

The Pastor's Corner Vol. 4

April, 2009

(Revised as of July, 2014)

The Importance of Attending Church



*.... I felt I had to write and urge you to contend for the faith
that was once for all entrusted to the saints. Jude 1:3 NIV*

The Importance of Attending Church

Hebrews 10:25 (NIV) “*Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another – and all the more as you see the day approaching.*”

Acts 2:42-46 (NIV) “*They devoted themselves to the apostles teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. (v43) Everyone was filled with awe, and many wonders and miraculous signs were done by the apostles. (v44) All the believers were together and had everything in common. (v45) Selling their possessions and goods, they gave to any one as he had need. (v46) Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts...*”

There are many that profess faith in Jesus Christ and boldly declare him to be both their Savior and Lord, yet refuse to attend church on a regular basis. You hear many of them say, “*I don’t need to go to church to be a Christian.*” Still others say, “*I read my bible and lead a clean life so I don’t need to go to church.*” The list of excuses people give for not attending church is far too lengthy to put into one article. I’ve always said, excuses are like belly buttons, everybody has one. However, it is true that going to church does not make us Christians any more than going to McDonald’s makes us a hamburger. According to the bible, salvation is the gift of God that is not based on our works (which includes going to church) lest we should be able to boast that we’ve earned our salvation through a system of works or something we’ve done. Simply put, we are saved by God’s grace through faith in Jesus Christ alone; we need not add anything, like going to church, to Jesus’ finished work on the cross. **Ephesians 2:8-9** (NIV) says, “*For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith – and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God – not by works, so that no one can boast.*” However, for me, it’s pretty difficult to believe a true, born again Christian would refuse to attend church on a regular basis. To the Christian, the church is filled with his/her extended family, and like with our biological family, although we may sometimes disagree, we should never divide with our church family by not attending church. The fact of the matter is that the writer of Hebrews, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, clearly tells us we should not give up going to church. **Hebrews 10:25** (NIV) says, “*Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another – and all the more as you see the day approaching.*”

So why is it important for us to regularly attend a healthy well-balanced church? Here are just a few reasons to consider:

1. **For Preparation of Works of Service**

It is through regular attendance in a healthy well-balanced church that we are prepared for works of service. **Ephesians 4:11-12** (NIV) says, *“it was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God’s people for works of service, so that the body of Christ, may be built up.”* Preparation for works of service requires, at the very least, two-way conversation coupled with hands-on training from within the walls of a church or equal. Preparation for works of service cannot be achieved by watching T.V. preachers, listening to the radio preachers, or staying home alone reading your bible, you must attend a healthy well-balanced church to be prepared for works of service.

2. **To Use/Apply Your Spiritual Gift(s)**

I believe every born again believer has at least one (1) spiritual gift. These gifts are different from the natural talents we receive at birth. These gifts are given by the Spirit of God for the sole purpose of edifying of the body of Christ, the church. **1 Peter 4:10** (NIV) says, *“Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God’s grace in its various forms.”* Our spiritual gift(s) are not given to us for use on the golf course, at the ball game, at the laundry or wherever else we may choose to be on Sunday mornings instead of being in church. God designed our gifts solely for the edifying of the body of Christ, which is the church. It is difficult if not impossible to use most spiritual gifts without regularly attending church.

3. **The Lord’s Supper (Communion)**

Every believer, to commemorate the death and suffering of our Lord and Savior, should partake of the Lord’s supper with the family of God, the church (**1Corinthians 11:23-26**).

4. **Accountability**

It has been said that *“a life without accountability is a life in danger, especially for the Christian.”* Accountability may be best defined as a checks and balance system we allow to protect us from spiritual suicide and/or the devil’s schemes. When we are accountable to a healthy well-balanced church, it means we willingly allow the pastor(s) and/or leadership of the church to monitor our attendance, our spiritual growth, our life style as it relates to our biological family and our church family, our stewardship as it relates to our time, gifting, giving and

our overall relationship with the Lord. When we allow ourselves to be accountable to a healthy well-balanced church, we usually see growth spiritually. As a result, our marriages will be healthier, and all our relationships will improve and we will find ourselves more usable for the things of God. Failure to be accountable to a healthy well-balanced church usually stunts the growth of the Christian. Even worse, some Christians that have refused to be accountable to a healthy well-balanced church have turned their backs on God while others became members of cults or cultic ministries that have destroyed their lives, all because they refused to be accountable to those that God appointed to love and watch over them.

5. **Fellowship**

One of the keys to becoming a well-rounded Christian is regular fellowship with other Christians. One of the things the early Church devoted itself to in order to deal with persecution was regular fellowship. In **Acts 2:42** (NIV) we read, “*They devoted themselves to the apostle teaching and to the **fellowship**, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.*” There is no substitute for fellowship. No Church has unity without it, no church is able to weather the inevitable storms and/or persecution without it and no Christian can know those that labor amongst them without some form of regular fellowship. In fact, it is through regular fellowship that Christians learn how to serve each other the way God says they should (**Galatians 5:13**).

6. **Encouragement**

No Christian can honestly say that they have never had times when they felt unsaved, useless and ready to give up. It is at these times when we all need to be encouraged by our brothers and sisters in Christ that have been through the same thing. In Church, we are encouraged by the testimonies of the saints that God delivered from similar or the same circumstances as ours, and through the preaching and teaching of God’s word.

7. **Teaching**

In **Matthew 4:4** (NIV) Jesus said, “*....man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.*” The word of God is every Christian’s source of spiritual food, without it they die spiritually. While you can hear preaching and teaching on the radio and television from your home, you can’t ask the teacher any questions from your home. The teaching in church is a two way conversation between the teacher and the student (s). That is, you can ask questions or ask for clarity on a subject that you came across during the week.

You can't do this with T.V. preachers/teachers, their conversation and message is one way only, they are talking to you.

Finally, the Good Shepherd does not want any of his sheep wandering away from the flock that usually watches each other's back. Alone, every Christian is easy prey for the devil's schemes. Purposely avoiding church for long periods of time is the perfect recipe for a spiritual shipwreck. Therefore, if you love the Lord and want to be obedient to him, get yourself to church regularly, it's important if you want to stay healthy spiritually!!!

God Bless,
Pastor D.M. Duncan

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