

The Assembly / Church - Why Bother?

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[0 : 00] And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is, but exhorting one another.

And so much the more as you see the day approaching. Of course, it's talking about the day of the Lord, the return of our Saviour. What's so important about the church?

Ephesians 5, 25, it says, Christ also loved the church and gave himself for it. And Acts 20, verse 8, of our Saviour, it says, the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.

So if the Lord Jesus cared enough about the church, he loved the church enough to suffer, to bleed and die for it, shouldn't we love the church? Shouldn't we love the assembling together?

Really, it's a blessing for us to have this fellowship one with another. And it's good for us. It's good for our faith. It's good for those who are about us. And it's a time that we can enjoy, we can have that real community with our brothers and sisters, with others who love the Saviour, to worship, to enrich our soul from the truth of his word.

[1 : 10] And it's a demonstration of our faith in action. As a Christian, we want to be a part of that visible expression of his church. It matters. And it's something that we should care about.

We should care about other Christians too. Because as I say, church isn't all about what's in it for me. Sometimes we come or we search for a church, we look for a church, gearing it all for what's in it for me.

What am I going to get out of it rather than what am I going to put into it? Maybe you might find a church that's in a real state and they need you more than you need them.

Because they need your fellowship. They need your Christian witness. And they need your maturity as a believer to help them to grow and to bless them. In 1 Peter 3 verse 8, it says that we should have compassion one of another, love as brethren.

A genuine love, an unfeigned love. It's not something we feign or pretend. It's a real love. It's a genuine love of the brethren. See that you love one another with a pure heart, fervently.

[2 : 15] How are you going to show your love to your brethren if you're not here? The Word of God says that the church in 1 Timothy 3 verse 15, it's the pillar and ground of the truth.

It's something that we can build on. It's something that is a strength for us. It's truth. It's a solid foundation. It gives us a foundation for our lives in that assembly, in that fellowshiping of God's people.

As God's truth is proclaimed and received and practiced, we want to be there where we can grow as a believer and help others in the process too.

And of course, if we're not in church, it's a vote to close it down. Really, that's what it is. The church has the responsibility of teaching the Word of God. And we have a responsibility of learning the Word of God.

It says of the Word of God, these are the holy scriptures which are able to make thee wise unto salvation. Fellowship. Fellowship brings a closeness.

[3 : 15] As we get together, we get to know each other. It talks in the Word of God how the believers were knit together. There was a knitting together of the believers as they joined together in fellowship and getting together with one another.

Maybe we might think, why should I come to church because I'm not really feeling like it today when I'm feeling down or I'm struggling with trials or having troubles in my life. And it's all the more reason why you should be here.

You know, when you're feeling like you're down or depressed or the world's falling around around your ears, then it's more so the reason that you should be here so that you can be encouraged, so you can be lifted.

It talks in the Word of God how we should bear one another's burdens. We should carry one another's burdens. How's someone going to carry your burden unless they know, unless they share

with you and you share with them?

And as God's people, we can provide and care for one another. And so it's a good reason to assemble. Another good reason is it's God's will. It honours the Lord. Think of Matthew 18, verse 20.

[4 : 17] It's a familiar one where it says, For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them. As you get together, there's a knitting together in love.

There's a joining together. I know we have prayer times together. We have study times together. As we get together, the Lord promises to be present as we do so, as we gather in His name.

And He promises to meet with us as we meet together with our brothers and sisters. The Church of God, the fellowship of the believers, the assembly of God, is a place where we can prod and encourage and urge one another, press one another on, provoke one another on, spur one another on in that gospel race to learn and sing, to pray together, to admonish one another, to encourage one another when there's burdens, to help lift the burden, to share the load, and when things go well, to share their joy.

And these are things that we can be as a church. And I'd love to see more of that, more of that as we see the day approaching. And He's made the way for that. And we should be excelling to the edifying of the church, whatever it be.

1 Corinthians 14, 12. Whatever our giftings and abilities and callings and talents and aptitudes, excel to the edifying of the church, whatever it be.

[5 : 41] Whatever latent or innate or spiritual blessing that you have, God's gifted you to use it for His glory, to use it for the edifying of the church.

And when we gather together as the church, that's what it's all about. We're sharing our time, our talents, our energies, our resources to serve the Lord, to build up others, and to be that body.

Like 1 Corinthians 12, 12 talks about that every part contributes to the body. We know in the natural body that every part has a place and a reason, a function, and is needed.

And likewise too, every believer in Christ's body is pictured to be different components of His body. Every believer is important and valuable and equally valuable.

And so by being involved in the ministry of a good church, you can play your part. You can be blessed and others can be blessed through your ministry. It's been said of the church that it's really like a colony of heaven on earth.

[6 : 45] As we count fellowship and our ministering and being together as God's body as important and a priority for our lives, it's a blessing really in lots of other ways too.

And for our good and our growth in faith, who do we want to be as a church? And I know it was referred to earlier about one accord. And I have these thoughts about being in one accord. It means an agreement.

It means a harmony. And that doesn't mean that we're all clones of each other or we all have to believe exactly the same on every fine point. And that may never be the case until heaven.

Then everyone will agree with me when I get there. Think of the one accords of Scripture. For example, in Acts 1.14, they were in one accord in prayer. Acts 2.1, and when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.

Acts 4.24, they lifted up their voice to God with one accord. That was a joint prayer, a joint praise. And that joining together in fellowship, it helps you to grow.

[7 : 50] It strengthens your faith. You know, it's been said of how you could get a bundle of arrows and you try to put them together and you try to break them over your knee. It's hard to break those arrows when they're in a bunch, but you take them one by one.

Crack. Crack. You know? It's got a picture there. For us as Christians, we're stronger together. Our faith is stronger together as we have that mutual fellowship together.

Psalms 34.3, the psalmist says, O magnify the Lord with me and let us exalt His name together. That should be the case with us. That there's that common bond, there's that common love for Christ, that wonderful sense of who He is, that we share that love and we express that love.

Church is about that one accord in assembling together and hearing the Word of God. There was a unity in their practice and a one accord. A one accord in our use of fellowship, in our ministering, in our active involvement together.

Romans 12.5, it says, And being many, we are one body in Christ, and everyone members one of another. So we need one another. You need your brother and your sister, and your brother and

your sister need you.

[9 : 09] As we have that sound teaching together, as we have that right spirit together, as we have that prayerfulness, as we have that one accord in praise and exalting His name together.

Another aspect too is that there's an accountability, and we can look out for one another. We can correct one another and receive correction. Grow together in God.

Stir one another. Encourage one another. Provoke one another unto love and to good works as you see the day approaching. Value the church as Christ did. O magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt His name together.