

The Ice-Bucket Challenge (2015)

Houston Hodges, for Writer's Corner on WLRH, Huntsville, AL USA

I heard about this great idea: you raise a lot of pledges from your friends and friendly foes, who will pay to see someone pour a bucket of ice water over your head. It is simple and stupid and lots of fun.

“Why not?” I asked, so I raised the question with my boss, who is also my pastor and friend, at the gallant little church where I work some. It seemed a long wait, though it wasn't: she would agree with the idea, if I got the approval of my doctor, and a call from his nurse to confirm it. She knows me well.

Nonetheless, it gave me reason to think: here I would be, eighty-four years old, with a colorful medical history, standing there drenched in ice water. What might happen? Well, a lot of things, mostly unwelcome, in fact.

A little more thought showed me the truth: my bold and dramatic decision, that heroic gesture, was nothing more than an effort to compensate for my eighty-fourness, and for not being able to be as active and busy and helpful as I had been! What I needed was not a drenching with ice, it was more appreciation of the grace of the Almighty, who can approve of me even when I'm aging.

I scrubbed the idea.

The Rev. Houston Hodges, a mostly retired Presbyterian minister, does a little work at the Big Cove Presbyterian Church in Hampton Cove, though not as much as he did in the past. Did I mention that he's eight-four?