

cont'd from front...

Take a minute and think about it logically: If going to church meant that life would be free of problems, wouldn't everybody go to church? Absolutely they would! If it was a guarantee, every human would give up an hour or two a week for smooth sailing the other 160 some hours. But that is not the purpose for assembling together with Christians. God wants people to come to church to worship, encourage others, build their faith, and learn about Him and His will. He does not want people coming to church trying to acquire good luck or a life without adversity. Going to church is not supposed to be a selfish act but a selfless one. It is probably fair to say that living as a Christian may (and probably will) make your life even more difficult! Why? Because Satan is going to do his best to get you back out into the world living in sin. Satan will try extra hard to make new Christians miserable (one way or another) in hopes of tempting them to forsake God and the way of righteousness. This is exactly what Satan expected to happen in Job's case, but Satan underestimated Job's strength of faith and character (cf. Job 1 & 2).

4. JUST BECAUSE YOU GO TO CHURCH DOESN'T MEAN YOU WILL GO TO HEAVEN. Isn't that ultimately what we all desire? Going to assemble with the saints and worship God is an important part in having that desire fulfilled. Certainly we don't want to be guilty of forsaking the assembly (Heb. 10:24,25). But, I hope you understand that God isn't going to say on Judgment Day - "All those who have been to church 1000 times or more may enter into heaven." No, it won't be like that at all. Faithfulness is not necessarily dependent upon the number of times one has gathered with the saints. Heaven is promised to those who faithfully endure the Christian life to the end. Consider some of Paul's last recorded words of inspiration in II Timothy 4:7,8 - "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing." Revelation 2:10 records these words of Christ - "...Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life."

Sadly, there are those who have been deceived into thinking that going to church regularly guarantees them a home in heaven. The Bible does not teach that! Others think that responding to an altar call and praying Jesus into their hearts will save them. The Bible does not teach that! The Lord Jesus Christ taught in Matthew 7:21 - "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven." To call on the Lord for His mercy is not sufficient, because some will do that very thing and be eternally lost! One must obey God and do His will! Jesus could not have made it any plainer! If we want to be saved from our sins and remain in God's good favor, we must do more than just warm a foot or two of pew a couple times a week. We must obey the gospel and busy ourselves doing God's will. Dear friends, don't be deceived into thinking that close association with faithful Christians will be enough to gain God's approval and get you into heaven. Just because you can bark like a dog doesn't mean that you are one. I recall that my son Adin, when he turned one, would respond with a "woof, woof" when asked what a puppy said. Of course, no one ever mistook him for a puppy when he did this. Why not? Because barking is just one small characteristic that dogs share; there are many others that define them. It's the same way spiritually. Going to church for worship and edification is wonderful, but it is just one aspect of a faithful Christian life. Assembling with the saints is important but not sufficient for a sanctified life.

In summary, let us all remember that just because we go to church doesn't mean we're real Christians-genuine Christians follow Christ in all things, not just on Sunday mornings. Just because we go to church doesn't mean our children will end up being faithful Christians. Yes, they need to come and learn about the Bible and be taught what it means to worship God properly, but if we think a couple hours a week is all the spiritual education they need, we're tragically mistaken. Just because we go to church doesn't mean our lives will go smoothly. In fact, it is probably fair to say that living as a Christian will actually make our lives even more difficult! Just because we go to church doesn't mean we will make it to heaven. Those who obey the gospel and are faithful unto death are the ones that will enjoy a heavenly home. I intend to be among that group. What about you? Are you a baptized, penitent believer? Are you living a sincere Christian life before God every day, and not just on the first day of the week?

May 27, 2018

church of Christ at Alisal

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In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. In him was life, and that life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not understood it. (John 1:1-5)

MEETING UPON THE FIRST DAY OF THE WEEK

Listen on AM Radio 880 KKMC in Salinas, California
2nd Friday of each month @ 1:30 pm

Bible Classes..... 9:00 A.M.
Assemblies..... 10:00 A.M. & 5:00 P.M.

<http://churchofchristalisal.com/>

WEDNESDAY

Bible Class, Singing, & Prayer..... 6:30 P.M.

Welcome

Good Morning Brothers and Sisters!



Jordan

This Week's Sermon's

A.M. - Sometimes Anger Rules?

P.M. - Pure In Heart

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Just Because You Go to Church Doesn't Mean...

presented by Stephen R. Bradd

Kerry



There are those who believe that attending the services of the church regularly will secure for them a heavenly home and make their life on Earth free of difficulties. Join us as we analyze these false assumptions (and others) about going to church.

We, as humans, make assumptions everyday. We assume that when we go to bed at night, we will wake up in the morning. We assume that the job we hold today will still be ours tomorrow. We assume that our children will outlive us. We assume that when we come home from a trip, our house will still be standing. On and on we could go with these sorts of examples, but the point I want to make is simple: Most of the assumptions we make are correct, but not always. Sometimes we are wrong. There are people everyday who go to sleep and never wake up. There are those who will lose their jobs before tomorrow. There are parents who will lose children today. There are some who will return home to find their house consumed by fire.

In addition to the above physical assumptions, we often make spiritual assumptions as well. For instance, many assume that a Bible showing signs of wear indicates its owner is a good student of God's word. In truth, they might not be a student of the Scriptures at all. They might just not take very good care of the holy book. There are also many common assumptions made regarding those who attend an assembly of Christians. However, like the prior assumptions, these are not always true. In this lesson I'd like for us to debunk four typical assumptions made pertaining to church attendance.

1. JUST BECAUSE YOU GO TO CHURCH DOESN'T MEAN YOU ARE A CHRISTIAN. If I were to go and sit down in a field of beautiful flowers, would that make me a flower? Of course not! No matter how long I sit in that field, I won't ever grow petals or bloom. Likewise, just because a person associates with Christians doesn't mean that he is one! Righteousness is not transferable. According to Ezekiel 18:20 - "The righteousness of the righteous shall be upon himself." One could associate with some of the finest Christians on Earth, and that individual wouldn't necessarily have God's favor. Take Judas Iscariot for example in John 12:4-6. During the last week of Jesus' earthly ministry, there was a feast at Bethany and Mary anointed Jesus' feet with costly spikenard. Judas complained - "Why was this fragrant oil not sold for three hundred denarii and given to the poor?" Of course, Judas didn't care about the poor but wanted to steal the money for himself! Judas' close association with the other apostles and Jesus for over 3 years did not cover his sins or make him a righteous man.

Throughout the history of the Lord's church, there have always been certain ones who were either openly sinful or idle with their Christianity. Just because they may have regularly attended services or had a close association with other sincere Christians does not brighten their spiritual condition. Consider II Thessalonians 3:11 as an illustration of this truth - "For we hear that there are some who walk among you in a disorderly manner." There were evidently some disciples at Thessalonica who were closely associated with Christians, but that didn't make them faithful or pleasing to God. They were disorderly and not to be fellowshiped. Let us remember that a Christian is one who follows Christ. Merely going to church with other Christians doesn't mean that you are one. Final judgment will be rendered individually, not congregationally. "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done



in the body according to what he has done, whether good or bad" (II Cor. 5:10). Attending a great church is not going to save your soul if you don't obey the Lord personally!

2. JUST BECAUSE YOU GO TO CHURCH DOESN'T MEAN YOUR CHILDREN WILL GROW UP TO BE CHRISTIANS. Some Christian parents deceive themselves into believing this. They think that they've done their job by putting the kids in the car and bringing them with them to services every week. Parents, we need to understand that it is not the job of the church to supply our children with everything they need in the area of religion. Yes, it is true that regularly bringing one's children to the services of the church will certainly help, but a couple hours a week is not sufficient for fully developing children spiritually. Whose responsibility is it to ensure that children get a good religious education? Whose job is it to make sure that children are learning God's word, being taught how to pray, and being instructed in how to live righteously every day? It is the parents' job! And God will hold parents accountable--not the church--for the spiritual development of children. Consider Ephesians 6:4 - "And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord." Parents should bring their children to worship with them, but they must also take an active role in the home in helping their children develop spiritually.

I strongly recommend that every family make some time each day to have a devotional. This is a time to read Scriptures together. It is a time to talk about the Bible and learn. It is a time to share in prayer together. It could also be a great time to sing a song or two to the Lord. Even if you don't have children, or if you don't have children who are in the house anymore, you could still benefit greatly from having a daily devotional with your spouse. When we study our Old Testaments, it is easy to see that God wanted His people to have daily devotionals--if you want to call them that. Listen to what was written in Deuteronomy 6:4-9 - "Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one! You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength. And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates." Every opportunity was to be used to teach children about God and the ways of righteousness. Are we using such opportunities today or are we depending upon the services of the church to work the impossible in the lives of our children?

3. JUST BECAUSE YOU GO TO CHURCH DOESN'T MEAN YOUR LIFE ON EARTH WILL BE EASY OR FREE OF DIFFICULTIES. Some fantasize that if they go to church then God owes them a favor and will prevent anything bad from happening to them. These are the type of people who blame God when something bad happens. They lose faith easily (cf. Matt. 13:20,21) and don't realize that trials and struggles can be beneficial for followers of Christ. James 1:2,3 teaches - "My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience." (continued on back page...)

Announcements

1. Brother David will be giving the invitation this Wednesday evening.

*Singing and prayer this coming Wednesday evening -
Let's all prepare ourselves for this great opportunity!*

~ On the Prayer list ~

**All our Families here at Alisal - for spiritual growth and good health.
Rose, Beverly, Norma - For peace of mind and better health.**