

*“If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God...” (1 Peter 4:11).*

Volume 11

October 23, 2022

Number 43

## STANDING BEFORE THE CONGREGATION

*John Edwards*

Responding to the rebellion of Korah, Dathan and Abiram, Moses said, *“Seemeth it but a small thing unto you, that the God of Israel hath separated you from the congregation of Israel, to bring you near to himself to do the service of the tabernacle of the Lord, and to stand before the congregation to minister unto them?”* (Num. 16:9). Our topic, **Standing Before The Congregation**, is suggested by the text. The reading shows there has always been those standing before the congregation. Standing before the congregation is no small thing. It is a matter of great importance and must be taken seriously.

**STAND WITH RESPECT FOR THE AUTHORITY OF CHRIST.** Men who stand before the congregation today must bow the knee in submission to the authority of Christ. He has *“all power in heaven and in earth”* (Mt. 28:18). He is *“the head over all things to the church”* (Eph. 1:22). The *“church is subject unto Christ”* (Eph. 5:24). *“And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus”*, the Bible teaches (Col. 3:17). This limits what we say and do when standing before the congregation. We may stand

before the congregation and lead prayer (Acts 2:42; 12:5), psalms, hymns and spiritual songs (Heb. 2:12; Eph. 5:19), serve the Lord’s supper (1 Cor. 11:23-26; Acts 20:7) and take up the collection on the first day of the week (1 Cor. 16:1-2), teach and preach the word of the Lord (1 Cor. 4:17; 2 Tim. 4:2), report on evangelistic work (Acts 14:27). This is because we have Bible for these things. Where is Book, Chapter, and Verse for other things one may stand before the congregation to say and do? Some have stood before the congregation and had everyone in the audience stand up to do stretching exercises, sing Happy Birthday, give testimonials, a comedy skit, and the list goes on. Does anyone have Bible for any of that? Men lacking respect for the authority of Christ have no business standing before the congregation.

**STAND IN SUBMISSION TO THE ELDERS.** It needs to be remembered when standing before the congregation that the elders of the local church are the *“overseers”* (Acts 20:17, 28; 1 Pet. 5:1-2), *“that rule”* (1 Tim. 5:17) and *“are over you in the Lord”* (1 Th. 5:12). Hebrews 13:17 teaches, *“Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with*

*grief: for that is unprofitable for you.”* *“Submit yourselves”* means to resist no longer, but to give way, to yield to their authority and admonition. There are decisions made by elders in matters of judgment that men standing before the congregation must observe and respect. If there’s something you would like to say or do or someone you would like to see serve publicly before the congregation, you need to ask the elders and get their approval first. And then respect their wishes!

**STAND WITH REVERENCE.** The Psalmist exclaimed, *“Holy and reverend is his name”* (Ps. 111:9). That’s God’s name! Your name is not reverend; neither is mine! His holiness of character demands our reverence. God has always commanded reverence. *“Ye shall keep my sabbaths, and reverence my sanctuary: I am the Lord”* (Lev. 19:30). *“God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints, and to be had in reverence of all them that are about him”* (Ps. 89:7). The dress we wear, our attitude, our speech and our conduct before the congregation ought to always show great reverence for the Lord and His word.

**STAND WITH HUMILITY.** God hates a proud look (Prov. 6:17). It is written, *“Every one that is proud in heart is an*

*abomination to the Lord*” (Prov. 16:5). Paul stands as a great example of humility. He said, *“Serving the Lord with all humility of mind”* (Acts 20:19). He wrote the Corinthians, *“For I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle”* (1 Cor. 15:9). *“Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ”* (Eph. 3:8), were the words of Paul to the Ephesian Christians. Men standing before the congregation today should be characterized by such humility. *“Before honour is humility”*, the Bible says (Prov. 15:33; 18:12).

**STAND WITH THANKSGIVING.** *“Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving”* (Ps. 95:2). It is a great privilege to stand before the congregation and men who do so ought to express great thanksgiving for the opportunity. *“Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name”* (Ps. 100:4). Paul penned these words to Timothy, *“And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord,*

*who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry”* (1 Tim. 1:12). Count your blessings—we have so much to be thankful for as we stand before the congregation.

**STAND WITH JOY AND GLADNESS.** Everything we do in service unto our Lord ought to come from a heart of joy and gladness. A section of Deuteronomy 28 is devoted to curses which would overtake Israel, *“Because thou servedst not the Lord thy God with joyfulness, and with gladness of heart”* (v. 47). During the reign of King Hezekiah, as reported in 2 Chronicles, *“they sang praises with gladness”* (29:30) and *“kept the feast of unleavened bread seven days with great gladness”* (30:21), *“So there was great joy in Jerusalem”* (30:26). Those who stand before the congregation set the mood of the entire service. *“Serve the Lord with gladness”* (Ps. 100:2). Be like the Psalmist: *“I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord”* (Ps. 122:1).

**STAND AS AN EXAMPLE.**

Those who stand before the congregation serve in an exemplary role. The congregation will do no better than those who stand before them. If you want to see the members dress appropriately, then men standing before the congregation must do so! If you want the congregation to sing enthusiastically, then men must lead singing with enthusiasm and fervor! The congregation needs *“faithful”* and *“able”* men standing before them (2 Tim. 2:2). Paul wrote Timothy, *“be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity”* (1 Tim. 4:12). One must consider his example when standing before the congregation. Those not setting the proper example ought not be used publicly until they make the proper correction. *“Thou therefore which teachest another, teachest thou not thyself?”* (Rom. 2:21). It won't work for a man to say, *“But seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness”* (Mt. 6:33) when his example speaks contrary to that as he puts his family, his school, his work, and everything else before the Lord!

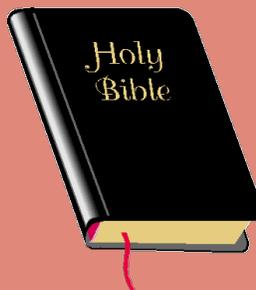
**The Terre Haute **SPEAKER**** is published weekly by the church of Christ at Terre Haute, Indiana.

**Assembling At:**

4017 E Margaret DR  
Terre Haute, IN 47803  
[Exit 11 (I-70) W on HWY 46,  
W on Margaret DR approx. 1 mile]

**Assembling Times:**

Sunday @ 10:00 a.m. & 3:00 p.m.  
Wednesday @ 7:00 p.m.



***We Speak Where the Bible Speaks.***

***We Are Silent Where the Bible Is Silent.***

***We Do Bible Things in Bible Ways.***

***Come be with us!***

**[www.churchofchristatterrehaute.com](http://www.churchofchristatterrehaute.com)**