

This lesson is part of a series we have talked about before, and for normal situations it is true and just. However, if one is in the hospital and not able to leave, he would be justified to partake of the Lord's Supper with his mate or someone who brought it to him (Matt. 18:20). If a person is unconscious in the hospital, he is fully justified not to meet with the saints or take the Lord's Supper.

Similarly, if the government commands us not to meet because of a pandemic or other life and death situation, we are justified not to assemble together or take the Lord's Supper until that ban is lifted.

If we are able arrange a way to hear the prophecy that edifies, we would be required to fulfill the purpose of the assembly. **Listening to modern day TV evangelists cannot fulfill that command, because they are not part of the Lord's body.**

FORSAKING THE ASSEMBLIES IS ONLY A SYMPTOM

Romans 1:18-32 clearly tells us the reason for those vile sins was that God gave them up to do those things. The sins were only a symptom of a sickness of the heart.

God's Wrath on Unrighteousness

“For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness; Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed *it* unto them. **For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, *even* his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse: Because that, when they knew God, they glorified *him* not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things. **Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts**, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves: Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen. **For this cause God gave them****

up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature: And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompence of their error which was meet. **And even as they did not like to retain God in *their* knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient;** Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers, Backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, Without understanding, covenantbreakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful: **Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them”** (Rom. 1:18-32).

THE FIRST DAY OF THE WEEK, JUST WHOSE DAY IS IT?

The Lord’s Day is unlike any other day of the week. When John received his vision from the Lord of future events while exiled on the island of Patmos, he spoke of it as happening on “the Lord’s Day” ([Revelation 1:10](#)). The Lord is strongly identified with the first day of the week, due to the fact that it was the day He rose from the dead ([Matthew 28:1-6](#)). The same day that we as Christians offer our worship to Him, seek to edify the brethren and remember His death in the Lord’s Supper ([Acts 20:7](#); [1 Corinthians 11:23-26](#)) **AND seek to edify one another.** No wonder the Hebrew writer exhorts the brethren, who are wavering in faith, not to forsake the assembly of the Lord’s people ([Hebrews 10:25](#)).

Have you often wondered why some members of the Lord’s church take the Lord’s Day so lightly, making it into another “day?” Another day such as “sleep day” — sleeping is what gets priority on Sunday for some. For others, it is “river day” or “beach day”— spending the day in recreational activities. And then there’s “yard or compound day”— digging up grass and cleaning rubbish to make the property cleaner. There’s also “hangover day”— for those who use this day to recover from drunkenness or other late-night activities.

Why do some Christians trivialize the day that Christ considers important enough to call His own? Why do we sometimes choose this day over every other day to do less important tasks that could be accomplished at any other time or day of the week? Brethren, does assembling together with fellow brothers and sisters in Christ to worship the Creator of the universe ([John 1:1-3](#); [Ephesians 3:9](#)) mean so little to us anymore?

Let us ask ourselves, if we do not enjoy assembling with the saints here upon the earth, will we enjoy assembling with the saints, offering our worship to the Lord, for eternity in Heaven? ([Revelation 5:9-14](#); [Revelation 7:9-12](#)). Moreover, if we find it difficult to assemble with the saints, what does this say about our commitment to serving the Lord, not only on the Lord’s Day, but also on every other day of the week? ([Luke 9:23](#); cf. [Acts 2:46](#); [Acts 16:5](#); [Acts 17:11](#); [Hebrews 3:13](#)).

Such attitudes reveal the fact that we not only “dishonor” the Lord’s Day at times, but our worship to the Lord is worship that is not in “spirit and in truth” ([John 4:24](#)). Let us thoroughly examine our attitude in our consideration of the Lord’s Day, and ask ourselves, **“Just whose day is it?”**

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GOD TESTS OUR HEARTS TO SEE IF WE WILL OBEY HIM.

Speaking to the church in Thyatira, the Lord passes judgment on the wicked woman Jezebel and her followers, "And I will kill her children with death; and all the churches shall know that I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts: and I will give unto every one of you according to your works" (Rev. 2:23).

In **2 Chronicles 32:31**, Hezekiah had just failed a test. Why did the ambassadors come? God sent them because of Hezekiah's pride regarding his achievements (**2 Chro. 32:24-31**). "Howbeit in *the business* of the ambassadors of the princes of Babylon, who sent unto him to enquire of the wonder that was *done* in the land, God left him, to try him, that he might know all *that was* in his heart" (vs. 31).

Judges 3:1-4 speaks about the five nations that were not driven out of Israel. Note why they were left there. Verses one and four say,

"Now these *are* the nations which the LORD left, to prove Israel by them,... *Namely*, five lords of the Philistines, and all the Canaanites, and the Sidonians, and the Hivites ... they were to prove Israel by them, to know whether they would hearken unto the commandments of the LORD, which he commanded their fathers by the hand of Moses."

God tested Israel to see if they would obey all God's commands. He had made a covenant with them to protect them and to drive out their enemies, but would they be faithful after he did all that for them? Read **Deuteronomy 13:1-9**.

If there arise among you a prophet, or a dreamer of dreams, and giveth thee a sign or a wonder,

And the sign or the wonder come to pass, whereof he spake unto thee, saying, Let us go after other gods, which thou hast not known, and let us serve them;

Thou shalt not hearken unto the words of that prophet, or that dreamer of dreams: for the LORD your God proveth you, to know whether ye love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul.

Our Heavenly Father will test men and women to see what is really in their hearts.

Read **Jeremiah 23:31** and tell me what is expected here.

Behold, I *am* against the prophets, saith the LORD, that use their tongues, and say, He saith.

Behold, I *am* against them that prophesy false dreams, saith the LORD, and do tell them, and cause my people to err by their lies, and by their lightness; yet I sent them not, nor commanded them: therefore they shall not profit this people at all, saith the LORD.

Thus shall ye say every one to his neighbour, and every one to his brother, **What hath the LORD answered? and, What hath the LORD spoken?**

Note in verse 31 that there will be false teachers among us to draw us away from God, but what should be our response in verse 35? What does the Lord say? Give me a scripture and not some man's words if we want the people to be converted. Who can know what is in God's mind if we do not hear his words from his mouth?

In **1 John 4:1-3** we are told to test the spirits. Why do we not obey that command? The Pharisees knew the truth, but they refused to speak it. They were more interested in having men to follow them. They wanted to be sure they got the collection plate every Sabbath Day. Do you suppose that could be the reason that

the Lord says **their converts were twofold more the sons of hell than themselves**. See **Matthew 23:13-15**.

But woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in *yourselves*, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in.

Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayer: therefore ye shall receive the greater damnation.

Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves.

LIKELY, THE REAL ISSUE WITH MEN AND WOMEN TODAY WHO ARE FORSAKING THE ASSEMBLIES AND GRADUALLY FALLING AWAY FROM THE CHURCH HAS TO DO WITH THEIR ORIGINAL CONVERSION.

Did they understand discipleship or the crucifixion of the old man?

Were they truly converted to Christ or did they just "get baptized?"

Did they make the covenant with the Lord to come out of the world and be separate (**2 Cor. 6:17-18**)?

Or did these weaker members simply JOIN the church because some evil false teacher convinced them they would "inherit" the property that belonged to the church when the aged missionary went home to Canada? Do these members need to be taught properly what it means to be a Christian?

Matthew 28:19 we are told to "teach" (make disciples) of all nations. By whose authority? How? So what is a disciple?

Luke 6:40 tells us to be like the Master. Study diligently to gain all the qualities of heart that Jesus possessed. How many today know about being crucified before they are buried? Moreover, when they rise out of the waters of baptism, how many consider they are walking in a new life?

We see in **1 Corinthians 5:15** we will have a new mind—a completely different direction and attitude.

Then in **Matthew 28:20**, we read the last part of the Great Commission that we will have a new work to do. Do we find our members eager to go from house to house teaching what Jesus has taught us? Do we have the mind that drives us to find and obey all the commands of God? What is the definition of true Bible love?

John 14:21-24 clearly states that if we love God we will obey his commands.

He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him.

Judas saith unto him, not Iscariot, Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world?

Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.

He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings: and the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me.

Verse 23 gives us hope that we can grow in that love, while verse 24 gives us a warning about our condition if we do not obey. Seek God in the Scriptures and obey more and more of his commands.

Some have just enough religion to fear not taking the Lord's Supper (**John 6:53-55**). Their hearts show they have no interest in anything else God requires because they only show up just in time to "get their ticket punched," and then go home. When they pray, they always remind God of his "great and precious promises," but do they remember their part of the covenant?

"Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier *matters* of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone" (**Matt. 23:23**).

1 John 5:2-3 says, "By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous."

Is any command too hard? Name just one command that you cannot obey **if** you have decided to follow him completely. On Judgment Day, can we give the excuse that God's commands were too hard? In **Matthew 11:29**, He says his yoke is easy and his burden is light.

In **1 Corinthians 10:13**, he gives us the assurance that his burdens will not be too heavy to bear.

"There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God *is* faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear *it*."

Why does he protect us? Why does he keep trying with the weak ones? Is it because he hates them? No! Because he loves us all, He wants us to be saved. He wants to give us the armour of the Christian with shield of faith and show us the good pathway.

Romans 8:28 gives us the perfect reminder that we should never question his judgment. **ALL** things work together for our good—even our trials. We can pray and have hope he will give us time to grow to the complete man. If we pass the tests he gives us, he will continue to work with us. **Luke 17:10**, if we are doing his work, can we boast? No, but if we do it willingly, we will get a reward (**1 Cor. 9:16-17**). If we don't **know God**, and if we are not disciples, we will find no reason to obey.

1 Corinthians 14:23-25 tells us to look into God's mirror and find a way to change! That is our job! Consider what we say and do.

MOREOVER, let us also remember that the first day of the week is not the only time the saints should meet together to study and learn his words and His will for their lives.

For a while, let us focus on one part of this conversion process as seen in [Hebrews 10:19-27](#) – "not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together"

When we are forsaking the assembly, whether it be a.m. or p.m. worship, or Sunday and Wednesday Bible Classes – we are forsaking God, one another, and ourselves.

Early Christians assembled EVERY Lord's Day for worship ([Acts 2:42](#)). The church was "steadfast" [to continue all the time Thayer] in assembling together

They assembled at every opportunity Acts 2:46-47

46 And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart,

47 Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.

Paul later says in **Acts 20:20**:

20 And how I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but have shewed you, and **have taught you publickly, and from house to house,**

[Acts 20:7](#) ... The Christians at Troas met on Sunday to worship.

The church in Corinth ([1 Cor. 11](#); [16:2](#)) are seen assembling on the first day of the week.

Consider several reason why we should not forsake the assembling of ourselves together:

Choosing not to assemble with the saints in Worship and Bible Study demonstrates a contempt for spiritual things ([Romans 8:1, 6](#)).

If one chooses not to assemble with the saints to worship would you say they are spiritually minded or carnally minded ([Galatians 6:7-8](#))?

Choosing not to assemble with the saints in Worship and Bible Study involves choosing not to do that which is known to be good ([James 4:17](#)).

I have never talked to anyone who denied that it would be good for one to attend all the worship services. Would you agree that who chooses to worship is a making a good choice?

Choosing not to assemble with the saints in Worship and Bible Study is choosing not to give or receive needed encouragement in living the Christian life ([Hebrews 10:24-25](#)).

We encourage each other in many ways, but one of the most important ways is by our faithful attendance. OUR faithful attendance helps prevent others from falling away from the Lord.

Choosing not to assemble with the saints in worship and Bible Study is a violation of an explicit command ([Hebrews 10:25](#)).

We need to remember what sin is ... [1 John 3:4](#).

Choosing to miss even one service violates [Hebrews 10:25](#).