

## ***Has This Ever Happened to You?***

You went through an entire song service without even thinking about what you were singing?

You bowed your head and closed your eyes during the prayer, but you really didn't become involved in the prayer?

You were more interested in when the preacher would finish the sermon than in what he was saying during the sermon?

You allowed some minor noise near you to completely upset you so that you could not really worship?

These and many other things often happen, don't they? Here are some ways to avoid them:

1. Don't come to services expecting to be entertained - this is not the purpose for our assemblies.
2. Be a participant rather than just a spectator.
3. Prepare yourself mentally when coming to worship.
4. Resolve that you are going to worship no matter what others do. There are many distractions, but we accept them. We do not condone noise in worship, but let us be determined that it will not keep us from worshipping.
5. Examine your motives for worshipping – and do so often. Doing things by habit can become a problem if we're not careful.
6. Don't think that services have to be conducted in new, innovative, or highly emotional ways to be meaningful.
7. Bring your Bible and follow references during the lesson
8. Take notes during the sermon. The time will pass faster and you will retain more of the lesson.
9. Make a list of words in the songs which are unfamiliar to you and find their definition later.

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## ***Alexander Campbell and the Church of Christ***

Members of the Lord's church are sometimes erroneously referred to as "Campbellites." What exactly is behind such appellation?

It is a tiresome thing to have to respond, again and again, to the same misguided (and frequently dishonest) charges. But one is compelled, from time to time, to do so.

First, Alexander Campbell (1788-1866) never started a church (or claimed such), even though reference works frequently refer to him as "founder" of the "Christian Churches" and "Churches of Christ."

It is a tragedy that the man who labored the bulk of his adult life with a view to encouraging others to abandon sectarianism should himself be accused of being the head and founder of the "Campbellite" church. The reformer utterly repudiated the designation. In 1826 Campbell wrote:

*"Some religious editors in Kentucky call those who are desirous of seeing the ancient order of things restored, "the Restorationers," "the Campbellites". . . This may go well with some; but all who fear God and keep his commands will pity and deplore the weakness and folly of those who either think to convince or to persuade by such means" (The Christian Baptist, Vol. IV, pp. 88-89).*

In 1828 Mr. Campbell responded to the question: "What is Campbellism?" in the following fashion:

*"It is a nickname of reproach invented and adopted by those whose views, feelings and desires are all sectarian - who cannot conceive of Christianity in any other light than an ISM" (Christian Baptist, Vol. V, p. 270).*

It is a matter of historical record that there were churches of Christ - both in Europe and in America - before Alexander Campbell had a clear concept of what primitive Christianity was all about. Leslie G. Thomas has documented New Testament churches in Scotland, England, and Ireland, dating between 1778 and 1810 (The Restoration Handbook, p. 73). Historical accounts reveal that the Old Philadelphia congregation of the Lord's people, which was near Morrison,

Tennessee, was organized in the year 1810. Alexander Campbell was not baptized until 1812, and he continued to be affiliated with the Baptists until the 1820s.

Churches of Christ do not owe their origin to Campbell or any other human leader. The fact that some, therefore, delight in using the term "Campbellite" to refer to those who choose to be called simply "Christians," rather than wearing humanly-devised titles, is more of a commentary upon their characters than anything else.

Why is it that so many religionists have such a difficult time being comfortable with the name "Christian," and that alone (cf. Acts 11:26; 26:28; 1 Pet. 4:16)? The use of human titles is sinful (cf. 1 Cor 1:10ff).

**- by Wayne Jackson**

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## ***Role Models***

When it comes to sports - we do it. In business - we do it. In almost every field of endeavor we look for role models. We try to find others who have been successful, and then we imitate them. God's word tells us to do the same thing in spiritual matters.

The best role models are found right there in the Scriptures. Jesus is the ultimate example:

*"For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps" (1 Peter 2:21).*

Other great heroes of faith serve as good role models, too. Paul urged us to be: "followers of me, even as I also am of Christ" (1 Corinthians 11:1). In another place he wrote: "Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample" (Philippians 3:17). Hebrews chapter eleven is full of examples of faithful men and women who serve as worthy patterns for us to imitate.

Some might complain that it is hard to fully relate to someone that we can only read about in a book. "Paul was a great Christian", they would say, "but we live in a different world. It's hard to imagine how Paul would deal with our situation." For these folks, let us suggest that they can also look to their own brethren. In any church there are faithful, zealous, devoted Christians who are working hard to live for the Lord. They resist temptation, spread the word, encourage others and generally work tirelessly to do His will. Look to them. Imitate them.

We know this method works. In all sorts of endeavors we look for "winners" and we copy them. Let's do the same thing when it comes to our most important endeavor - serving God!

**- by Greg Gwin**