



Perspective

By JAMIE BUCKINGHAM

Looking Out For Number Two

For months, now, at the top of the best-seller list, has been Rinker's book "Looking Out For Number One." Following his own philosophy that "You can do it," the author has stumped the country, pushing the book. He's taken out full page ads in national magazines and big city newspapers telling people that if they don't "look out for number one," no one else will. With vivid clarity he convinces them that the most important person in the world is self. Everybody else is number two.

Over Easter I've had the opportunity to consider this. We have been contemplating putting a roof over our screened-in back porch. We don't really need it — but it would be nice. Besides, for the first time in months we have enough money to complete the job.

Jackie and I talked with the building contractor. His suggestion was, of course, that we go first class. "That's looking out for number one, you know." That seemed logical.

Yet something, (or Someone) deep inside, kept asking little questions.

"You don't really need a roof over the patio, do you?"

"Is spending this money on yourself more important than giving it to someone else who has greater need?"

Most people aren't bothered by those questions. They are so convinced that they are the most important person in the world that spending money on themselves is second nature. That's the reason several hundred thousand people have rushed out to buy that expensive cloth bound book telling them how to look out for number one.

But I'm different. Sometimes I don't like being different, but I'm different by an act of my will. Like the man who enlists in the Marines and then gripes because he has to get up early, a number of years ago I enlisted in a different Kingdom than the systems of this world. I still live here, but I take my ultimate

orders from a different source than most people. As I say, sometimes I gripe about it. But I know I'm committed. And if push comes to shove, I'll go forward — not backward.

Most of the principles of this Kingdom sound backward to those who live by the world's standards. For instance: if you want to be a leader, you must become a servant; if you want to be first, you must become last; if you want to receive, you must give; and strangest of all — number two is more important than number one.

So, we've decided against the roof on the patio. It was strictly a luxury — like driving a Rolls Royce when a Chevrolet will get you there just as well. Besides, I know several number twos who don't even have a roof over their house — much less their patio.

That's what happens when you reflect on Easter — and the One who gave His life that I might live.