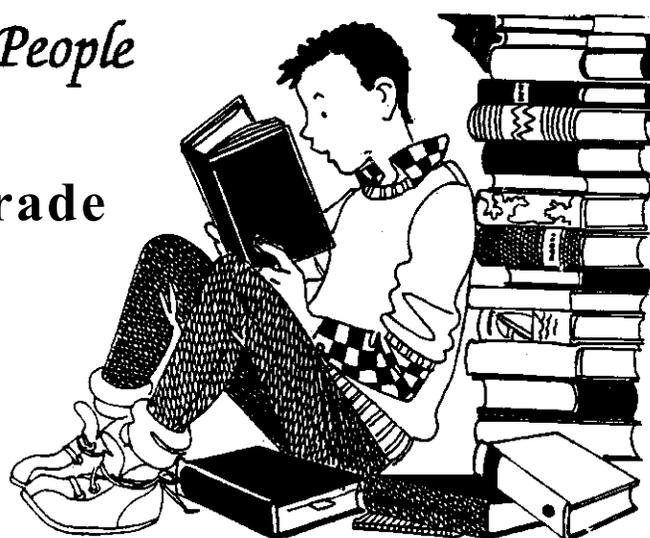
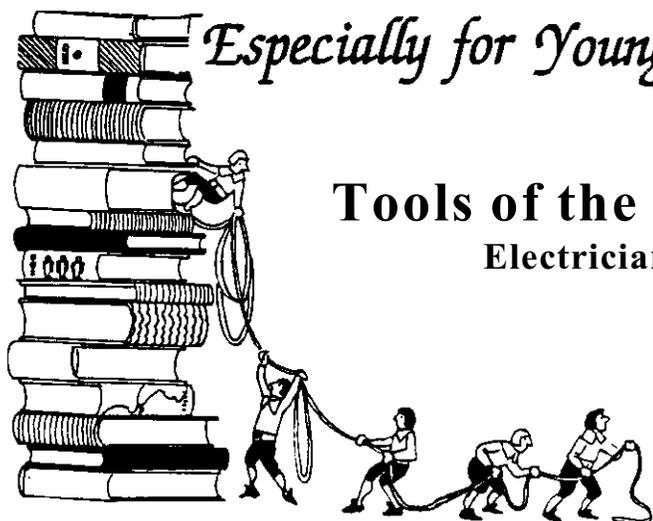


Especially for Young People

Tools of the Trade Electrician



In my job as an electrician, I use many different types of safety tools. When working on a job, it is important to know what tool to use and where to use it. When I open the panel on an electrical box and start unbolting the fingers, I might think it is dead; however, just because the switch is in the off position does not always insure that the power is off, so I use a safety tool called a lock-out. This is a padlock that electricians put on one of the six holes in the box, along with a special required tag. This must display the electrician's name and the date that he is working on it.

When I put the padlock on, I am the only one who has a key to it. The reason is that we do not want anyone else working on that same circuit. It does not take much (only thirty-five volts) to kill a person. Many times we are working with hundreds or possibly thousands of volts. Therefore, this safety device is of utmost importance. Potentially, five other electricians could be working on the same panel, and they each would have their own padlocks on a circuit as well. Before that panel is ever cleared for operation, all those padlocks must be removed.

The Word of God has some good safety tools and good safety procedures for the Christian to utilize. In Ephesians, Chapter 6, some of these tools are mentioned. Verse 17 tells

us to take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit. These help us to fight against the wiles of the devil. God did not put us here without giving us something with which to work. He gave us the Word, which tells us how He will save souls and forgive sins. Then He gave pastors, evangelists, Sunday school teachers, and other saints to help us in our walk with Christ. These safety devices help us along the way.

As an electrician on the job, I must follow the proper guidelines and OSHA (Occupational Safety and Health Administration) standards. We must adhere to many federal standards for safety. Safety is the number one thing that is taught on the job. As you know, equipment can be replaced, but it is impossible to replace a person.

A circuit breaker in a fuse cabinet may be in the off position and tagged, but one must not take it for granted that the power is off. A person must always treat it as though it is hot, or live. I use a tool called a voltmeter to test it. This tool does many different things, and there are lots of different attachments for it. When I use a voltmeter on a panel, it will tell me whether it is a three-phase system or if there are different lines powering it. I can check between each line and take each one right to the ground wire to make sure that phase is dead before

I try to work on it. The voltmeter is another one of those safety devices. Even though the probes of that voltmeter are insulated, I must take extreme precautions when going into a circuit. I must put on special rubber gloves with leather over them for protection. Those gloves are good for up to five thousand volts. When I put on those gloves, I can work with live circuits; that is what the gloves are made for.

There are other types of safety tools called blankets. Many times I might have to take out the cutouts on high voltage. I use a ten-foot or longer fiberglass pole. The pole is good for up to 20,000 volts. I must use the pole because safety is the number one priority.

When I buy a tool, I buy the very best, like the gloves that I spoke of. I would not go out and buy just any pair of gloves. I want to know that I have the best available. The paperwork that comes with the gloves states that they have been tested and have passed certain criteria. I especially want to know this when I am the one using the gloves. I want to make sure that they are safe and that they do not have pinholes in them.

This is the same way it is with the plan of salvation. We are bought with a price. Salvation is not something cheap, but it is God's very best. This is the same attitude that I take with a tool. I do not like to

work with cheap tools when I am working with high voltage.

God gave us the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit. He prepares us with the Word of God and the Holy Spirit. When I am working in the field, I check not only for voltage but also for phase rotation. This is checked by a meter on a three-phase system. If those phases are not in the right sequence, they can actually run backwards and possibly burn up a motor. If somebody is working on a piece of equipment and it starts to run backwards, many things could happen. Someone could be hurt or killed. So it is with our spiritual lives. If we do not take the utmost precaution and go by the Word of God, listening and obeying, we can do more harm than good.

Most electricians carry a tool pouch. I carry many types of tools in my tool pouch, and I have a certain spot for each one. I liken these tools to the members in the body of Christ. There are many members in this body, and if any one of those members is out of place, it will hinder and things will not go right. If I pull out a tool to use, I put it back in the correct spot. Otherwise, when I need it again, if it is not in the right place, I would waste time fiddling around with the tools, trying to find the right one.

Each member of the body of Christ has his specific job. First Corinthians 12:1-12 reads: "Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I would not have you ignorant. . . . Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all. But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal. For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; To another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; To another the

working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues: But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will. For as the body is one, and hath many members."

Again, verse 12 says, "For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ." There are many gifts in the body. The pastor's gift is to lead the body; that is his calling. Other gifts are custodians, song leaders, Sunday school teachers, young people's leaders, and helpers. Each one has a part in the body of Christ. You may think, "My job is little." It does not make any difference how little or how big the job is. We all are a part of the body of Christ. It may seem like a little thing, but often that little thing is more important than you may realize.

In my job as an electrician, the big fuses often will not operate in a circuit until the little fuses control the big fuses. Many times in a circuit, relays relay the interlock. Locking in requires pulling a coil, which is done by low voltage control circuitry. Sometimes control circuits are operated by temperature. For instance, in a heating system there are relays in the room and in cabinets. For a heater to trip on, it has to sense a certain temperature. A small control circuit energizes a relay, and when that relay pulls in, it makes contact. When the relays snap in, they snap in a millisecond. This is what energizes the big fuses to carry the load.

A 1600 amp fuse may be little, but it has a lot of impact on a big one. A big fuse is not going to work unless the little fuse is working. No matter how small you think your job is, it is big in the sight of God. However, you must always keep a humble spirit and a humble attitude. The gifts you have and the things

you are doing are contributing to the body of Christ. You may think, "Well, I'm not doing much," or "What I'm doing is not really having the effect it ought to have." First Corinthians 12:26 says, "And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it." No matter how small that member may be, if it is suffering, the whole body suffers.

When using my tools, if I need to tighten a screw, I do not take a wrench out to turn the screw. Each tool has its own particular function. It is the same with the members of the body. I would be out of order if I stood in the pulpit and pretended to be the pastor. It would not work, because that is not my position.

Another great tool is a level. I use this so things will be straight. If I am hanging an electrical panel on a wall, I want it to be level. Isaiah 28:17 talks about laying judgment to the line and righteousness to the plummet. I expect something to be straight, and it is important not to do a sloppy job. Many times sloppiness causes safety problems. Sagging pipes can cause trouble down the road by fracturing the insulation on a cable that carries the power. There are guidelines to prevent sloppiness.

The same is true in our Christian walk. We must listen to the pastor, stay in the Word of God, and always be in a spirit of prayer to prevent sloppiness. We must keep safety in place as we build by the plan of God's Word. If we build our lives according to the blueprint, or the Bible, we will be fitly framed together (Ephesians 2:21). I am glad that God's guidelines are not by trial and error. He established them from the foundation of the world, and they are from everlasting to everlasting. We can stand on the Word of God and build our lives around it. What if something happens? We have proper safety guidelines to follow in the Bible.

Brother Jan Romine