

Why Should We Go To Church

A Teaching Outline



Compiled By Dr. Harold Bollinger

Why Go To Church

It is essential for spiritual growth

Forsake not the assembling of ourselves together.

Hebrews 10:25

Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching,

We have significant privileges associated with our new life in Christ:

- (1) We have personal access to God through Christ and can draw near to him without an elaborate system (10:22);
- (2) We may grow in faith, overcome doubts and questions, and deepen our relationship with God (10:23);
- (3) We may enjoy motivation from one another (10:24);
- (4) We may worship together (10:25).

To neglect Christian meetings is to give up the encouragement and help of other Christians. We gather together to share our faith and to strengthen one another in the Lord.

As we get closer to the day when Christ will return, we will face many spiritual struggles, and even times of persecution. Anti-Christian forces will grow in strength. Difficulties should never be excuses for missing church services. Rather, as difficulties arise, we should make an even greater effort to be faithful in attendance.

Where two or three come to worship, Jesus is present.

Matthew 18:20

For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.

Jesus looked ahead to a new day when he would be present with his followers not in body, but through his Holy Spirit. In the body of believers (the church), the sincere agreement of two people in prayer is more powerful than the superficial agreement of thousands, because Christ's Holy Spirit is with them.

Two or more believers, *filled with the Holy Spirit*, will pray according to God's will, not their own; thus, their requests will be granted.

Keep a day holy to the Lord.

Exodus 20:8

Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.

The Sabbath was a day set aside for rest and worship. God commanded a Sabbath because human beings need to spend unhurried time in worship and rest each week. A God who is concerned enough to provide a day each week for us to rest is indeed wonderful.

To observe a regular time of rest and worship in our fast-paced world demonstrates how important God is to us, and it gives us the extra benefit of refreshing our spirits. Don't neglect God's provision.

You receive faith by hearing the word.

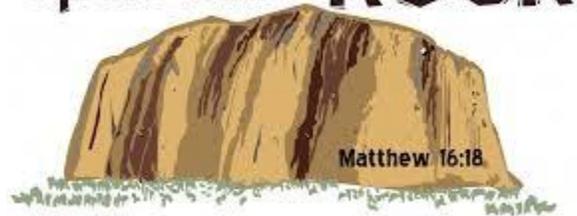
Romans 10:17

So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

Many Jews who looked for the Messiah refused to believe in him when he came. God offered his salvation to the Gentiles ("people who were not looking for me"); thus, many Gentiles who didn't even know about a Messiah found and believed in him.

Some religious people are spiritually blind, while those who have never been in a church are sometimes the most responsive to God's message. Because appearances are deceiving, and we can't see into people's hearts, beware of judging beforehand who will respond to the Good News and who will not.

Upon This ROCK



I Will Build My Church

Continue stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine.

Acts 2:42

And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.

About 3,000 people became new believers when Peter preached the Good News about Christ. These new Christians were united with the other believers, taught by the apostles, and included in the prayer meetings and fellowship. New believers in Christ need to be in groups, where they can learn God's Word, pray, and mature in the faith.

If you have just begun a relationship with Christ, seek out other believers for fellowship, prayer, and teaching. This is the way to grow.

Meeting together sharpeneth the countenance.

Proverbs 27:17

Iron sharpeneth iron; so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend.

Mental sharpness comes from being around good people. And a meeting of minds can help people see their ideas with new clarity, refine them, and shape them into brilliant insights. This requires partners who can challenge one another and stimulate thought—people who focus on the idea without involving their egos in the discussion; people who know how to attack the thought and not the thinker. Two friends who bring their ideas together can help each other become sharper.

Provoke one another to love and to good works.

Hebrews 10:24

And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works:

We have significant privileges associated with our new life in Christ:
(1) We have personal access to God through Christ and can draw near to him without an elaborate system (10:22);

(2) We may grow in faith, overcome doubts and questions, and deepen our relationship with God (10:23);

(3) We may enjoy motivation from one another (10:24);

(4) We may worship together (10:25).

Submit to those who instruct you.

Hebrews 13:17

Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that [is] unprofitable for you.

The Israelites failed to enter the Promised Land because they did not believe in God's protection, and they did not believe that God would help them conquer the giants in the land (see Numbers 14-15). So God sent them into the wilderness to wander for 40 years. This was an unhappy alternative to the wonderful gift he had planned for them. Lack of trust in God always prevents us from receiving his best.

Better to dwell in the house of God.

Psalms 84:10

For a day in thy courts [is] better than a thousand. I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness.

The pilgrimage to the Temple passed through the barren Valley of Weeping.

No specific valley has been identified. The "weeping" may have been a symbolic reference to the times of struggles and tears through which people must pass on their way to meet God.

Growing strong in God's presence is often preceded by a journey through barren places in our lives. The person who loves to spend time with God will see his or her adversity as an opportunity to experience God's faithfulness even more deeply.

If you are walking through your own Valley of Weeping today, be sure your pilgrimage leads toward God, not away from him.

All the members together make one body.

1 Corinthians 12:12

For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also [is] Christ.

Paul compares the body of Christ to a human body. Each part has a specific function that is necessary to the body as a whole. The parts are different for a purpose, and in their differences they must work together. Christians must avoid two common errors:

- (1) Being proud of their abilities, or
- (2) Thinking they have nothing to give to the body of believers.

Instead of comparing ourselves to one another, we should use our different gifts, together, to spread the Good News of salvation.

Seek God's blessings in the house of the Lord.

Psalms 27:4

One thing have I desired of the LORD, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the LORD, and to enquire in his temple.

By the "house of the LORD" and "his Temple," David could be referring to the Tabernacle in Gibeon, to the sanctuary he had built to house the Ark of the Covenant, or to the Temple that his son Solomon was to build. David probably had the Temple in mind because he made many of the plans for it (1 Chronicles 22). David may also have used the word *Temple* to refer to the presence of the Lord. David's greatest desire was to live in God's presence each day of his life. Sadly, this is not the greatest desire of many who claim to be believers.



Exhort one another daily.

Hebrews 3:13

But exhort one another daily, while it is called to day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.

The Jewish Christians were being ridiculed and persecuted by Jews who didn't believe in Jesus the Messiah. Most of the book of Hebrews tells them how Christ is greater than the sacrificial system. Here the writer drives home the point of his lengthy argument: It may be necessary to leave the "camp" and suffer with Christ.

To be outside the camp meant to be unclean—in the days of the Exodus, those who were ceremonially unclean had to stay outside the camp. But Jesus suffered humiliation and uncleanness outside the Jerusalem gates on their behalf.

The time had come for Jewish Christians to declare their loyalty to Christ above any other loyalty, to choose to follow the Messiah whatever suffering that might entail. They needed to move outside the safe confinement of their past, their traditions, and their ceremonies to live for Christ. What holds you back from complete loyalty to Jesus Christ?

Present your body as a living sacrifice.

Romans 12:1

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, [which is] your reasonable service.

When sacrificing an animal according to God's law, a priest would kill the animal, cut it in pieces, and place it on the altar. Sacrifice was important, but even in the Old Testament God made it clear that obedience from the heart was much more important (see 1 Samuel 15:22; Psalm 40:6; Amos 5:21 -24). God wants us to offer ourselves, not animals, as *living* sacrifices—daily laying aside our own desires to follow him, putting all our energy and resources at his disposal and trusting him to guide us. We do this out of gratitude that our sins have been forgiven.

The Scripture is given by the inspiration of God.

2 Timothy 3:16

All scripture [is] given by inspiration of God, and [is] profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:

The Bible is not a collection of stories, fables, myths, or merely human ideas about God. It is not a human book. Through the Holy Spirit, God revealed his person and plan to certain believers, who wrote down his message for his people (2 Peter 1:20, 21). This process is known as *inspiration*. The writers wrote from their own personal, historical, and cultural contexts. Although they used their own minds, talents, language, and style, they wrote what God wanted them to write. Scripture is completely trustworthy because God was in control of its writing. Its words are entirely authoritative for our faith and life. The Bible is "God-breathed." Read it, and use its teachings to guide your conduct.

Declare the name of the Lord in the midst of the church.

Hebrews 2:12

Saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee.

We who have been set apart for God's service, cleansed, and made holy (sanctified) by Jesus now have the same Father he has, so he has made us his brothers and sisters. Various psalms look forward to Christ and his work in the world. Here the writer quotes a portion of Psalm 22, a messianic psalm. Because God has adopted all believers as his children, Jesus calls them his brothers and sisters.



Prayer to salvation.

Lord God in heaven, I come to you in the name of Jesus.

I acknowledge to you that I am a sinner, and

I am sorry for my sins and the life that I have lived;

I need your forgiveness.

I believe that your only begotten Son Jesus Christ shed His precious blood on the cross at Calvary and died for my sins, and I am now willing to turn from my sin.

Your Holy Word declares in Romans 10:9 that if we confess the Lord our God and believe in our hearts that God raised Jesus from the dead, we shall be saved.

Right now I confess Jesus as the Lord of my soul. With my heart, I believe that God raised Jesus from the dead.

This very moment I accept Jesus Christ as my own personal Savior and according to His Word, right now I am saved. Amen

References:

Holy Bible: King James Translation

New American Standard Bible

Additional comments and charts are taken from: *Life Application Study Bible*. Illinois: Tyndale House 2007. Print