

Pleasant Hill Baptist  
Bucksville, KY

Backwoods Religion

by Warren Tinsley

In this modern age when a large percent of our younger people are pondering the problems of life and ~~unknown~~ questioning the unknown we find one branch of religion that few of them have studied or examined. This is what is commonly referred to as "Backwoods Religion". As a young child and even up to my late teens I was a part of that rural, backwoods environment which fosters that mode of worship. In this age of fast automobiles, radios and television it is rapidly going out of style. However, to those of us who passed through it or experienced it, we find it a part of our life that we can never forget.

When a young boy I was invariably taken to Sunday School which was held in the country church near our home. For many years we would chug up the country pike in my father's model T ford and come to a spluttering halt beneath the spreading oak that looked down on the old building where we worshiped. On arriving there we could see and talk with our country neighbors. Most of them were farmers. To most of them church services were an important part of their dreary lives. It was there that they could learn a whole weeks news in one hour. Most of the news was nothing but gossip and ~~talk of weather~~ the effect of the weather on their crops. At exactly ten oclock in the morning the old church organ would peal forth in solemn tones, sometimes off key, and the men would file in with slow heavy steps. There was no official choir, anyone who considered himself in godd voice was welcome to try out his vocal chords. The results were not always harmonious. It seemed to me that the women always sang too high and the men too low. One of our local women sang as if she were in her own back yard calling the chickens. She screeched high in the clouds and came to earth with loud wailings. The men sang like bullfrogs on a riverbank at night

Their deep groans alleviated the painful ~~wilings~~ wailings of the women. Hymn singing time was the opportune ~~ki~~ moment for young couples to get together and sing with the same songbook. This was perfectly allright with the older folks as they could oversee such romantic attachments with the eyes of authority.

After the first song was finished everyone bowed their heads in prayer. Sometimes the prayers were long, they often started with the care of crops and ended with the health and wisdom of the president of the United States. There followed a short welcome talk by the Sunday school supt. and the scripture reading. The short talks were amazingly similar and it was a pleasant surprise to hear a slight variation. The scripture reading was followed by another prayer and then ~~the~~ everyone was separated into their respective classes. First came the primary class followed by the junion, intermediate, and adult classes. The old church was not ~~xx~~ built to accomodate but one class. I can imagine how this came about, the adults built the church and they must have felt that they were the only age group that could learn anything. So it was that thee class -es were separated but the voices were not. It was quite an experience to sit in the intermediate class and listen to a discussi~~on~~ among the adults.