

Take Me Out To The Ballgame

by Steve Higginbotham (March 7, 2018)

Because we lived close to Pittsburgh while growing up, my dad took me to a lot of Pirates baseball games when I was a boy. With the passing of time, most of the events that transpired at those games have been forgotten, but one game we attended has been etched deeply into my memory.

I would imagine I was about 10-12 years of age when about 10 men from church attended a Pirates game with my dad and me. We were all seated in the same row, taking up the first 12 seats from the aisle. My dad and I were sitting the farthest from the aisle. As you know, during the game, vendors walk up and down the aisles trying to sell, hotdogs, popcorn, soft-drinks, and beer as well.

At some point during the game, a man to my right hollered at the vender, wanting a beer. So the vender handed a beer to our friend sitting in the aisle seat and asked him to pass it down. He did, to our friend in the second seat, the second passed it to the third, and so on until it got to my dad. My dad crossed his arms and refused to pass it on. At this point, the vender began yelling at my dad, and the guy sitting on the other side of me who wanted his beer began yelling at my dad, but dad didn't budge. Finally, dad said, "I didn't come here to bartend, I came to watch a ballgame." At that point, our friend to the left of my dad, passed it back, and the next guy passed it back, and so on until it was returned to the vender. The vender was incredulous at what just happened, and continued to yell at the whole row of us, telling us to pass it on to the guy who wanted a beer. Finally, when he saw he wasn't going to make any progress with us, he went down to the row in front of us and had them pass the beer over to the guy in our row.

I'll have to admit that as a kid, I was embarrassed that day. People were yelling at my dad, and I just wanted to sink down in my seat. But looking back on this memory as an adult, I couldn't be more proud of my dad for taking a stand a living in harmony with his convictions.

I don't remember who won the game that day. In fact, I don't even remember who the Pirates were playing. But I do remember my dad's resolve and his refusal to compromise his convictions. Now that's a father/son memory at the ballpark I'll never forget!

By Steve Higginbotham, 2018. Permission is granted to copy these articles.