



Rockwood Church of Christ

The Proclaimer

June 4, 2017

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Elders:

Dana Carter
Kenneth Carter
Don Chandler

Deacons:

Kendall Bear
Larry Brackett
Roger Carter
Steve McCreary

Minister:

Todd Houston

Secretary:

Susan Chandler

Service Times:

Sunday

Bible Study 10 am
Worship Service 10:45 am
Worship Service 6 pm

Wednesday

Bible Study 7:30 pm

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WHEN THE GAME STOPS

It was just your average baseball game and your average pitch. But when the baseball bat connected, the ball came screaming towards Archie Bradley's face. The Arizona Diamondbacks' pitcher had only a split second to react, and it wasn't enough. The ball smashed into the side of his face with an audible impact and he immediately went down to the ground.

At this moment, the game completely stopped. No one cared that Colorado Rockies' Carlos Gonzalez made it to first base. No one cared what the score was. The stadium went completely silent. The medical staff rushed out. The Diamondback players ran to their downed teammate. Gonzalez clapped his hands in frustration of what he had done by accident, and watched with concern. Both benches looked on with great worry. Every eye was fixed on Archie Bradley, peering for any signs of movement; any indication that he was ok. The announcer accurately captured the feeling when he said, "Obviously concern on both sides of the field and in the stands. Sometimes things just supersede competition. Everyone is concerned." Finally after several agonizing minutes, Bradley sat up and eventually walked off the field under his own power. With a standing ovation, the crowd clapped and cheered him all the way into the dugout.

Incredibly, Bradley did not end up with a concussion or any shattered bones. He did suffer huge swelling on his right cheek, a black eye, and a small sinus fracture. Others who have been hit in the face before him were not so lucky. The line drive from Carlos Gonzalez reached 115 mph, making it the 12th fastest hit so far that year.

There are times in life when everything just stops. Whatever we were doing or whatever our plans were just vanish. It is a time to be selfless and focus on others. **Romans 12:15** talks about important times when we should "*Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep.*" When someone is going through something wonderful or terrible, it's important to be there for them in their joy or sorrow. Our lives should stop. It's a time to put our own lives and concerns aside and be there for someone else.

This is just one more way to love our neighbor (**Mark 12:31**), to put others above ourselves (**Romans 12:10; Philippians 2:3-4**), and be a servant (**Matthew 23:11**). Good things result when we are willing to humble ourselves (**Philippians 2:3-4; I Peter 5:6**). Let's watch for these important opportunities to serve and help.

Bert Petrillo

WHERE WERE YOU SUNDAY AND WEDNESDAY NIGHTS?

One of the most discouraging sights to a sincere Christian is the visible lack of commitment to the public assembling of the saints among a good many of our brethren. It is a rare congregation indeed where about 50% of the members don't disappear on Sunday and Wednesday evenings. Some, admittedly, are unable to get out because of legitimate reasons. But most, I fear, just have no desire whatsoever to attend. The church simply isn't their top priority.

Bro. Charles Hodge recently wrote an article titled "It's Meeting Time – Where Are You?!" In this article he made the following observation: "Why won't members return on Sunday night?" This is the wrong question. The real question is, "Why did they come Sunday morning?" Those who come for the right reasons Sunday morning will return on Sunday night and Wednesday! So, we keep treating symptoms, not the heart!

I think Bro. Hodge has truly identified the problem. Our approach too often is to treat the symptoms, rather than going to the heart of the problem – The Heart! When people don't come Sunday or Wednesday nights our first thought is; "How can we change our service on Sunday or Wednesday evenings so that we can get them to return? What can we do differently? What can we add or eliminate?" We tend to view the assembly as the problem, when in most cases it is probably the person staying away. Our questions ought to be: "How can we change their hearts? How can we improve their spiritual attitude? How can we motivate them to be committed to the Lord and His people?" Worrying about trying to manipulate the externals of an assembly in order to lure the uncommitted back to a building is the wrong focus. We must encourage personal commitment.

When the saints assemble, why do you come? If you attend only for yourself, Hodge points out that "your reasons are wrong!" Christianity is not just about ME – it is about OTHERS first. We assemble together to encourage, uplift, strengthen and build up others. When we finally mature to the point where we attend primarily to benefit our brethren, rather than expecting the brethren to benefit us, we will have taken a giant leap toward solving our attendance problem.

Hebrews 10:24-25 tells us that we assemble together to encourage one another and to stimulate one another to love and good deeds. Is this your reason for coming? Are you truly committed to edifying your brethren and helping them grow? Are you determined to do your part to strengthen and build up the body of Christ where you are? Are you also here to offer up praise to God, and to learn more about His will? If this is why you are here, then we won't be able to keep you away whenever the saints assemble themselves together. You won't want to be anywhere else! It would be unthinkable to you!

However, if you attend only to be served, not to serve others, if you expect everyone to be there for **you**, but are unwilling to be there for **them**, if you think God promised you a life of smooth sailing, with no problems or difficulties; a life where every brother or sister has reached perfect maturity and only has your best interest in mind, **WAKE UP!** God's people are not perfect, so you are in good company – neither are you! Hang in there with us; help us grow. If you are getting nothing out of the assembly, try putting something into it, **yourself**, on a regular basis. It will make a huge difference, both to you and to your brothers and sisters in Christ.

Al Maxey