JUST WHAT DOES IT TAKE TO MOTIVATE US? By Al Diestelkamp

When I was working with the church in Davenport, Iowa, several years ago (before we were able to build our own building), we met in an old one-room schoolhouse. This arrangement seemed unique to a local television station, so it contacted us about coming to one of our assemblies and taping the service for a feature segment on their newscast.

We were happy to receive any publicity we could get, so we gave permission for people from the station to come to a Sunday morning worship. The day arrived and, for the first time, every man, woman and child in the congregation was there. Funny, isn’t it, how the possibility of being on television inspires people?

As we were about to begin our worship, the lights from the cameras were turned on and produced a surge that blew the *one* electrical fuse in the building. The news crew gathered up their equipment and discreetly left without any footage whatsoever.

This got me to thinking about what motivates people to attend worship and reminded me of a story I read that took place in a simpler time when Herbert Hoover was President of the United States.

President Hoover was traveling from Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, after attending an event at which he had given a speech. Accompanying him were his wife and one cabinet member. As they traveled by car on the following Sunday morning, they came to a little church building by the side of the road. Noting that it was time for worship, they decided to stop and attend the service.

Only thirteen people attended the service that morning. Those who did attend and the man in the pulpit were happily surprised when the President of the United States came in and sat down with them in worship. They were further pleased by his generous contribution when the offering was taken. Before nightfall, the whole community had heard of the honored guest at the little church, and many regretted not being there.

I wonder how many of us would miss services if we knew that a President of the United States would be in attendance? If only Christians would realize that One much greater than the President is present every time the saints meet, maybe they would make more effort to be there.

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