

Work Of God Should Take Priority Over Trips, TV

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By JAMIE BUCKINGHAM

Marge Thomas' aunt, Myrtie Adams, lives in the little town of Vinemont, Ala. She missed Sunday school last week. Nothing unusual about that except it was the first Sunday in 46 years that she's missed.

Now according to my arithmetic, this means that she went 2,392 consecutive Sundays without missing. Not bad. Matter of fact, I imagine if we started checking around we'd find that to be some kind of a record.

I ASKED Marge if Aunt Myrtie ever had kinfolks come in on the weekend.

"Sure," Marge said, "but she always took them to Sunday school with her—or left them at home while she went."

Marge says she can remember trudging two miles through the snow from the farm house to the little frame church because Aunt Myrtie was determined not to miss Sunday school.

I WONDERED about some of those cold, wet Alabama mornings when the red clay turns to gummy ooze and the wind whistles through the skinny pines that stand stark against the gray sky.

I wondered if Aunt Myrtie didn't sometimes want to stay home by the fire, lie in bed and listen to the radio, or even get up and cook Sunday dinner for the men folks. I imagine she did.

But you know, you can always find time to do what you want to do. And I guess she felt that learning about God in that little frame church building in Alabama was just a little more important than anything else she could have done on Sunday morning.

IT'S BASICALLY a matter of priorities. I've never really understood why it is that a fellow can get up every morning at 5 a.m. to get to his job—but when the Lord's Day rolls around he's just "too tired" to make it.

It's a matter of loyalties, too.

I still haven't accustomed myself to seeing little children playing in their yards or climbing in the car with mother and daddy to head to the river on Sunday morning.

MAYBE THINGS have changed since my parents raised me. Maybe God is dead or something. Or maybe honesty and ethics and morality are things to be learned in school—and not in church. Although now there's some question about that, too.

It certainly couldn't be that mother and daddy are lazy. Or indifferent. Or selfish. Surely our educated parents know that the things of God ought to take priority over fishing trips, television, funny papers, or even a trip out of town.

It's a matter of priorities. Several years ago I stopped by to see Fred Summey at his mountain house outside Hendersonville, N. C.

FRED WASN'T home and I was sitting on the steps talking to Bertha when Fred's big bird dog came sliding around the corner of the house and fell into a perfect point—pointing at a bumblebee.

I've thought about that a lot when I see some young family with a church background, who have been trained in the things of God, spending their Sunday time scratching under the money

tree or laying around the house doing nothing. All that potential for God and good wasted on bumblebees.

"Too tired," my buddy says. "Man, I work hard

all week and Sunday is my day of rest."

BUT HE'S not too tired to work on his car or get his boat rigged. He's not too tired, he just doesn't love the Lord.

It's a matter of priorities.

No, I imagine that Aunt Myrtie had just as many reasons as you and I for not going to church on Sunday.

She just did what she wanted to do.