

28th January 2018

Essential ingredients for Christian growth Pt.5 Forsake not the gathering together.

This is our fifth study on our topic – Essential ingredients for Christian growth. In our previous teaching we established the need to worship the Father in spirit and truth through His Son the Lord Jesus Christ. In this study we will cover the need to forsake not the gathering together.

Scriptures upon which this teaching is founded.

1. Forsake not the gathering together.

“For first of all, when ye come together in the church” (1Cor.11: 18), c.f Heb.10: 25 –“Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is”.

Which means we forsake **not** –

a) praying together, and

“And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers” (Acts 2: 42).

b) worshipping together, and

“Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord” (Col.3: 16).

c) receiving instruction from the word of God together, and

“And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them” (Acts 20: 7). See also Acts 13: 44.

d) taking the Lord's Supper together.

“And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread” (Acts 20: 7). See also Acts 2: 42 & 1Cor.11: 18–34.

Applying the teaching to our life today.

Since the 1960s attendance at traditional churches like Anglican, Methodist and Presbyterian have fallen by 50%. I expect some believers have fallen away (2Thes.2: 3) and others were as I was when I attended a Presbyterian church for 16 years, unsaved pew sitter, attending for fellowship.

Question to think about.

For those that leave churches and **are** in the body of Christ they can have their own quiet times and include the activities that take place when believers come together – like prayer, reading the word and worship, so why should we not opt out of “assembling...together”?

My answer to our question from the scriptures.

i) We are obedient to the word of God when we assemble ourselves together to pray, receive instruction from the scriptures, worship and share in the Lord's Supper together, and

ii) we fellowship with our brethren, and in doing so we fellowship with the Lord (1Jn 1:3), and

iii) we are given opportunities to show our love to the brethren. And to “love thy neighbour as thyself” (Gal.5: 14) is a fulfilment of the law, as is bearing one another's burdens a fulfilment of the law of Christ (Gal.6: 2), and

iv) we are in an environment where there is order (1Cor.16: 1), and “God hath set some in the church...teachers...helps” (1Cor.12: 28), and we are called to “Obey them that have the rule over you” (Heb 13:17), and

v) we, and the body of Christ are stronger when there is less division (see Lk.11: 17), when we edify the other, and “of one mind” (2Cor.13: 10 & 11), hence the need to fellowship with each other.

When a person is put out of the church as a disciplinary action they are delivered “unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh” (1Cor.5: 5) which indicates we are more vulnerable to attack from our adversary when we are “going it alone” and not assembling together.

Hence our gathering together, our meeting as a church body for worship, prayer, instruction from the scriptures, and breaking of bread is an essential ingredient for Christian growth.