

# The Old Hickory Bulletin

## *Old Hickory Church of Christ*

*841 Old Hickory Blvd.  
Jackson, TN 38305*

---

September 09, 2012

Volume 32, # 37

---

## Sitting At The Back

**Why do so many churchgoers insist upon sitting in the back of the building?** In big churches, little churches; north, south, east or west; this is a continual question. The elders will make an announcement, the preacher "shame! shame!"s the folk, and everybody (?) moves down -- for a few weeks. Then most of them drift back, back, back; and we start all over again.

I may not have the solution, but many years of experience have taught me some things about the **problem**. If more members would think objectively about that, we might get a little closer to the answers.

In the first place, saints assemble to worship God; i.e., each one is a **participant** or teammate in a joint activity. We are not in the grandstand, as observers; but on the field, as players. Each Christian is priest, (1 Pet.2:5,9) with a valid function.

Frequently we are urged to "move down, so the singing will sound better." The request is based upon factual observation, but it misses the more important reason. The higher motive for a close blending of voices is the blessedness of united effort, the sweet communion of kindred souls as the songs of Zion swell heavenward. Yes, we shall be judged as individuals; but the collective elements of public worship, by divine

assignment, have a special function in the praise of God and the strengthening of the worshippers. (Cf. 1 Cor.14:23-25)

In a large auditorium that is but sparsely populated the problem is **communication**. In any auditorium, half-filled or packed, the problem is communication. I do not refer to the purely physical matter of being heard. Current modern electronic systems can blast sound into the most remote corner. I refer to the communication necessary to our purpose for assembling. It is feeling, and being felt; imparting and receiving; establishing the togetherness so essential to community worship that suffers most in a scattered assembly, or between the teacher at the front and the pupil on the back row. Unnecessary space interferes with this communication. Distractions such as crying babies (or playing with the babies) break this communication. The late-comer, the shifting about of mothers who must take their children to the nursery or rest room -- all of these things wreck communication; and these things are worse in the back of the auditorium.

Visitors - especially non-members-sit in the back because they ARE but observers. Although we welcome their presence, there is no reason for feeling themselves a part -- a participant in our worship of God. Psychologists tell us that people sit apart because they do not wish to become involved - to feel obligated by the activities of the gathering. This offers a logical and understandable reason for the non-member sitting at the back.

But why would sincere worshippers of God, members of the congregation, saints who have come for no other purpose than to join with fellow-saints in this sacred service -- why would they sit at the back?

- Robert F. Turner, *Plain Talk*, May, 1966

---

# A WISH FOR TODAY

This is the beginning of a new day. I can waste it — or use it for good; but what I do today is important because I am exchanging a day of my life for it. When tomorrow comes, this day will be gone forever, leaving in its place something that I have traded for it. I want it to be gain, and not loss; good, and not evil; success, and not failure.

- Author unknown

---

# This Man Jesus

Back in history — so long ago,  
There lived a man we need to know.  
Yet, more than just a man was he,  
For he also partook of deity.

Born of a virgin whose name was Mary,  
He could not long in Bethlehem tarry,  
For wicked old Herod, on hearing, had said,  
"All babies under two I want to be dead."

Led by the Lord, his parents took him away

To far off Egypt — and there they did stay,  
Till God struck Herod dead and safe it would be  
For them to return home to Galilee.

And there Jesus grew, as all men can,  
In stature, in wisdom, in favor with God and man.  
And at the age of twelve, again we find  
Jesus talking to teachers as one of their kind.

At thirty he was baptized by one named John,  
From which many lessons for us can be drawn.  
Then he entered the desert to fast forty days,  
After which he was tempted in all Satan's ways.

Yet, forth he came, without yielding to sin,  
To bring mankind back to the Father again.  
His teaching went forth throughout all the land,  
Yea, even demons were subject to his command.

Three years he spent in teaching the lost,  
Selecting apostles — and showing the cost  
Of faithful allegiance to the One up above;  
But one, for money, had a greater love.

After the last supper, when it was yet dark,  
Judas sought out the soldiers to give them the mark.

And so with a kiss, his Lord he betrayed,  
For he knew where Jesus often went and prayed.

And off into the night the disciples did fly,  
And Peter his Lord three times did deny.  
Said Pontus Pilate, "I'm at a loss,"  
And permitted the Jews to erect the cross.

He was hung with two thieves upon a hill,  
And the cross is an emblem of mankind still,  
For the grave could not hold him — upon the third morn,  
He arose from the dead — Salvation was born!

- *Donald P. Ames*

---

**THIS WEEK'S LESSONS:** Sunday morning: "*Draw Near!*" (text: James 4:4-10); Sunday evening: "*Jeroboam's Religion!*" (1 Kings 12:25-33).