"Why We Need the Assembly"

Hebrews 10:24-25

5-31-2020

We missed you during the "Covid19 Pandemic!"

Ecclesia means "assembly"

***You & I have an obligation to be faithful to gathering with God's people in a local assembly!**

Why be committed to gathering faithfully?

I. WE NEED SPIRITUAL PROVOCATION (v. 24)

II. GOD EXPECTS US TO ASSEMBLE (v. 25)

A. We have an important <u>WARNING</u> to assemble (v. 25a)

B. We have an important <u>REASON</u> to assemble (v. 25b)

C. We have an important <u>TIME</u> to assemble (v. 25c)

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INTRODUCTION: *We missed you during the "Covid19 Pandemic!"*

(v. 24a)
"Am I my brother's keeper?" (Gen. 4:9)
Yes, I am!

Example of my obligations as the oldest brother to my brothers and sister while growing up.

Salvation in Christ unites us to a new family. The church is a family.

We need to genuinely take care of each other in the family of God!
How should we take care of each other?
See: Romans

I. **BE MEMBERS with one another (Rom.12:4-5)**
(A plea to contribute our gift to each other)

II. **HONOR one another (12:10)**
(A plea to show family honor to each other)

III. **LOVE one another (13:8)**
(A plea to pay the dept of love to each other)

IV. **EDIFY one another (14:13,19)**
(A plea to be a stepping stone, not a stumbling block to each other)

V. **BEAR with one another (15:1)**
(A plea for patience toward each other)

VI. **PLEASE one another (15:2-4)**
(A plea for unselfishness toward each other)

VII. **UNITE with one another (15:5-6)**
(A plea for oneness with each other)

VIII. **ACCEPT one another (15:7)**
(A plea for impartiality toward each other)

IX. **ADMONISH one another (15:14)**
(A plea for loving confrontation with each other)

X. **WARMLY GREET one another (16:16)**
(A plea to show loving affection to each other)

"Let us" - a rousing exhortation (Greek - a hortatory subjunctive).

"Let us" - Note the three times this phrase appears in the context, showing three obligations we have:

V. 22 - "Let us draw near" (our obligation to our prayer life)

V. 23 - "Let us hold fast" (our obligation to our personal life)

V. 24 - "Let us consider one another" (our obligation to our public life with fellow believers)

"Consider" = to pay careful attention to one another; to focus our thoughts on the needs of others; to take interest in one another; being thoughtful or considerate of others is the idea.

In context, what type of "consideration" would the Hebrew Christians need to have toward each other? Answer: To not allow their brother Christians to draw back into Judaism!

"One another" = shows the reciprocal nature of the consideration. Showing consideration or being thoughtful is not a one-way street. It is our mutual obligation.

As not "Who is being considerate of me?" but "Whom am I being considerate of?"

"Whose need am I focusing my thoughts on? Who am I empathizing with? To whom am I sharing thoughtful words or extending thoughtful deeds?"

How often we tend to be caught up with our own problems and needs and become inconsiderate of others.

Ecclesia means "assembly"

***You & I have an obligation to be faithful to gathering with God's people in a local assembly!**

Why be committed to gathering faithfully?

I. WE NEED SPIRITUAL PROVOCATION (v. 24)

Gal. 6:1-2 - "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself lest thou also be tempted. Bear ye one another's burdens and so fulfill the law of Christ."

"To provoke" - a strong word, meaning to incite (EX; of a mob); to spur on (EX: of a horse); to stimulate a response; to stir up to action; to irritate; to push someone or practically compel them into doing something.

"Provoke" - The Greek word is used in Acts 15:39 to speak of a sharp contention; in Acts 17:16 of a heart-wrenching stirring; in Eph. 6:4 of a father provoking his son.

ILLUS: How there were times when John Deseno (my bus captain) would irritate me with his concern and Saturday visits, yet it paid off! And I today thank him for loving me enough to keep after me.

I used to have the attitude: "I don't want to be a bother to them." "So what if "so and so" has missed church for one year, I'll let God convict him/her about it."

Then it dawned on me that perhaps I just might be the tool God uses to bring conviction to him/her.

The biggest disservice we could ever do toward each other is to never care enough to say: "Brother, I'm concerned about you, we've missed you at church . . . etc.

"Love and good works" do not come "naturally." We all continually rely on each other's encouragement, rebuke, and concern to demonstrate such virtues.

NOTE: The word order is not "good works and love" but "love and good works." Why? Because good works flow out of an attitude of love. Love is the motivation to good works.

"To love" - an agapa love toward God and man (Mt. 22:37-39); having such love will fulfill every law! (v. 40 - cp. Rom. 13:8 ["Owe no man anything, but to love on another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law"]; and Gal. 5:14 ["For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this: Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself"]). "Good works" would include:

--Meeting the financial needs of others
--Sending a card to an ill patient
--Caring for the fatherless and widow
--Preaching the Gospel to the lost
--Forgiving your enemies; overcoming evil with good

One main reason God saved you is that you might do good works (Eph. 2:10; Mt. 5:16; cp. I Pet. 2:12).

Basically, to provoke others unto "good works" is to provoke them to Christ-likeness, because good works were the undeniable trademark of Christ's ministry.

True love may confront and love may rebuke, but true love never neglects.

--Passive Christianity is unBiblical!

--Laissez faire ("hands off") Christianity is sin!

--Being an isolationist, or spiritual hermit or monk is a violation of Heb. 10:24

II. GOD EXPECTS US TO ASSEMBLE (v. 25)

After the exhortation of V. 24, the question now is: "How can we provoke one another?" "In what setting does this mutual encouragement take place?"

Answer: In the assembly (v. 25)

When a believer becomes lax in his assembling with God's people, other believers are to speak to him about it and provoke him to do what is right.

A. We have an important WARNING to assemble (v. 25a)

"Forsake" = to leave behind; to neglect something or forget about it.

Just as Christ will never abandon His bride (Heb. 13:5), so we should never abandon our brothers.

To forsake the assembly is to be inconsiderate of others (Note: the participle "not forsaking" is modifying the verb consider [v. 24]).

"The assembling" = the gathering together ("epi-sunagoga"). This word points to a specific gathering; and an organized gathering.

"As the manner of some is" - Skipping church is not merely a contemporary problem, but has been a frustration to pastors throughout church history.

"Manner" = habit or custom, a pattern of life

"Of some" = thank God not every believer has this problem; just "some"

The best habit any believer could have is to be faithful to at least each of the main services of their church.

Why do people forsake the assembly?

1. Because they are not saved
   I Jn. 2:19 - "They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they

had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us."

2. Because of sin
   a. Laziness
   b. Worldliness
   c. Embarrassment (to face their friends after they became unfaithful)
   d. Because of ignorance (of the importance of church attendance or of God's command)

A Christian who says he worships God every Sunday morning on the golf course is really worshipping golf on God's course!

Prepare for Sunday on Saturday. Beware: the devil begins working on Saturday to disrupt your Sunday!

Excuses that keep believers from church:

1. Headaches, muscle aches (SEE: Green ILL. #171)
2. Visitors at home
3. Inadequate clothing
4. Common colds
5. The weather (too cold, hot, rainy)
6. Too tired
7. Children have the sniffles

Let's declare next Sunday a "No-excuse-to-stay-home" Sunday!

What do you miss when you miss?

--You miss out on perhaps hearing the very message you needed to hear

--You miss out on being a blessing to someone else, by your words of encouragement or by simply the encouragement that your presence brings (ILLUS: the Empty Restaurant)

Never minimize the importance of your presence

Ask yourself, "Is my example of faithfulness to my Christian brothers a stepping stone, or a stumbling block?"

B. We have an important REASON to assemble (v. 25b)

"Exhorting" - a word intended to convey the opposite of forsaking. Rather

than forsaking one another, we should be exhorting one another.

The main purpose of church is exhortation! That is, encouragement and comfort that comes from the public preaching of God's Word!

Such exhortation is God's way of equipping each church member to serve Him (SEE: Eph. 4:11-12)

"Most people think of the church as a drama, with the minister as the chief actor, God as the prompter, and the laity as the critic. What is actually the case is that the congregation is the chief actor, the minister is the prompter, and God is the critic" (James Kennedy).

We all need exhortation! Heb. 3:13 - "But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin."

"It is interesting to note that the emphasis here is not on what a believer gets from the assembly, but rather on what he can contribute (give) to the assembly" (Wiersbe, p. 115)

So many people today are not looking for a place to serve but for a place to be served.

There is strength in knowing we are not alone. We have the greatest support group available! We are a co-dependent and unified body!

C. We have an important TIME to assemble (v. 25c)

"An so much the more" = And all the more

The Lord is telling us that assembling will be all the more important, as ye see the day approaching.

What is meant by the phrase "the Day?"

ANSWER: "The Day of the Lord"

The phrase "the day" is a technical phrase when it occurs without an antecedent, pointing to a most momentous Day; a great and awesome Day; a vitally important Day - namely, The Day of Christ's return (Rapture) and the wrath of God which follows.
"The Day" = the Day of Christ's return (SEE: heb. 10:37)

Rom. 13:11-12 - "And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to

awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light."

II Thes. 2:2 - "That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand."

Phil. 1:6, 10; 2:16 - "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ" . . . That ye may approve things that are excellent, that ye may be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ . . . Holding forth the word of life; that I may rejoice int eh day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain."

"Ye <u>see</u> the day <u>approaching</u>" - The mention of us "<u>seeing</u>" the time of Christ's return drawing near is indicative of the fact that there will be clear, visible indications that Christ's coming is near; yea, even prophetic fulfillments which will <u>precede</u> the Day of the Rapture.

SEE: II Thes. 2:1-3. <u>Two</u> definite signs that will transpire <u>before</u> the Day of Christ are:

1) Apostasy (v. 3a; cp. I Tim. 4:1_

II Tim. 3:1-4 - "But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come: For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God"

2) Antichrist's appearance (v. 3b)

If there was ever a time when assembling together was important, it is today! The day is approaching! Apostasy is on the horizon; the greatest onslaught of the devil's deceit and destruction is yet ahead. You need to learn God's Word! Be faithful to its proclamation. Arm yourself for what lies ahead!

CONCLUSION:

ILLUS: of the <u>fireplace</u> (Green #170)

Don't Just Join any church:

What is a Biblical Church? What does a Biblical Church look like, sound like, act like? The Apostle Paul in the Pastoral Epistles of I & II Timothy and Titus give us the answer:

A Church that Glorifies God is Biblically:

1. **B**ible Based

A Church should be characterized by…

a. Commitment to Bible Authority *2 Tim 3:16-17*
b. Accurate Bible Interpretation *2 Tim 2:15-16*
c. Doctrinal Bible Preaching *1 Tim 4:13 1 Tim 4:16 2 Tim 4:2-4*

A Church that Glorifies God has Biblical:

2. **I**ntegrity

a. Ministerial Integrity
b. Moral Integrity *Titus 1:16*
c. Doctrinal Integrity *Titus 2:7-8*
c. Financial Integrity *1 Tim 6:9-11*

A Church that Glorifies God is Biblically:

3. **B**alanced

a. Balanced in Evangelism
(Reaching all People; of every race or color) *1 Tim 2:4 Titus 2:11*
b. Balanced is our Message
Salvation is only by Grace Titus 3:5 1 Tim 1:15
Salvation will be followed by Good Works Titus 2:14 Titus 3:8

A Church that Glorifies God has Biblical:

4. **L**eadership

a. Godly Pastoral Leadership *1 Tim 3:1-7*
b. Exemplary Leadership *1 Tim 4:12 2 Tim 2:24-25*
c. Women Should not occupy the position of Pastoral Leadership in the Church *1 Tim 2:11-14*

A Church that Glorifies God is Biblically:

5. **I**ndividual-minded

People orientated ministry. Focus is on People and not Programs

The Mature men minister to men 2 Tim 2:2
The Mature women minister to women Titus 2:4-5
No Racial Prejudice, or partiality in our ministry 1 Tim 5:21 Titus 3:2

A Church that Glorifies God is Biblically:

6. Christ-centered
   a. Christ-centered in our Worship
   b. Christ-centered in our Ordinances (Lord's supper & Baptism)
   c. Christ-centered in our evangelism *1 Tim 1:15*

A Church that Glorifies God has Biblical:

7. Associations

Personal, Moral, & Ecclesiastical separation are vital to a churches holiness.
2 Tim 2:22 2 Tim 2:19 2 Tim 2:4

A Church that Glorifies God is Biblically:

8. Loving *1 Tim*