

Many people who say they are Christians don't go to church. When asked why, many will answer that it is not necessary to go to church to be saved. We agree! Salvation is by grace through faith in Jesus Christ. Many have come to know Jesus as their personal saviour outside of church. So why do we go to church? Is it really important? Can't we live just as good at home?

The New Testament never divides Christians into the church members and the non-church members. All the way through, the Bible assumes that everyone participates in their local assembly. There is a teaching in the Bible of the whole body of Christ. This would be believers all over the world. But it gives no examples of Christians who belong to the "universal or general church" but have no link with a local assembly. Any idea of enjoying salvation or being a Christian in isolation is foreign to the New Testament writings. Wherever Christians are within range of each other in the New Testament, they meet. Every time the apostle Paul comes to a town in the book of Acts where there are no Christians, he wins a few converts and immediately organizes them into a small group - a church.

Acts 20:7 explains the practice of the early church: *"And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached to them..."*

For Christians in every area, regular gathering was a part of life. This is a fact not just found in the

New Testament, but also in the old and in church history. Gathering in the house of God has always been a part of living for God.

It's illogical to say that you are merely part of the worldwide, universal church, yet refuse to gather with the part of that universal church that exists in your local area. It would be like claiming you have a car, when the wheels are in New York, the engine is in Florida, and the steering wheel is in Washington! You don't have a car; you have the beginnings of a junkyard. It just won't function until the pieces are put together.

Christians must be together in a local assembly to carry out many of its purposes. Here are some pieces of the biblical Christian life that cannot happen when you live in isolation from the church:

**1. SPIRITUAL GIFTS** - 1 Corinthians 12 makes it clear that God has given spiritual gifts to every Christian. And verse 7 states unmistakably that these abilities are not provided to make you feel good; they are abilities to minister that should be used for the common good! 1 Peter 4:10 says, *"As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God."*

The same passage makes it clear that we meet with other Christians so they can use their gifts to strengthen us. For example, God's gift of a preacher or teacher is wasted if no one comes to hear them

speak.

**2. MINISTRY OF OTHER BELIEVERS** - The church is pictured as a body in 1 Corinthians 12, and Paul explains that each part of the body exists to meet the needs of other body parts. In the same way, God intends each of us to meet the needs of other believers, using our strengths to help in their areas of weakness. 1 Corinthians 12:21 expresses it this way: *"And the eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee: nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you."* Neither can a Christian claim to be self-sufficient today. It is just not fulfilling God's biblical example.

The New Testament is full of "one another" commands. We are to comfort one another (1Thessalonians 4:18), build up one another (1Thessalonians 5:11), confess our faults to one another (James 5:16), pray for one another (James 5:16), and many more. How can we obey these directives if we stay away from one another?

**3. ACCOUNTABILITY** - Why would God have inspired Paul to write to Timothy explaining how Church leadership should be carried out, if it was not assumed that this leadership was vitally important to God's people. God pictures the church as a place where spiritual leaders can watch out for our welfare, as a shepherd guards his sheep (1 Peter 5:1-4; Hebrews 13:17). A

Christian who answers only to himself can easily rationalize sin. Regular contact with other Christians can help keep us living right.

**4. EVANGELISM** - The great commission teaches us to spread the gospel to the whole world. Luke 14:23 says *“And the lord said unto the servant, Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled.”* How can we compel others to come in, when we are out?

**5. BIBLICAL EXAMPLES** - Much of what we learn from the Bible on how we should live comes from the examples of the lives of those living in Bible days. Nowhere in scripture do we find examples of men living for God holding to the belief that they should do so separate from other believers. Paul built church after church for this very reason. We find Jesus at a young age staying behind at the Temple. Whenever Jesus went into a new city, he could always be found at the House of God. If we are to call ourselves Christian, which means “Christ like” then we should try to live by his example.

**6. GOD’S PERFECT WILL** - How many times does God have to say something for it to be true? Just one! In Hebrews 10: 23-25 He says, *“Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that*

*promised;)* And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: **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.”** The day he is speaking of is of course the day of the return of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. I see it coming fast. This world is becoming more and more wicked. The hour is close at hand and we are commanded to Not Forsake the Assembling of Ourselves Together. It is obviously God’s perfect will for each believer to assemble together with other believers.

We have tried to list just a few of the reasons the Bible gives for going to church. A very wise man once said, “Sometimes, we should look at what the Bible does not say.” We challenge anyone to find one example the Bible gives describing reasons why you should not go to church.



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# WHY GO TO GO CHURCH?



**What does the Bible Say?**