

**CHURCH BEHAVIOR REPORT 12/5/82 by  
An Anonymous Youth**

During hymn 110, ? was constantly talking with ? During the reading and hearing of God's word ? and ? were talking quite a lot. (constantly) . They were playing a game on paper.

I could hear them talking while we were singing hymn 146 without turning around. During opp. & concerns they were all talking in a loud whisper. During the solo, ? had her feet propped upon the pew in front of her and drawing and talking to ?. They were drawing while ? went and got markers. During the sermon ? and ? and ? were all loudly whispering & laughing & drawing. During the prayer they were drawing and whispering. ? didn't sing the first 3 verses and half of the 4th verse of hymn 118. She didnt read the Nicene Creed, also she didn't sing Praise to the Lamb, whispering loudly during communion. ? didn't bow her head at prayer. She didn't stand up at the end. Can we & ? go to Kentucky. Fried Chicken for lunch?  
P.S. ? and ? etc. did not even come into church!!

The article at the left appeared in the most recent issue of our Church Newsletter, The Covenant Lamplighter, for January 1983.

The anonymous youth who wrote this article is obviously concerned that our worship services are being disrupted and that our Lord is not being properly glorified. This is an important concern and not to be taken lightly.

The use of the "?" reporting mechanism did not effectively protect the identities of those who were written about though, because their behavior in the fashion reported would identify them to anyone who sits near them in church. Obviously, the writer was attempting to

exercise some Christian love by not exposing the culprits to open ridicule and the writer, being young and inexperienced, should not be severely condemned for not realizing that the mechanism used was not sufficient protection.

But, what would have been the proper way to handle the situation in a loving Christian fashion? Should the behavior of those in question be simply overlooked and indulgently tolerated because of their young age?

Would it have been better to directly approach them and attempt to convince them to improve their behavior in the fashion prescribed in Matthew 18:15 (page 852) which says, "If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault, between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother."?

If that didn't work, what about the following verse 16, "But if he does not listen, take one or two others along with you, that every word may be confirmed by the evidence of two or three witnesses." ?

And, if that didn't work, should the guilty parties be openly brought before the church by name as in the following verse 17, "If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector."?

Or, since they are still children who are the ones misbehaving in church, should their actions simply be reported to their parents and their parents be expected to properly instruct, discipline, and/or chastise them as needed?

Or....Or....? What additional ideas would YOU have on the way a loving Christian should deal with this problem?