

**Schedule of Meeting Times:**

WKAC 1080 AM Sunday 7:30 AM

*Speaker, Robert Emerson*

Study Sunday 10:00 AM

Worship Sunday Morn 11:00 AM

Worship Sunday Eve 5:00 PM

*Singing every 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday evening*

Study Wednesday 7:00 PM

**Preacher / bulletin editor:**

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“...you also, as living stones,  
are being built up as a  
spiritual house for a holy  
priesthood, to offer up  
spiritual sacrifices  
acceptable to  
God through  
Jesus Christ.”  
—1 Peter 2:5

**Servants during January:**

**Songleader:** Stanley (3), Larry (10), David (17),  
Peter (24), Stanley (31)

**Reading:** Mike Beckman**Announcements:** Larry**Table:** Stanley, Marty, Robert, David**Wednesday Lesson:** Larry (6),Stanley (13), Kris (20),  
Larry (27)**Hays Mill church of Christ**

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# The Bible . Examiner

“Examine everything carefully...” —1 Thessalonians 5:21 NASB

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## Non-Christian Church Members

*By Robert F. Turner*

Not all church members are Christians! This is true in more ways than one; but because different people use these terms differently, a careful study of this matter is in order.

The church, in its universal sense, is the kingdom of Christ, Col 1:13. This refers to the relation of individuals to Christ, as subject to King. If Satan is allowed to rule in our lives, we are in Satan’s kingdom, cf Mt 12:26; Jn 8:44; Rom 6:16, etc. Neither Satan’s, nor Christ’s kingdom function as a visible organized unit, but these terms depict the relation of subject to ruler in a figure.

When one becomes a Christian he becomes a citizen in Christ’s kingdom, a member of His body, a branch on the vine, and a part of the called-out people, the Church, Acts 2:47; Eph 1:22,23; Jn 15:1-6, etc. In this sense all Christians are members of Christ’s church, and all true members of Christ’s church are Christians. We

enter this relationship by obedience to the commands of King Jesus; and those who refuse to obey Him, no matter how “good” or how many denominations they join, are neither true Christians nor members of His church.

But “church” is used in another sense: those Christians who agree to work together as a collective unit; having bishops (overseers), deacons (servants of the church), and pooling their means and abilities to function as one, Phil 1:1; 4:15,16. This is the “local” church, dependent upon the mutual agreement of its members for its existence, cf Acts 9:26-28. Let’s apply our subject to this.

Certainly God intended that the members of the local church be Christians. But because the human element is here involved, sometimes people are accepted as members who are not what they seem, 1 Jn 2:19, and sometimes people truly “bought”

by the blood of the Lamb, 2 Pet 2:1, make shipwreck their faith, 1 Tim 1:19,20. Only a few in the church at Sardis were acceptable to God, Rev 3:4.

Christians are commanded to keep the local church pure. This is done by restoring the erring brother, Gal 6:1, or, failing this, to deny him their fellowship, 1 Cor 5:1ff.

Of paramount importance here is the fact that such breaking of fellowship, to be acceptable before God, must be done with God's word as the standard—not majority rule, Jas 2:12; 4:11,12; Rom 16:17. The church at Corinth accepted the incestuous man, but God denied him. Diotrephes led a church which cast out John's brethren, but God received

them.

Yes, one may be a member of a local church, yet not be a Christian. Such a thing does not argue against the importance of the church, but it may bring shame upon the church that allows such to go uncorrected, Rev 2:20. Fellowship with "church members" must never be allowed to take precedence over fellowship with the Lord.

Perhaps the greatest lesson learned here is that heaven is not gained by following a "party" of people, by staying in a certain building, or by agreeing with the majority. We must be faithful to God and His word.

—via *Plain Talk*, May, 1965 

# The "Audience" Complex

By *Robert F. Turner*

The "spectator" sports provide the "show" for an "audience." A few players carry the ball, bat and run, swim or skate; while the vast majority get their thrills by seeing and hearing—and mentally associating themselves with the participants. Yes, even in a spectator sport the audience must give attention to the plays, and in a sense "become a part" of the game, to really enjoy it.

But in the worship of God many "church goers" are satisfied with an "audience" status; and worse still, are often an inattentive audience.

We "go to church," arrive late, thumb through the song-books, play with the children, note the neighbor's new hat, take a nap, absentmindedly partake of the Lord's Supper, and bow our heads for the "Amen!" This is WORSHIP????

Under the Old Law (Judaism) the Levitical priesthood offered the sacrifice and did all mediatory service at the altar and in the Holy Place. The people were participants in an empathic sense only, once the material for the sacrifice had been provided. Catholicism, growing out of

an earlier "falling away" with respect to authority, developed the bishopric system into a full-grown hierarchy, with a "priesthood" that closely paralleled that of Judaism.

Many Protestant churches began with efforts to limit the power of the "clergy" but most of them sought to maintain "brotherhood" machinery which required "high offices," so the "priesthood" conception continued.

The people (called "laity" to distinguish them from the "nobility" (?)) may pay the bills, but the priests must "serve at the altar." And even today many "worshippers" are content to "attend" worship—approaching the throne of God only through empathy (imaginative association) with some "pastor" or "priest."

But New Testament Christianity has each Christian a "priest." We are "a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ," 1 Pet 2:5. Christ is our High Priest, under a new and different

law, Heb 7:12-28.

In Christianity there is no hierarchy, Mt 20:25-28. We have ONE Master, even Christ; and all the rest are "brethren," Mt 23:8. Even the overseers of the local church must not be "lords over God's heritage," but examples to the flock, 1 Pet 5:3.

Instead of "attending worship" you should be a worshipper. Instead of trying to build greater "audiences" we need to work for more "players"—more participants. The worship is not "up front"—tied to an altar, gold-plated cross, or preacher's platform. You are more than a "spectator" if you are truly a Christian—you are a priest of the Most High God, gathered with other priests to offer up spiritual sacrifices.

When prayer is to be offered, YOU pray. YOU sing—not for aesthetic reasons, to please your neighbor, but to express your praise unto God. Give your body "a living sacrifice," Rom 12:1, and save your soul.

—via *Plain Talk*, May, 1965 

***"Another called, another brought, dear Master, to Thy feet! Oh, where are words to tell the joy so wonderful and sweet! ...Another heart will own Thee, Lord, and worship Thee as King, And grateful love and glowing praise and willing service bring."***  
—*F.R. Havergal*

## Remember in Prayer

Ronda's niece has had the twins; one is still in NICU. Joyce is struggling with her cancer. David and Chessie Harwell are both unwell. Scott Richardson, a relatively young preacher, has numerous serious health issues, but a wonderful attitude; and he remains very busy in the

Lord's work. Remember them all: prayer is a powerful friend, Jas 5:16; 1 Pet 3:12. Let us remember these, as well as those that cannot meet with us: Lois Adams, Madelene Britnell, Carolyn Dennis, Tim and Dot Hice. 