

## THE DAY THE CRICKET PREACHED

Distractions are common in worship. The following story (author unknown) reminds us that at church we encounter both the marvelous and the mundane. What we see depends on where we choose to look.

As a youth, I squirmed through many a worship service. This particular Sunday was to have an added distraction. As soon as the preacher got up to deliver his sermon, a cricket walked out onto the stage. He probably came from one of the cracks that were to be found most anywhere in the old building. Everyone in the first three rows saw the cricket. He looked dazed, and stumbled near the edge of the pulpit area. Our eyes followed his every step. We could see that he had come to the other edge again, and we shouted to ourselves, "Jump! Jump!" But alas, the cricket did not jump. Time after time he walked back and forth. I don't know if the sermon was any good that day, but the cricket was sure fun to watch. When the invitation song began, we all stood up and watched the cricket run. He almost got stepped on when the song leader walked toward the microphone, and we all laughed. Then my laughter turned to amazement. Someone had gone forward! My dad! He wasn't a Christian, and my mom and I had been trying for years to get him to come to church with us, to no avail until today. Now the preacher was taking him back to baptize him.

"Dad," I asked later. "What made you want to be baptized today?" Dad asked, "Didn't you hear how Jesus gave His life for us so that we could be saved?" I hung my head in shame. The beautiful message of the Bible did not reach me that day. I had been watching the cricket.

To this day, I believe that cricket was preaching to me. He was saying, "Watch me! Jesus isn't important. I'm more fun!" Since then there have been many more crickets walk across the stage: fretful babies, sneezes, coughs, etc. A lot of things will tend to distract a person from worshipping God. But I learned my lesson. God is more important than anything.

Every time God's Word is being preached, the devil is nearby! Jesus said, "And these are the ones by the wayside where the word is sown. When they hear, Satan comes immediately and takes away the word that was sown in their hearts" (Mark 4:15). What "cricket" are you watching in worship?

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