

A COUNTRY PARSON GOES TO TOWN



T'other day I was invited to take part in a community Thanksgivin' service with other preachers from different churches. And they was different! We met in one of the town churches, and all the other fellers started puttin' on black nightgowns over their suits. I figgered right then that, that meetin' wasn't goin' to amount to shucks, what with everbody getting ready to go to sleep. I didn't have none of them there gowns, so I walked along in my brown suit with its fancy stripes and my brown tie with green polka dots, feelin' like a canary in a flock of blackbirds! Speakin' of a canary—we was follerin' the choir and singin' a song I didn't know. So I was movin' my mouth and fakin' it.

I finally made it to my place right up on the front seat, and one of the other preachers went on up onto the platform and stood facin' the wall like Dennis the Menace when he's been bad. That preacher must have done somethin' awful, as long as he stood there! I didn't ask him what it was. I didn't want to embarrass him.

He started talkin', and I was grinnin' and swallerin' hard to keep from laughin' out loud! That feller kept on talkin' to the wall like he was blind or drunk on too much communion wine. But I thought I ought to give him the benefit of the doubt, so I figgered he might be timid or bashful. I could see for shore that he was backward!

After a while he walked over and started singin' with the choir. I guess he found 'em by listenin' to where they was.

Then I got up and read, lookin' right out at the congregation. I'd read, then look at 'em, then read some more and look at 'em again. I wanted 'em to know I had my head on straight and knowed where they was! I didn't want any of 'em to leave because they was bein' overlooked and ignored.

After I set down, the preacher who was goin' to give the sermon got up—and would you believe it? He went over and looked at that wall, too! He'd seen that first feller lookin' at it, so he checked it out to see if it was ready to fall down, I guess. He could see the cross settin' there like a charm to hold it up. He must have figgered he'd take a chance, for he walked out and give a little speech. But he was thinkin' of that wall all the time, 'cause when he quit, he walked over and looked at it again before he set down!

Then the first feller come out and faced the wall and started to talk again. I tell you—that was the most talked-to wall I've ever seen! But it didn't move, and I was glad—I kept thinkin' of the walls of Jericho! That preacher said, "Amen," and I got out of there while the gettin' was good!

I keep lookin' in the paper ever' evenin' to see if the buildin' has been condemned—or if it's fell down on a bunch of Sunday School kids. That church is a new one, too. They just don't make nothin' like they used to, but that's the awfullest thing—a contractor buildin' a church with a worryin' wall! I'd hate to preach in that church. A feller has his hands full tryin' to think of his sermon, without wonderin' if the wall is goin' to fall on him!

-- Edmund E. Wells

© 1978

www.wellsosalvation.com