

Missing

By Steve Higginbotham

One Sunday morning, a preacher pointed out to one of the elders that the flower arrangement that sits in front of the pulpit was missing. The elder hadn't noticed it, but he certainly did now. This elder pulled all the other elders to the side and asked them if they had any knowledge of what had happened to the flower arrangement. None of them knew; so the search for the missing flower arrangement was on.

The elders called a special meeting with the deacons and asked them to help locate this arrangement due to its great value; after all, the florist billed the church several hundred dollars for that arrangement. Every room in the church building, every closet, and every cabinet was turned upside down looking for that missing flower arrangement. Announcements were made in the church bulletin, emails were sent out, and even a phone tree message was sent to every family in the church. Still, they had no luck in recovering the missing flower arrangement.

After looking at a "bare" pulpit for a month, the preacher got up to preach, reached down behind the pulpit, pulled out the missing flower arrangement, and placed it on its rightful stand in front of the pulpit. There were audible sighs of relief that could be heard from the unsuspecting congregation. But what followed next was this preacher's shortest, and perhaps his best and most convicting sermon he ever preached. He simply said, "I must confess, I am the one who took the flower arrangement. Why? Because I just wanted to see if, as a church, we were more stirred and moved to action by a missing flower arrangement than we were a missing soul."

Well, what about you? If you were a member of that church, would you have been convicted of misplaced priorities that morning? Give it some thought.