



CHURCH ATTENDANCE: IS IT IMPORTANT?

EARL M. BLACKBURN

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by Earl Blackburn

BEING FAITHFUL AND CONSISTENT in attending a true church of Jesus Christ and worshipping God is extremely important; more important than you may realize. Irregularity and unfaithfulness in attending church conveys a certain message and produces definite short term and far-reaching effects. Failure to assemble yourself with the Lord's people at all stated meetings for worship, unless you are sick or legitimately hindered:

1. Reveals a cold heart and lack of fervent love to Christ who instituted local churches (Revelation 2:4 & 3:20).
2. It shows disregard for the apostolic example and command of God's Holy Word (Acts 2:41 ff.; Hebrews 10:25).
3. It robs you of blessing and help for the days ahead.
4. It cheats the brethren of blessings and help they would receive from your mutual ministry to them (see 1 Thessalonians 5:14; Hebrews 10:24, "And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good works." NIV).
5. It grieves the Holy Spirit who dwells in each believer individually, and in the church as a whole.
6. It grieves the Elders who oversee you and minister the Word of God to you (Hebrews 13:7 & 17; cf. I Thessalonians 5:12, 13).
7. It can influence others, by your poor example, to become unfaithful, lazy, indifferent and selfish. (Many young Christians have said, "Brother or Sister So-and-So do not come regularly, why should I?"). You are a letter known and read by all men (2 Corinthians 3:2,3a).

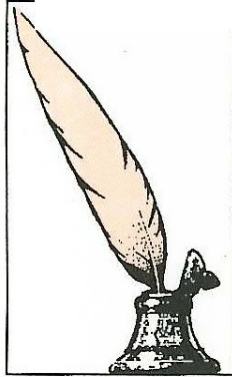
8. It discourages brethren in the body with whom you are joined.
9. It is a poor testimony to unbelievers who see your inconsistency (see John 13:35; cf. 1 John 3:13, 14).
10. It demonstrates your lack of vision for the future of that particular church of Jesus Christ in which you are a member (see Jeremiah 29:10,11).
11. It makes you a covenant-breaker in your commitment to God and to the church where you are a member.
12. It is a dreadful and empty step toward backsliding and apostasy (study Hebrews 10:25 in its context of verses 19-39).
13. It shows disrespect for the best and the brightest day of the week, Sunday-the Lord's Day, the day on which the Lord Jesus rose from the dead.

A Christian is saved by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone and this saving grace causes one to love Christ's churches, (see Psalms 27:4, 84:1,2 & 10, 87:1-3). If there is no love for Christ's churches or no concern to be identified with a local church, then one's faith is suspect. True and saving faith creates a love for the things Christ loves. He "loved the church and gave Himself for it;" (Ephesians 5:25). John Owen puts it well when he says:

"It is the duty of everyone who professes faith in Jesus Christ, and takes due care of his own eternal salvation, voluntarily and by his own choice to join himself to some particular congregation of Christ's institution . . . no particular person is to be esteemed a legal, true subject that does not appear in these His courts with a solemn homage to Him." (*Works, Vol. 15, 'Duty of Believers to Join Themselves In Church Order,' pp. 319-327*).

May each of us say from his heart, as David said of old, "*I was Glad when they said to me, Let us go into the house of the LORD*" (*Psalms 122:1*).

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*“Study to show thyself
approved unto God”
2 Timothy 2:15*