

Skit Three: The Parts of the Rose

by David A. Waganer

Reader 1: The Cooperative Program, just as the rose is comprised of a number of different parts such as the Mission Boards, the seminaries, the universities, the agencies, the state convention needs, and the other ministries. Many people without thinking, prioritize these parts in an order of importance to them individually.

Reader 2: *(This person enters with a Hefty Garbage Bag and mumbling aloud.)* I've never understood why in the world God created the rose in the way He did?

Reader 1: Sir, can't you see that you are interrupting the program? Can't you see that I'm attempting to make a speech?

Reader 2: Go ahead and make your speech. No one is listening to you anyway. *(The man turns to the crowd and continues his interruption.)* Have you ever stopped to see how God messed-up the rose? I mean just think about it. The thorns, the stems, the leaves - they just shouldn't be a part of the rose.

Reader 1: Sir, if you must interrupt my speech, what do you plan to do about the rose? Just finding fault with God's creation won't do.

Reader 2: *(The man takes part of his rose bush clippings and starts cutting away the thorns, the leaves and the stem.)* I'm going to start cutting away the thorns, the leaves and the stem. If I can just get rid of these hazards, truly the rose will stand out in beautiful form. I won't ever have to get stuck with the rose thorn again.

Reader 1: Certainly you don't think that you can improve on God's creation. As I've already said sir, you are interrupting my Cooperative Program speech. My Cooperative Program speech is definitely more important than hearing you attempt to improve on the rose.

Reader 2: I apologize for not being sensitive to you but I had just been stuck with a thorn while attempting to trim back the rose bush. What is the Cooperative Program anyway?

Reader 1: The Cooperative Program is the mission program of Southern Baptists. One fourth grader described the Cooperative Program as "the way churches work together to get something done." Our goal is to reach the world for Christ.

Reader 2: I'm sure that such a program has some thorns, leaves, and stems amidst the blooms of the flower.

Reader 1: I haven't ever thought of the Cooperative Program like that but I'm sure that as people look at the Cooperative Program from various angles, what might be viewed as a bloom for one person, would be the thorn for others.

Reader 2: Give me an example of one such ministry supported through the Cooperative Program that could be viewed from such differing perspectives?

Reader 1: The work of the Baptist Campus Ministry would be one such ministry. For those that were never touched by such ministries might be viewed as a waste of money on such things as trips, meals, and supporting campus ministers. However, for those that made life-changing decisions as a result of the ministry, it would be viewed as the flower.

Reader 2: I think that I understand what you are saying. Will you give me one other example.

Reader 1: *(Select another area of support that you want to focus as unnecessary by some and insert here.)*

Reader 2: So, what you are saying to me is that to be able to enjoy the rose bush, one needs to be willing to acknowledge that for some, other parts of the rose bush are enjoyable.

Reader 1: The life and ministry of a campus minister, or for that matter anything else that is supported through the Cooperative Program, might not be your favorite part of the rose. For some, such ministries might be viewed as the stem or the thorn. For others that were touched by these ministries, they would be viewed as the bloom. Recognize that God made the rose with the multiple parts, and even the Cooperative Program in all of its beauty is not made up of just blooms. But, to enjoy the bloom one needs to allow the other parts to offer the support that they can to the bloom.

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