

2-12-1970

From/To: Paul DuBois (Chalk's reply filed first)

Paul DuBois

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February 12, 1970

Mr. Paul DuBois
Echo Lake Church of Christ
East Broad Street at Springfield Avenue
Westfield, New Jersey 07090

Dear Paul:

I did not reply to your letter of November 14 but not out of any lack of interest. I have mentioned your name to several people and hope that some of them have gotten in touch with you. I can appreciate the agony of your decision to leave Westfield. I have known something of the condition of that congregation and certainly can appreciate the tensions and burdens it has created for you.

I would like to know when and if you make a change, what you are doing. I think all of us must be looking more honestly at the modern-day role of the "hired minister." It is one that is not consistent with any Biblical roles that I see. There may, however, be some selfishness here that all of us have to look at. Any insights you gain regarding this matter and regarding your personal fulfillment of the will of God in your life could be very helpful to me. I will continue to watch for things that you might be interested in.

Thank you for our friendship and fellowship.

Your brother,

John Allen Chalk

JAC:lc

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ECHO LAKE CHURCH OF CHRIST
E. BROAD STREET AT SPRINGFIELD AVENUE
WESTFIELD, NEW JERSEY 07090

November 14, 1969

Mr. John Allen Chalk
Church of Christ
5th and Highland
Abilene, Texas

Dear John:

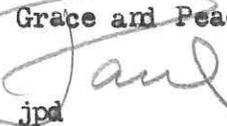
Today I have reached another one of those painful decisions. The church here, composed of about 100 members, is undoubtedly the deadest church I've ever known. This wouldn't be so bad if there was any spark to enliven it. The Lord, I believe, has removed the candlestick here. It is a situation in which the primary emphasis is that of paying for a building, which is costing us over \$1500 per month, leaving only enough to pay the preacher and buy grape juice (& and think we'll have to start diluting the grape juice to make ends meet). At any rate, I have decided that I want to do more with my life than what I am doing here. I can't seem to find ANY redemptive factors. Even the building that has been built is, without any exaggeration, the most non-functional building I've seen among modern church buildings. They built ONLY an auditorium (with a few "make-shift" classrooms, 8 in all), intending to build the educational unit later. Obviously that is going to be many years away, unless the Lord intervenes with a miracle. We have no funds to have any kind of community outreach, and even if we did there is no will to do so. In fact the ideas I've suggested (drug addiction seminar, Sex education seminar, etc.) are dismissed as unimportant -- and not within the scope of our mission. It is apparent that my philosophy in serving the Lord is a long ways down the road from that which obtains here.

Accordingly, after less than a year, I've decided to move. In fact, I'm seriously considering secular employment (if it is anywhere available for a man nearly 40). John, I hate to put this burden on you again, but I do believe you're interested. If you know of ANYTHING, let me know. I'd like very much to stay in the ministry, but frankly I just don't know many churches in our fellowship who really want to "let go and let God." Leaderships are too fearful of "the constituency" to do anything really meaningful in Christian service. However, I'm willing to give it another try if the Lord so directs. But I'm placing the fleece before him on this other matter, too, that is, of secular employment.

Please write and let me know if you have any ideas that might help. I think I'd like to bring my children up in the Pasadena church where Wesley Reagan preaches, or some church that is really alive to modern issues. If you know of any possibilities in Houston let me know. Okay?

Regards to the family, and best wishes in your work at Highland. We pray for you, and ask the Lord to use you to the fullest.

Grace and Peace,


jpd

*P.S. Put this word out to others as
you have opportunity.*