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Pleasant View church of Christ  
2500 Highway 49 East  
P.O. Box 189  
Pleasant View, TN 37146

Sunday School: 9:30  
A.M. Worship: 10:30  
P.M. Worship: 6:00  
Wednesday Bible Study: 7:00 pm  
Phone: 924-9714

Colossians 3:1-3

“Therefore if you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth.”

*“Nobody can hurt me without my permission.”*

*Gandhi*

*“Every goal, every action, every thought, every feeling one experiences, whether it be consciously or unconsciously known, is an attempt to increase one’s level of peace of mind.”*

*Sydney Madwed*

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## Churches of Christ in the 21st Century, Part II

Nored’s first three suggestions for making worship more about an experience are to (1) use video throughout, (2) use 3 projectors and screens, and (3) dim the lights in the audience and brighten the stage. Do these suggestions sound familiar? It reminds me of most of the concerts I’ve been to. The stage is highlighted and the room is dark because the show is on the stage. The focus is on the performance. But is this the type of worship that we read of in Scripture? Is worship about a performance? Of course it’s not. Remember, in worship, God is the audience, not us. He is unimpressed by our outward performances.

Most of his last five suggestions revolve around his central theme: make worship about the worshiper. Make the crowd *feel* something. He later makes a valid point regarding preaching, but he explains it by making this unfounded, outrageous statement: “Remember, people are not going to be wowed by our exegesis. They can find this online or on their own Bible study.” What? He is conceding serious Bible study to whatever someone may find on the Internet. And it is interesting that he doesn’t think people will be “wowed” by exegesis, yet he seems determined for them to be wowed by lighting, videos, and testimonials.

There is no doubt that churches

must adapt to modern methods of evangelism. The previous generations used whatever means they had available to them in order to reach the masses for Christ. We should use the latest technology to advance the message of Jesus. But when we ignore God’s word when we come together to worship, we won’t be bringing people to Christ—we’ll be bringing them to a feel-good, temporary, self-satisfying charade.

“This people honors me with their lips, but their heart is far away from Me. But in vain do they worship Me, teaching as doctrines the precepts of men” (Mark 7:6-7).

James Hayes

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# Pleasant View Proclaimer

**Pleasant View church of Christ**

## Churches of Christ in the 21st Century Part I

**February 17, 2013**

**Issue 99**

Recently there was a blog post that got quite a bit of attention among members of churches of Christ. It was written by James Nored and titled, "Why Are Churches of Christ Shrinking?" Nored makes several valid claims, but most of his proposed methods for church growth are more culture-based than Bible-based.

First, Nored notes that churches of Christ are shrinking as a percentage of the overall American population, and they are shrinking numerically as well. Those facts cannot be disputed. In the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, churches of Christ were fastest growing religious group in

America. Over the last 40 years, the numbers have either been stagnant or declining.

Second, Nored goes on to point out that the church grew in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century because America was a reason-based society, a world that embraced the scientific method. The church, therefore, grew because it operated like the society around it, proving biblical points to anyone who disagreed. Worship services were focused on education instead of soul-transformation—head over heart. I'll address this point later.

Third, Nored explains that 21<sup>st</sup> century American soci-

ety is all about images, apps, iPads, and Twitter. If the church doesn't adapt to this trend, it will continue to decline. He says that young people go to worship looking for an experience. He makes the shocking claim that churches of Christ run the risk of losing an entire generation of our people (18-35-year-olds) unless major changes are made. He concludes his post by offering suggestions as to how we should stem the tide of regression. Since our goal should be to do everything in the name of the Lord (Col. 3:17), we should evaluate Nored's suggestions with that principle in mind. (*con't...back*)

James Hayes

### Items of Note:

- Continue to have a long-range view of our new facility. We will continue to use budget overage and all of the 5th Sunday contributions for the new building for many years after it is completed. The more money we can raise as a down payment, the less we our monthly obligation will be, which will allow us to use funds in other vital areas of church work. Continue to pray for this effort.

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**Please Email Janet Tabor With Church News—[taborj@realtracs.com](mailto:taborj@realtracs.com)  
Q&A Night NEXT Sunday; Please Submit Questions To James**

THOSE WHO WILL SERVE THE CONGREGATION

Sunday School

Read: Rose

Pray: J. Walker

Morning Worship

Wait on the Table: E. Walker

Serve: Donkin, Trent, Dalton

Pray: J. Newell