

We ought to look forward to assembling together in the local church

There has probably never been a congregation where every single member had the right attitude about the assemblies of the church. Seemingly there is always someone who feels at liberty to absent himself from the assembly when he chooses. Consequently, there will probably always be a need for preaching and teaching on the need to be faithful in attendance at the services of the church. We need to be reminded from time to time how good it is for us to meet together as God's people to worship Him and study His word. And we need to be reminded how much we need what the services of the church offer.

There is no doubt a sense in which we should feel an obligation to meet whenever the church assembles, but being present surely can be thought of as more than a mere duty. ***We ought to look forward to assembling together in the local church.*** If we love the Lord and His people, the various assemblies of the congregation will be a joy to attend.

In **Psa. 122:1**, David said, "I was glad when they said to me, 'Let us go to the house of the LORD!'" Today there is no physical building which is the "house of the Lord" such as the temple was in the Old Testament. In Christ, we ourselves are the dwelling place of God. But should we not have the same attitude about meeting with our brethren that David had about going to the temple to worship? Should we be anything but glad when the time comes to assemble with the saints of God to praise Him and learn from His word?

Of all the people in the world, the Lord's people should be those whom we most look forward to being with. As John wrote, "Whoever loves God must also love his brother . . . and everyone who loves the Father loves whoever has been born of him" (**1 Jn. 4:21-5:1**).

This week, let's set ourselves the challenge of developing a more positive attitude about the services of the church. Let's work on viewing our weekly assemblies as a joy and a privilege. Given the difficulties of life in this world, it is not likely that we will survive living in it without the edification that we get when we worship together. Think about it!

Monday: 1 John 4:20,21

Key Idea: We cannot love God if we do not love our fellow Christians.

Questions for Family Growth: What did John say about the person who says he loves God but hates his brother? In what ways might we show that we "hate" our fellow Christians? If we love our brothers and sisters, how important do you think it is that we meet with them for worship?

Wisdom for the Day: **Proverbs 19:24.**

Tuesday: Hebrews 10:23-25

Key Idea: We will assemble with other Christians if we are concerned about them spiritually.

Questions for Family Growth: What does v.24 say we ought to do for one another? What would it mean to “consider” one another? What does v.25 say we must not do if we are properly concerned about our brethren?

Wisdom for the Day: Proverbs 19:25.

Wednesday: Ephesians 5:18-21; Colossians 3:12-17

Key Idea: When we assemble as a congregation, we build up one another spiritually.

Questions for Family Growth: In Eph. 5:19, how do Christians “speak” (NKJV) to one another when they assemble for worship? In Col. 3:16, how do they “teach” and “admonish” one another? Can we do these things if we choose not to assemble with the church?

Wisdom for the Day: Proverbs 19:26.

Thursday: Matthew 18:20

Key Idea: Christ has promised to be with us when we meet together in His name.

Questions for Family Growth: What does it mean to gather together in the Lord’s name? Knowing that Christ is present with us, how do you think we should conduct ourselves when we assemble as a congregation?

Wisdom for the Day: Proverbs 19:27.

Friday: Psalm 122:1-9

Key Idea: We ought to be glad to worship God with His people.

Questions for Family Growth: What was the “house of the Lord” in David’s day? What is the Lord’s “house” today? Consider 1 Pt. 2:5. What are some things we can do to help ourselves have David’s attitude about worship?

Wisdom for the Day: Proverbs 19:28.

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