

THE PARABLE OF THE HOG WALLOW

Or ... Something Stinks In Church

by Ben Williams

THERE once was a hog farm. It had many hog pens (or “sties” as they are called). Each sty was furnished with the customary trough and wallow ... mud, mire and accompanying smells. The pens were joined to one another so that each pen bordered the adjoining pen ... separated only by a fence and an occasional walkway for the farmer to use when feeding and observing the hogs. Looking down upon the farm from a nearby hill it seemed like a labyrinth of unending fenced cells.

It was called “**The Church Farm,**” and it had been owned and managed by the Church family for many generations. It had grown into the largest hog farm in the land.

The Church Farm was renown for its contented, fat, easy-to-manage hogs. For generations, the Church hogs had occupied themselves mostly with eating, breeding and sleeping. It was an ideal setup, and the hogs were passively, blissfully ignorant of their destiny.

NEW VISION

One day, one of the more intelligent young hogs overheard Mr. Church telling his son that hog life was not always like it is today on the Church Farm. Long ago, most hogs had actually ran free. They had no fences, no sties, were not owned by farmers, and were not herded into trucks to go to the BUTCHER SHOP. Hogs were free to roam about, making their own life and seeking their own happiness. This caught the attention of the young hog and he determined to look into the matter.

Soon, he had gathered an impressive stack of evidence showing that, indeed, hogs could live and survive outside the sty. Not only that, but evidence showed that hogs were better off and happier before they started living in sties. He discovered, also, that the free hogs of the past produced the statesman hogs and higher-class offspring of hog history.

After he was convinced of these things, he decided that he should share the information with others.

Being a “natural leader,” and since he enjoyed the attention given to him by the crowds of hogs who came to hear him speak about “improvements,” he gladly became their leader. “Why,” he thought, “if I can get enough hogs to join my movement and support my ideas, I can create a new hog sect. I can change the hog world!”

REFORMATION

He began by learning how to unlatch gates. Then, one night, along with a few of his most trusted followers, he escaped from the farm. The escapees were few in number, and would not be missed from the thousands of hogs that lived on the farm. Soon, he found an area he liked, and set up his base of operations there, not far from the Church Farm. Within a month or two, he had established a system to teach hogs how to open gates. Then he began sending the veteran gate openers on

tions, and was still growing.

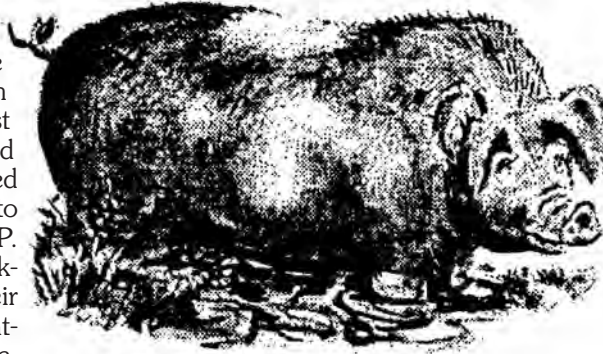
The air of success was so intoxicating it obscured the fact that their leader was starting to have problems. He was finding that being a hog leader was not an easy task. The problems seemed to increase in proportion to the number of members. Nonetheless, he bolstered himself and figured that being a leader meant that he would have to face and conquer the challenges and hardships. Besides, other leaders had led large groups. He, too, was determined to be successful.

One of his accomplishments, of which he was particularly proud, was his revolutionary idea that hog life was improved by refraining from wallowing in mud. This was his crowning achievement. The hogs in his sect were the cleanest in the land – and the best smelling too. In fact, his sect developed a reputation for turning out executive type pigs which were more socially acceptable. They were no longer handicapped with the stigma of “hog stench.”

THE BUSINESS WORLD

Over the next several years, his leadership took on new meaning. He was no longer motivated by a need to share new information. Instead, he was consumed by pride for his accomplishments. Also, much of his energy was spent managing and maintaining his popularity against a spate of new competition. Hog sects were popping up everywhere. And as if that wasn't enough, he also had the constant worry of maintaining control of his personal holdings. But he kept reminding his members of how much he had improved their lives and sacrificed for them, and that they must keep supporting him so he could keep helping them.

Happily, some of his daily worries, as leader, had been taken off his shoulders when he incorporated a committee of educated hogs to help manage the herd. Consequently, with the help of these executive hogs, he could man-



night missions to recruit more hogs to join them. They would walk around the pens inviting others to join their sect, and then open the gates for those who wanted to go with them.

SWEET SUCCESS

Before long, the hog rebellion had grown into a new sect of sizable proportions. Its success surpassed all expecta-

age a larger membership more efficiently ... and the operation increased.

He had almost no personal contact with the herd anymore. It was even said, among the hog members, that he was no longer "one of them." But the hog members prided themselves in the success of their leader.

Indeed, he had lost contact with daily herd life. In fact, he seemed unconcerned when he learned that several sections of the herd were beginning to practice mud-wallowing again. He just passed it off as "harmless reminiscing." Besides, it didn't seem to effect the profit or membership ratings, which were available on monthly spreadsheets from his in-house computer setup. Furthermore, when one executive hog reported that some of the members were starting to request sties for themselves and their families, the leader actually encouraged the idea.

THE TRUTH ABOUT HOG FARMS

One day, many years later, the proud old leader was showing his grandson around the herd facilities. "This," he proudly drawled, "was all possible because I had vision. I dared to be different!"

As he basked in the admiration from his attentive offspring, he heard the young pig ask, "Grandpa, why do we need such high fences, and why are the members so muddy and stinky?" The proud old hog, in a moment of reflection, mused the question. He felt a strange twinge of conscience, barely noticeable – but didn't answer.

The precocious piglet continued, "These hog pens are muddy and smelly ...like those at the Church Farm! Why do you say our farm is different, Grandpa?"

The old sire turned and headed back toward his manner house, and with his nose held high he grunted, "Just remember, hogs will be hogs!"

—THE MORAL—

Vision and inspiration can be overcome by pride, habit and laziness. If an innovation loses its original impetus and purpose, it may revert back to old patterns and rejoin the stereotypes which it originally protested.

Israel was freed from Pharaoh, but reverted back to the same kind of enslavement under its own kings.

Protestants protested the Papacy and then reverted back to the Church stereotype.

Colonists declared independence from the British Crown in 1776 and then reverted back to English-style central government in 1787.

Today, more and more Christians are leaving the Judeo-churches (Church Farms). But, unfortunately, very few have the vision to STAY OUT. Most simply rejoin another church.

Just as hog farms beget fences, mud, and stench, churches naturally beget idolatry. They call it "worship" – but the Bible calls it "abomination."

While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption: ... But it is happened to them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed, to her wallowing in the mire.

– 2 Peter 2:19 & 22

"Church," as we know it, is a misnomer and a counterfeit. The King James Bible translators used the word "church" to translate the Greek word: ECCLESIA. But, "church" actually comes from a different Greek word: KURIOKOS. These are two completely different words confused by the Romanized translators.

A "church" is a temple of religion like those that stood in Babylon, Rome and Jerusalem. "Church" is NOT a New Testament word. It does not appear in the Bible. The correct word is "ecclesia." An "ecclesia" is a body of the "called-out ones."

In Athens, the "ecclesia" was the governmental assembly of the citizens – duly called by proper officers.

—Britannica, 9th edition –1 888

Thus, New Testament "ecclesias" were free communities of "the called-out" – NOT CHURCHES!

Churches derail and neutralize Christians by ritual, emotionalism and illusion. Churches are sties for the idolaters and herd' followers. They offer programs, entertainment, ritual and indulgence of habit (mud wallowing). They pacify you, make you feel religious, and fatten you up for the butchers (politicians and bankers).

As citizens of Christ's Kingdom, you have been redeemed from the idolatry of the churches. KEEP YOURSELVES FROM RELIGIOUS MUD-WALLOWING!

"When you come to appear before me, who requires of you this trampling of my courts? Bring your worthless offerings no longer, incense is an abomination to me.

"So when you spread out your hands in prayer, I will hide my eyes from you, yes, even though you multiply prayers, I will not listen. Your hands are covered with blood.

"Wash yourselves, make yourselves clean; Remove the evil of your deeds from my sight. Cease to do evil, learn to do good; seek justice ..."

–Isaiah 1:12-17



CHURCH "PEW"