

## THE RELIGION OF EXCITEMENT, AND THE EXCITEMENT OF RELIGION

Alexander Campbell

In the present day we seem to have more of the religion of excitement than we have of the excitement of religion. The ancient and apostolic plan of first enlightening the understanding by declaring and illustrating the testimony of God, seems to be both rational and slow for the ardent demands of the proselyting spirit of the age. Our Savior and his apostles spoke plain good sense to the understanding of men, knowing it to be God's charted way to the heart. Paul teaching that "faith came by hearing" – that "hearing came by the word of God" – and that as he "preached so the people believed," was only anxious to declare the whole testimony of God, with its innate and cognate evidences of the divine authenticity. His preaching being first understood and then believed, he knew could not possibly fail to seize the heart with omnipotent power, and turn it to God, and Christ, and heaven. Therefore, he never made an effort to excite the feelings of any audience until he had "declared to them the whole counsel of God." He threw no artificial exciting circumstances around them: he never thought of an "anxious seat," nor of "a mourning bench," and never called up convicted and trembling sinners to pray for them. These are all the greenhouse or hotbed appliances of the present day. They have no root in themselves. They are born in the midst of excitement – they live in the midst of excitement, and as soon as it wanes they generally sicken and die. They have no taste for religion that demands both reading and meditation as the food of its devotion, and generally prefer those feelings which a warm exhorter can produce, to all the moral feelings, and refined and purifying sentiments and sympathies, which the truth believed and read, and pondered in the heart, can waken within us. They are deluded by the idea that religion is the *effect*, and not the *cause* of the feeling. Religion with them, is the fruit of excitement, rather than the root and reason of it. Hence such converts display little or nothing of that constant and powerful excitement to love and to good works, which so visibly and constantly attended the profession of the faith in the New Testament age. The faith of Christ and the consequent hope and joy which simultaneously arise in the heart of a true convert, like the mainspring of a watch, or the *primum mobile* of any complicated machinery, set our whole frame in motion, and excite to every praiseworthy deed both towards God and man.

The Christian religion is, indeed, a religion of the purest, noblest, and most refined feeling and excitements of which our fallen nature is susceptible. It exerts a constant power upon all the affections and moral sensibilities of our hearts; but it is itself the offspring not of fancy, but of faith; not of excitement but of reason; not of visions, dreams and extraordinary impulses, but of the testimony of God, developed and confirmed by the Holy Spirit. It is, in one word, the effect of the Christian truth believed, and not the cause of faith: for it is faith and not feeling, that works by love, that purifies the heart, and that overcomes the world.

Written in the *Millennial Harbinger*, December 3, 1838

(Even in 1838 churches were dealing with religions that were seeking entertainment. TJK)

## IF I WERE SITTING IN THE PEW

Terry Joe Kee

As a preacher it has been over 45 years since I have sat in a pew each week. When we first got married Martha and I worked secular jobs and lived in my hometown. At that time, I enjoyed sitting in the pew from week to week, but soon an opportunity arose for me to begin preaching in Weakley County Tennessee. For the next two and a half years I taught Bible class and preached each Sunday. During a part of this time I was attending the Memphis School of Preaching and I have been preaching ever since. I have had the best of lives and even with some difficult moments, I could not have been blessed more. I am also blessed because here at Greensboro Road when I am in the pew, there are able, dedicated men filling the pulpit. I have not been sitting in a pew listening to a preacher regularly, however, for a long time. If I swapped places with my brethren, what would I want while sitting in the pew?

First, from the pew, I would want to hear the scriptures. It is the Word of God that produces faith (Rom. 10:17). I would not want to hear stories except where they make a point and help imprint the scripture in the mind. Paul told Timothy to "Preach the word" (2 Timothy 4:2). The pew needs to hear the Word and when those in the pew leave, they should remember and meditate upon the Word.

From the pew, I am not impressed with where the pulpit went to school or what degrees it may have. Education is good, but it does not take the place of faithfully presenting the Word of God. If one goes back a few years, preaching came from humble men who studied the Word. Many of them did not have extensive formal education, but they knew and loved God, His church, and the Bible.

From the pew, I want a balanced diet. Reproving and rebuking are necessary, but preaching is more than that. It also includes exhorting. I want to be able to leave each service being encouraged to do better. If I need rebuking or reproof, so be it, but do not forget to build me back up. Life is hard and I need encouragement.

From the pew, I need to know that the preacher is someone of like passions. I need to see the preacher as someone who has the same trials and troubles that I have. Preachers are men and they face the same temptations the pew does. If the pew cannot relate to the preacher, it is hard to listen and apply what is being taught.

From the pew, I need preaching that gets to and makes the point. Rambling preaching causes the pew's mind to wander and the time is not used wisely. The old adage that said, *stand up, speak up, shut up, and sit down* is still needed and helpful for the preacher and for the pew.

From the pew, I want to be considerate of the preacher. Not every sermon is going to be the best I have ever heard. Sometimes the preacher is going to have an *off day*. The pew needs to understand that some sermons are preached to build on the one previous and the one to follow. The pew needs to be present for every sermon in order to get everything the pulpit is trying to feed the pew.

# NEWS AND NOTES

“I was sick, and ye visited me...” (Matthew 25:36)

### Remember in Prayer:

**Darlene Felts** is now in Encompass, Room 225 by the door, for rehab as she deals with many issues.

**Nita Felts** had an echocardiogram Wednesday and is waiting now to see results from wearing a heart monitor.

**James McQuay** had stress and circulation tests last week.

**David Dye** is dealing with several health issues at this time.

**Jim Spencer** has been hospitalized with infection in his back incision.

**Nicole Nelson** has been in Room 2011 of St. Bernards after a trip to the emergency room Wednesday.

Please check the bulletin boards for updates on Prayer Request Lists. Please update us if needed. Also please pray for those directly and indirectly affected by Covid-19, and please keep us updated.

*Stacy & Sherrie Eddleman*

*Jimmie & Vicki Powell*

*Leah Smith – daughter of Jimmie & Vicki Powell*

### In Other News:

*We will have our November Birthday/Anniversary meal after evening service tonight, November 1st, with the theme being Thanksgiving.*

*Ladies Night Out will be at the building November 10<sup>th</sup>, Tuesday night, at 6:30.*

*November copies of Seek the Old Paths are on the tables in the foyer.*

*Mission Sunday is today. Envelopes are on the back of the pews.*

### Those Privileged To Serve

November 1, 2020

#### SUNDAY MORNING

Song Leader: Ben Johns  
Opening Prayer: Noah Flanrey  
Closing Prayer: Jimmie Powell  
Bible Reading: Jerry Dodson  
Preacher: Terry Joe Kee

#### LORD'S TABLE

Presiding: Hal Baugh  
J. L. May James Johnson  
Reginald Read Scottie Blanchard  
Gerald George Jack Johnson

#### ANNOUNCEMENTS

Jody Pickens

#### SUNDAY EVENING

Song Leader: Mark Wooten  
Opening Prayer: Dan Nichols  
Closing Prayer: Carroll Morris  
Preacher: Terry Joe Kee

#### WEDNESDAY NIGHT

November 4, 2020

Song Leader: *Singing Night*  
Opening Prayer: Terry Joe Kee  
Closing Prayer: Scott Pratt

#### DEVOTIONAL SPEAKER

November 4, 2020

J. L. May

### NUMBERS FOR THE WEEK

Week Of

October 25, 2020

Sunday Bible Study	76
Sunday AM Worship	115
Sunday PM Worship	79
Wednesday Bible Study	81
Contribution	\$5832

**“To do justice and judgment is more acceptable to the LORD than sacrifice.”**

**Proverbs 21:3**

# The Friend of Truth

Greensboro Road church of Christ

Jonesboro, Arkansas 72405

(870) 932-3920

“Am I therefore become your enemy, because I tell you the truth?” (Galatians 4:16)

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## Keep Notes

This past Lord's day was a good day. It always is when we can come together and worship. However, it was not a great day, because too many of our members are still not with us. We have too many empty seats and that means we have too many brethren who are not present. The longer we stay away the more comfortable we get with staying away. Coming together is good for all of us and the Lord knew this when He called for us to assemble. Our time together is precious, and we should all rejoice at every opportunity we have of coming together.

Please look around and see who is missing. I know that with everyone sitting in new places it may not be easy to recognize who is missing, but make a conscious effort to notice whom we are missing and then make every effort to check on those who are not with us today.

We rejoice every time a sheep that has wandered away comes home. Our sister, Gloria Thomas, responded to the Lord's call and returned home. Gloria is working at a new job and is struggling to get into the routine without it affecting her attendance. She repented of not assembling with the saints when she could have and asked for all of us to carry her petition to the throne of God. We rejoiced to go to the Father with Gloria and see her restored to the Lord. Keep Gloria in your prayers in the days and weeks ahead as she continues to work on making a living, while she is seeing to save her soul.

Rather than having a gospel meeting just to say we had a gospel meeting we are making plans for 2021. Our hopes and prayers are for a better year with new opportunities to sow the seed of the kingdom. The year of 2020 has taken two gospel meetings and our VBS from us, but we cannot allow it to take any more. We need now to begin preparing for our Spring 2021 gospel meeting. We are presently looking at a gospel meeting for the last week of April, which will be April 25-28. Please go ahead and mark your calendars and do not let anything get in the way of our all being here and encouraging this work. Our VBS next year will be on the “Gospel Railroad,” and we will be having it June 13-16. More about that will be coming but mark your calendars for that week and please make the effort to not make plans to be anywhere but here. Finally, our fall meeting next year will be October 24-27. If we begin working to bring visitors and open doors of opportunity, we can have a great 2021. Be sure you are a part of it, and don't get left behind.

Visit Our Website: [greensbororoadchurchofchrist.com](http://greensbororoadchurchofchrist.com)

### SHEPHERDS

Dan Nichols  
Randy Oden  
Jody Pickens

### DEACONS

Scottie Blanchard  
Jerry Dodson  
Mike Felts  
Jason Garland  
Marshall Lands  
Mark Wooten

### EVANGELIST

Terry Joe Kee

### MISSIONARIES

Michael Hughes  
Samrit Kammanee  
Arnold Kelley  
Guyana, South America  
Warren, PA

### SERVICES

#### SUNDAY

Classes 9:00 a.m.  
Worship 10:00 a.m.  
5:00 p.m.

#### WEDNESDAY

Bible Study 7:00 p.m.

### What Must I Do To Be Saved?

**Hear** the Word of God  
*Romans 10:17*

**Believe** the Word of God  
*John 8:24*

**Repent** of your sins  
*Luke 13:3*

**Confess** your faith in Jesus as the Son of God  
*Romans 10:9,10*

**Be Baptized** for the remission of your sins  
*Acts 2:38*

**Live faithfully**  
*Revelation 2:10*

“Where there is no vision, the people perish...”  
*Proverbs 29:18*

God Give Us 2020 Vision in 2020