whole church by how awful she thought I was, of course (I never got around to telling her that some of our members are even "worse" than I was! At that point, I am sure she would not have believed me anyway). She very angrily stated, "The church of Christ runs this town. I never heard of the church of Christ before I moved here, but it runs this town."

I replied that I thought she was mistaken, since at the time none of our people were on the school board or on the city council, and we had no one serving as a county commissioner. However, I also commented that if I thought her accusation were true, I would thank God for it. I admitted to her that we were doing our best to find some way to influence every resident in the county as well as in the town.

About a week after the above-described occurrence, I received a phone call from a lady. She said she had planned to write a letter to me but just decided to call me instead. She said, "I am not a member of the church of Christ; I am a \_\_\_\_\_, but I want you to know that the church of Christ is the only church in this town that really cares about people and that is really trying to serve our town." This lady didn't know about the statement made by the lady who visited me earlier.

Isn't it interesting how different people respond to the same stimuli? Among the multitudes assembled in Jerusalem for the Pentecost celebration after Jesus was crucified, arose from His tomb, and ascended to Heaven, 3,000 of those who heard Peter preach were "pricked in their heart" by Peter's Gospel message. Peter's sermon provoked faith in Jesus as the Christ, causing them to ask, "What shall we do?" Peter instructed them to repent and be baptized unto the remission of their sins, resulting in their obedience to Christ and His adding them to His church (Acts 2:37-41, 47).

Not long thereafter, the evangelist, Stephen preached a Gospel sermon in Jerusalem, causing those in his audience to be “cut to the heart,” upon which the unbelieving mob stoned him to death (Acts 7:54–60). The respective viewpoints of these ladies are perhaps what Paul had in mind when he commanded, “Preach the word...in season, out of season” (2 Tim. 4:2). When we preach, teach, and practice the Gospel, we are making an impact on the people around us. Some will see it as a blessing, while others will see it as a curse.

[**Note:** I wrote this article for, and it was published in the *Granbury Gospel*, weekly bulletin of the Granbury Church of Christ, Granbury, TX, April 29, 1976, of which I was editor.]

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