

## Sermon in the Aisle

His T-shirt had holes in it. He wore faded jeans and no shoes. This was literally his wardrobe for his entire four years of college. But he was brilliant. Kind of esoteric and very, very bright. He became a Christian while attending college

Across the street from the campus was a well-dressed, very conservative church. It wanted to develop a ministry to the students, but wasn't sure how to go about it.

One day, Bill, the college student, decides to go there to worship. He walks in with no shoes, jeans, his T-shirt and wild hair. The service has already started, so Bill walks down the aisle looking for a seat. The church is completely packed and he can't find a seat. By now, people are really looking a bit uncomfortable, but no one says anything.

Bill gets closer and closer to the pulpit, and when he realizes there are no seats, he just squats down right on the carpet. By now, the people are really uptight, and the tension in the air is thick.

About this time, the minister realizes that from way at the back of the church, a deacon is slowly making his way toward Bill. Now the deacon is in his 80s, has silver-gray hair and a three-piece suit. A godly man, very elegant, very dignified, very courtly. He walks with a cane and, as he starts walking toward this boy, everyone is saying to themselves that you can't blame him for what he's going to do. How can you expect a man of his age and of his background to understand some college kid on the floor?

It takes a long time for the man to reach the boy. The church is utterly silent except for the clicking of the man's cane. All eyes are focused on him. You can't hear anyone breathing. The minister can't even preach the sermon until the deacon does what he has to do.

And now they see this elderly man drop his cane on the floor. With great difficulty, he lowers himself and sits down next to Bill and worships with him so he won't be alone. Everyone chokes up with emotion.

When the minister gains control, he says, "What I'm about to preach, you will never remember. What you have just seen, you will never forget."

A member of my Sunday School class sent me this story. Its author is unknown. In my opinion, however, it is an excerpt from "the living Bible" -- God's will performed in the lives of believers. It is a reminder to all of us that we must be careful how we live, because each one of us may be the only Bible that some people will ever read.

--Beecher Hunter