

Forsake Not Assembling

WARNING: READ VERSES 26-31

Verse 26 says that there is no more sacrifice for my sins. *Verse 27* says I must fearfully expect to be devoured with God's wrath, *Verse 29* says that I will die without mercy and with worse punishment than those who disobeyed Moses' Law. *Verse 30* warns me that God will judge His people and bring vengeance upon His people who fall away. *Verse 31* says that it is a fearful thing for me to fall into the hands of the living God.

WHERE FORSAKING LEADS: VERSE 29

Forsaking the assembly leads me to trod under foot the Son of God, to count unholy, the blood of the covenant by which I was made holy, and to do despite unto the Spirit of grace. Does this sound serious? Does this make forsaking worship serious? Do I want to take the first steps which lead me to complete rebellion against God? Missing worship leads to Hell. Faithful worship leads to heaven. Which road are you traveling? Few are on the first road, many are on the second, where are you and where does your road lead? (*Matthew 7:13-14*)

"I WAS GLAD WHEN THEY SAID UNTO ME, LET US GO INTO THE HOUSE OF THE LORD," PSALMS 122:1

God's commands are not grievous (*1 John 5:3*). They do not bring grief, because they are commandments of his love. Just as an earthly father commands his child to eat at his table, so our Heavenly Father commands us to eat at the Lord's Table. To do so brings joy, strength, and fullness. To fail to do so brings sadness, weakness, and emptiness.

WILL YOU KEEP YOUR APPOINTMENT WITH JESUS?



Bible Christians assembled and worshipped steadfastly. This was because of their own spiritual needs, because of the needs of others, and because of the commands of God. Those who do not assemble steadfastly become weak, sickly, and dead spiritually.

I need the warmth and strength of Christian fellowship. I must not discourage the heart of my brethren. If I am a parent, I must nurture my children by faithful worship. But if I fail to assemble, as the manner of some is, my neglect leads me to sin against God. I must expect worse punishment than death under Moses' Law. I cannot escape if I neglect so great salvation.

Jesus will be looking for you this Lord's Day to eat with Him His Communion Supper. He will keep His appointment and be waiting. You will keep your appointment and meet Him, or you will injure yourself, neglect others, and forsake God. God will punish with vengeance those who fall away. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.



Hebrews 10:25 is a warning to Christians: "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."

This warning shows that some Hebrew Christians were already neglecting their salvation: "How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?" (**Hebrews 2:3**). The warning says not to forsake assembling, as the manner of some was to forsake assembling (**10:25**). It is the manner of many today to forsake worship.

Hebrew Christians were warned: "We ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip" (**2:1**). Missing worship indicates letting one's salvation slip.

JESUS MADE AN APPOINTMENT

Jesus gave His apostles the Lord's Supper and then said: "I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine until the day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom" (**Matthew 26:29**).

Jesus had just kept the Communion with them physically, but He promised afterward to keep it with them "new" (in a new manner) in His Father's kingdom. He had already promised to build His church, which was the kingdom to which Peter would soon open the doors (**Matthew 16:18, 19**). Jesus built His church and Peter opened its doors.



COMMUNION PROMISE KEPT IN THE CHURCH

Fifty days after the first Communion the church was established on Pentecost Sunday, and 3,000 new Christians continued steadfastly in "the breaking of bread" (**Acts 2:42**).

Jesus kept His promise to build His church, and He kept His appointment to eat Communion with His apostles "new," or in a new manner. This new manner was by His spiritual presence at Communion, not His physical presence. Jesus is present every week to keep His appointment with Christians in His church. Are you always there?

COMMUNION IS EXPENSIVE

It cost Jesus the agony of the cross to be able to keep His Communion appointment. He gladly gave His blood for the remission of our sins so that we could have fellowship with God through the New Testament (**Matthew 26:28**). It will require you to sacrifice to keep your Communion appointment. You will have to deny yourself and take up your cross daily and imitate Jesus (**Luke 9:23**),



NOT THE SUPPER OF MEN

If you neglect to keep your Communion appointment with Jesus on the Lord's Day, you are not forsaking the supper of Christians, but the Supper of the Lord (*1 Corinthians 11:20*). You are not disregarding a day set by men, but the Lord's Day (*Revelation 1:10*). You are not spurning a human memorial, but you are failing to show forth the death of the Lord (*1 Corinthians 11:26*) Do not forsake your assembling together with Jesus in His Kingdom.

EARLY CHRISTIAN COMMUNION WAS WEEKLY

Acts 2:42 describes the steadfast worship of the Jerusalem church: "And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers." Since "stedfast" means "standing fast," the Bible here says that Christians "broke bread" regularly.

Acts 20:7 tells us how regularly or stedfastly how often: "And upon the first day of the week when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached to them." Putting these two verses together the Bible clearly shows that breaking of bread was stedfastly or regularly upon the first day of the week. Communion was kept regularly every Lord's Day or every first day of the week (Sunday).

BIBLE CHRISTIANS ASSEMBLED STEDFASTLY

Christians in the Bible wanted to attend every meeting of the church. *Acts 20:7* was a Sunday night meeting which lasted past midnight. *Acts 12:12* was a weeknight prayer meeting session. *Acts 2:46* shows that Christians continued daily in the temple, and verse 47 says that the Lord added the saved to the church daily. *Acts 1:12* says: "And daily in the temple and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ." *Acts 16:5* says that congregations were established in the faith and increased in number daily. If I am like these Christians, I will want to attend every gathering of the church

THREE BIBLE REASONS FOR STEDFAST WORSHIP

Hebrews 10:23 through 27 gives three major reasons for not forsaking worship: "Let us hold fast (he profession of our faith without wavering (for He is faithful that promised.) And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and good works, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is, bill exhorting one another, and so much the more as ye see the day approaching. For if we sin willfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, (here remained) no more a sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment which shall devour the adversaries."



REASON ONE: SELF

Verse 23 says: "Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering." I myself personally need to assemble stedfastly with the church for my own spiritual strength. I need the food and strength of Bible study and worship with other Christians. Jesus knew this and provided His Supper for me to commune with Him so as to have the strength of His presence in a special way every Lord's Day.

MANY WEAK, SICKLY, AND DEAD

1 Corinthians 11:30 shows the result of abuse or neglect of the Communion: "For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep." Corinthian Christians who did not receive the weekly food and strength found in Communion were weak, sickly, and dead spiritually. I will eat Communion and grow strong weekly, or I will neglect Communion and grow "weakly" weekly. Which do you do? You cannot be strong and forsake Communion.

I NEED CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP



Ephesians 4:16 describes each Christian as a working part in the spiritual body of Christ, the church: "From whom (Christ) the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love." A single coal of

fire will soon blacken to ashes and die when separated from other coals of fire. But when kept hot by other coals, the coal will receive and give warmth and strength and life. Do you absorb the life giving warmth of love, which is provided for you in regular worship?

REASON TWO: OTHERS

Hebrews 10:24 stresses my need to strengthen others: "And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works." Verse 25 says: "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." I want to assemble and worship regularly because it strengthens others. Others need me as I need them.



WHY DISCOURAGE YE THE HEART OF YOUR BRETHREN?

Numbers 32:7 asks this question of Jews who did not want to do their part in entering the Promised Land. When a Christian forsakes Bible study classes and worship, he discourages the heart of his brethren, instead of considering and encouraging them to love and good works. Jesus said that my light needs to shine before others (*Matthew 5:16*). Colossians 3:16 shows that I teach and admonish others by my singing. When I am absent, I withdraw my help from the togetherness which others need. Forsaking the assembly discourages the heart of my brethren.

LIKE FATHER, LIKE SON

This is especially true of parents who seriously injure their children when they as mother and father forsake assembling. Parents are commanded to bring up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord (*Ephesians 6:4*). Nurturing a child is regularly training and cultivating his spiritual growth. Children are commanded to obey their parents in the Lord (*Ephesians 6:1*). But God's commands are broken, and God's plan for nurturing children fails when parents do not teach and demonstrate God's way of faithful assembling for worship. Generations of your offspring yet unborn will do as you are teaching your children to do.



REASON THREE: GOD

Verse 23 of Hebrews 10 stresses my personal need of faithful worship, *verse 24* emphasizes my need to exhort others, and *verse 26* emphasizes my worship as it relates me to God. It says: "For if we sin willfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins." The word "for" connects the sinning of *verse 26* with the forsaking of *verse 25*. To forsake my assembling for worship is the first step in my falling away from God. The third reason I need to assemble is my duty to God.