

Why Assemble with the Saints?

INTRODUCTION.

- A. If you are a Christian, then assembling with the saints should be a crucial part of your life. But, do you know why?
 - 1. Do you attend church services because it is basically a tradition for you and your family?
 - 2. Do you attend church services because your friends attend church with you?
 - 3. Do you attend church services because of your children?
 - 4. Do you attend church services just enough to keep the preacher off of your back?
- B. With this lesson, I will show you the proper reasons why you should be present at every assembly of this local group.
 - 1. Am I referring to those assemblies which call the whole congregation together, such as Sunday Bible classes and services, Wednesday night services, gospel meetings, etc.
 - 2. I am not referring to studies at people's home or special studies at the building which might be considered optional. While such studies would help each and everyone of us, they are not studies bound upon every member of the congregation. They would be studies offered to help further strengthen any and all who would like to participate.
- C. Let us begin with the first reason why we assemble together.

I. WE UNDERSTAND WHAT IS IMPORTANT.

- A. We are to seek first the kingdom of God. (Matthew 6:33)
 - 1. The reason we are to seek first the kingdom of God is because we are the servants of God. It is our duty. (Luke 17:10)
 - 2. As servants of God, we know that our duty is to fear God and keep His commandments. This should be the sum of our existence. (Ecclesiastes 12:13-14)
 - 3. Since we have chosen to fear God and keep His commandments, we have, therefore, left behind the ways of sin. We have been raised with Christ. We should put our wants and desires upon heavenly things. (Colossians 3:1-2)
- B. If we are seeking first the kingdom of God, dutifully fearing Him and keeping His

commandments, then we know what is important. If we know what is important, then we will assemble with the saints without fail.

II. WE WORSHIP AND PRAISE OUR HEAVENLY FATHER.

- A. God's followers have always offered up praise and worship.
 - 1. Abel offered an acceptable "offering" to the Lord. (Genesis 4:1-5)
 - 2. Abraham worshiped the Lord.
 - a. Genesis 12:7,8 - built an altar in the middle of Bethel and Ai
 - b. Genesis 13:1-4 - he returns to the altar and again calls upon the name of the Lord
 - c. Genesis 22:5-14 - he leaves the men traveling with him and goes to "worship" God.
 - 3. After the establishment of the law of Moses, worshiping God took on an established pattern. The priesthood was given charge of presiding over the worshiping of God. (Exodus 25-31; 35-40)
- B. Under the New Covenant of Jesus Christ, we are to offer up praise and worship.
 - 1. Consider the following examples: Ephesians 5:19 and Colossians 3:16
 - a. Ephesians 5:19 shows that we can praise and worship through songs.
 - (1) Psalms and hymns are songs of praise, pious songs.
 - (2) Paul also wrote, "(S)inging and making melody in your heart to the Lord." Notice, we are singing *to the Lord*. The psalms and hymns (songs of praise) are to be sung *to the Lord*.
 - b. Colossians 3:16 teaches that we can praise and worship through songs.
 - (1) Again we see psalms and hymns, which are songs of praise, pious songs.
 - (2) Paul also wrote, "(S)inging with grace in your hearts to the Lord." Notice, we are to sing with grace in our hearts *to the Lord*. The psalms and hymns are to be sung *to the Lord*.
 - 2. Another example of praise and worship is in I Corinthians 11:23-26. Here we see that when we partake of the Lord's supper, we are proclaiming His death.
 - a. The Greek word translated as "proclaim" is *kataggello* which means "1) to announce, declare, promulgate, make known 2) to proclaim publicly, publish . . ." (Enhanced Strong's Lexicon)

- b. This proclaiming or announcing the Lord's death and its significance is, in and of itself, a form of praise. We give honor to the Lord for the great sacrifice that He made for our sins.
- C. When we assemble together, we offer up praise and worship unto God. Let us never forsake that responsibility and privilege.

III. WE COME TOGETHER TO BE EDIFIED.

- A. We are edified by the teaching of the Word, the sermon or lessons.
 - 1. I Corinthians 14 makes clear the purpose of saints assembling together. The purpose of the assemblies is to edify the church. "Edify" is translated from the Greek word *oikodome* which means "1) (the act of) building, building up 2) metaph. edifying, edification 2a) the act of one who promotes another's growth in Christian wisdom, piety, happiness, holiness." (Enhanced Strong's Lexicon)
 - a. Verse 3 - "*But he who prophesies speaks **edification** and exhortation and comfort to men.*" (NKJV) While prophesying was a spiritual gift, it apparently served the same purpose as one who preaches the Gospel without the spiritual gift. What they taught through the spiritual gift of prophecy, we teach through the use of God's written word.
 - b. Verse 12 - "*Even so you, since you are zealous for spiritual gifts, let it be for the **edification** of the church that you seek to excel.*" (NKJV) Paul reminds the brethren that, not the gift, but the edification of the church was the most important concern.
 - c. Verse 26 - "*How is it then, brethren? Whenever you come together, each of you has a psalm, has a teaching, has a tongue, has a revelation, has an interpretation. Let all things be done for **edification.***" (NKJV) Again, we see the stress is being placed upon the end result of edification, not the gift. The end results are still the same today. All things are to be done for the edification of the saints.
 - 2. There are other examples showing the saints being taught the word.
 - a. Paul told Timothy, "*Till I come, give attention to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine.*" (I Timothy 4:13, NKJV)
 - b. Paul also told Timothy, "*And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.*" (II Timothy 2:2, NKJV)
 - c. In Acts 2:42, we read, "*And they continued steadfastly in the*

apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers." (NKJV)

- d. In Acts 20:7, we also read, "*Now on the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul, ready to depart the next day, spoke to them and continued his message until midnight.*" (NKJV)
3. Not only were the saints taught the word, but they were also rebuked and corrected when they were wrong.
 - a. Paul told Timothy, "*Those who are sinning rebuke in the presence of all, that the rest also may fear.*" (I Timothy 5:20, NKJV)
 - b. Preachers are to always stand ready to preach the word. (II Timothy 4:2-5)
 - c. All scriptures were given for doctrine, reproof, correction, and instructions in righteousness. All for the purpose of equipping the Christian to properly serve the Lord. (II Timothy 3:16-17)
- B. We are edified by the songs that we sing. (Colossians 3:16 - *admonish one another*)
 1. Make sure the songs are scriptural.
 2. Make sure you listen to the words and apply their messages within your life.
- C. We are edified by the remembering of the death of Jesus Christ. (I Corinthians 11:17-33)
 1. In Corinth, the members of the church had turned the Lord's supper into a common meal. They were eating to be full, not eating to proclaim the Lord's death.
 2. Because of their perversion of the Lord's supper, the act lost its intended meaning and edification. Therefore many were "weak and sick among you, and many sleep."
- D. When we assemble together, it is with the purpose of being edified or built up and made stronger.

IV. WE COME TOGETHER TO EDIFY.

- A. When you assemble with the saints, you have a responsibility to edify your fellow brethren. (Hebrews 10:24-25)
 1. Paul wrote, "*And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, . . .*" (vs 24)
 - a. Paul is not telling you to be stirred up to love and good works.

Instead, Paul is telling you to stir up your brethren to love and good works.

- b. In other words, the question is not are you being stirred up to love and good works, but are you stirring up others to love and good works. Or, are you simply a taker or a giver? Paul is telling you to be a giver.
2. Paul wrote, “. . . *not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, . . .*” (vs 25)
 - a. In the first century, they had Christians who would forsake the assembling of the saints, just as we do today.
 - b. When you forsake the assembling of the saints, you cannot exhort others.
 - c. It is your responsibility to edify your brethren. If you do your part to edify your brethren, then you will be edified and made stronger.
3. You need to think about your responsibility tonight or Wednesday night. Think about the fact that you have a responsibility to provoke you fellow brethren to love and good works. This is your responsibility to edify.
4. Instead of asking, “What will the church do to edify me? What can the church do for me?” Ask yourself, “What can I do to help edify the church? What can I do for the church?”

V. THE QUESTION: DO I HAVE TO ATTEND EVERY ASSEMBLY?

- A. “Do I have to attend every assembly?” is a question that a faithful Christian will NOT ask.
 1. When a Christian contemplates and takes to heart what is truly important, he will not ask such a question. He knows the answer for he knows what is truly important.
 2. When a Christian considers the praise and worship that is offered to God every time we assemble, he will not ask such a question. He knows the answer for he knows how great of a privilege it is to worship God; he understands his duty to offer such praise and worship.
 3. When a Christian considers the edification which results from assembling with the saints, he will not ask such a question. He knows that he needs the edification. He knows that he needs to be made stronger.
 4. When a Christian considers his responsibility to edify other Christians, he will not ask such a question. He knows that other souls are relying upon him to help make them strong; to help lead them out of sin or help them to stay

away from sin.

- B. “Do I have to attend every assembly?” is a question asked by a weak Christian who is in sore need of prayer and edification.
- C. Instead, let us have the attitude of the psalmist who wrote, “*I was glad when they said to me, ‘Let us go into the house of the Lord.’*” (Psalms 122:1, NKJV)

CONCLUSION.

- A. Why should you be assembling with the saints at every opportunity?
 1. Because you know that serving God is the more important element of your life.
 2. Because you know the privilege of offering worship and praise to God. You also know that such worship is your duty as a servant of God.
 3. Because you know that you need weekly edification in order to maintain your faithful life as a Christian. You also realize that other people are counting on you to help edify them in their faith.
- B. If you have been guilty of forsaking the assemblies of the saints, then now is the time to ask God to forgive you. After you ask God to forgive you, follow your repent change with righteous action by assembling together with the saints.
- C. Remember, we live in a world full of sin and ungodliness. Let us know to where and to whom we can turn for help, strength, and support as we travel together towards eternity in Heaven.

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