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The actions of a believer (Pt.2) Desire the company of their brethren.

This is our second study on this topic. We previously established that a person born of the Spirit of God desires the words of God, to hear, receive, and search them, and therefore desires the “sincere milk of the word” (1Pet.2: 2). In this study we establish that believers are to desire the company of their brethren, and forsake not the assembling together for worship.

Scriptures upon which this teaching is founded.

1. Believers are to prefer the company of their brethren.

“Be kindly affectioned one to another...in honour preferring one another” (Rom.12: 10).

There is a worldly saying that has some truth about it – “You are known by the company you keep”. In other words, if a man is a thief his circle of friends are often thieves, and married women that have just had a baby often meet with other women and discuss their struggles and encourage each other. When a lost man is born of the Spirit of God one of the indicators of the inward change in his heart is his outward desire to walk away from his old friends that he had (“put off the old man” – Col.3: 9), and to make new friends with his brethren, and so preferring one another.

2. Believers are to be given to hospitality.

“Distributing to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality” (Rom.12: 13).

See also 1Pet 4:9

Once a believer has established friends within the body of Christ it is likely that the elders, or older brethren will invite them to share a meal (1Cor.11: 20 & 33), and so we are encouraged to be given to hospitality. Paul identifies Bishops as being a lover of hospitality (Tit.1: 8).

3. Believers are not to forsake the assembling together for worship.

“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” (Heb.10: 25).

The book of Acts and in Paul’s first epistle to the Corinthians there are reminders that the church (the body of Christ – Col.1: 18) are to gather together – Acts 14:27, 1Cor 11:18 & 20. Paul warns the church at Thessalonica that there will come a time of “falling away” (2Thes.2: 3) when believers will no longer desire to assemble together to worship.

Applying the teaching to our life today.

The trend in main-stream churches is parishioners leaving to either go to Rome, abandon church altogether, or starting a house church. Starting a house church is an excellent option as it fulfils the scriptural teaching of believers meeting in their houses (Rom.16: 5, 1Cor.16: 9 & Col.4: 15).

Question to think about.

Traditional churches offer a sense of security to believers – with history, structure and accountability. What is the potential challenge that believers face when they choose to leave the main-stream churches and worship in their houses?

My answer to our question from the scriptures.

Little or no structure that provides accountability of the teacher to an elder, apart from direct accountability to the Lord. Therefore being open to “damnable heresies” where the pastor is potentially a false teacher (2Pet.2: 1) that have set themselves to teach in the body of Christ, and not God (1Cor.12: 28). Hence the more reason why believers should adopt the instruction in our previous teaching to search the scriptures themselves “whether those things be so”.

Nevertheless, let us encourage our brethren to prefer the company of like minded believers, offering hospitality and not forsaking the assembling together for worship. Amen!