“I’m a Christian, I just don’t go to church”

(by Dan Chaney)

Maybe you’ve been burned by religious people. Maybe you have social setting anxiety. Maybe you just prefer other recreational activities on Sunday. Individual motivations really aren’t the focus of this post.

*“I’m a Christian but I don’t go to church”* sounds reasonable, possibly even preferable. It’s similar to the phrase you used to hear *“I’m spiritual but not religious.”* Being dismayed or soured on organized religion is a real thing. So these phrases sound reasonable - the problem is, they’re just not biblical.

Collective worship IS God’s idea!

The word *“church”* itself means *“assembly”* (ekklesia).

Church = regular assembling!

*“I find God in the woods.” “I do a lot of my own devotions.” “My family worships via livestream.”*

All of those ideas are great! In fact if you’re not engaging with God like this outside of collective worship your spiritual life is probably anemic.

The issue is - those are all Monday thru Saturday things!

And to be honest, the mentality of those statements, if that’s all I’m doing, is a little on the selfish side.

God calls us to collective worship on Sunday (**Acts 20:7**, **I Corinthians 16:1-2**). **Hebrews 10:25** tells Christians not to ***“forsake the assembling of ourselves together.”***

You know why vs 25 is so important? Because I can’t do vs 24 if I’m guilty of vs 25. If I’m not there, I’m not ***“considering how to stimulate others to love and good works.”***

You see, God’s design of assembling is about more than just me!

Bear one another’s burdens. Confess one to another. Sing together. Break bread together. There is no *“church”* without *“together”*…consistently together!

We can’t fulfill those togethers even if we’re assembling but it’s infrequently or inconsistently.

And we’re robbing ourselves of God’s blessings, we are outside of His will for us, if we’re not consistently worshipping together.

This post is NOT about attendance keeping, a tally sheet being kept somewhere recording how often folks *“show up.”*

I pray what it does is provoke Jesus-minded people to fulfill Gods design for your spiritual life.

*“Church”* is a blessing!

Let me quickly speak to this - if you’ve been burned by church people or disappointed in Gods people, well, I’d probably say *“Join the club. We all have.”*

Anytime you get multiple personalities together, friction is a guarantee. I’m not excusing all ungodly behavior. Some groups should be abandoned. I’m just begging you, don’t let the actions of a few cause you to throw away the whole concept.

I think part of Gods design of *“together”* is to encourage us from being selfish. We can’t always get our way. Sometimes going through a difficult situation with people we disagree with can actually be a healthy thing for us and develop bonds that would never have been that strong without the adversity.

So please, from my heart, please consider regularly worshiping somewhere.

Get plugged into a local church somewhere.

Actively serve others and let them serve you.

For your benefit and for God’s glory!

Amen, let it be so.

Which Servant Are You?

(by Edwin Crozier)

***“Who then is the faithful and wise servant, whom his master has set over his household, to give them their food at the proper time? Blessed is that servant whom his master will find so doing when he comes. Truly, I say to you, he will set him over all his possessions. But if that wicked servant says to himself, 'My master is delayed,' and begins to beat his fellow servants and eats and drinks with drunkards, the master of that servant will come on a day when he does not expect him and at an hour he does not know and will cut him in pieces and put him with the hypocrites. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth”*** (**Matthew 24:45-51**).

I think some people misunderstand the parable of the faithful and wise servant who is doing the master’s will when he comes. Some critics would suggest that this parable teaches people to be faithful lest they get punished. In fact, it teaches the exact opposite. What it highlights is there are some servants who the only reason they obey is to avoid punishment. When the master isn’t around, they procrastinate and wait. They hope to guess rightly about when he is going to return and get caught up on their duties before he does. But the master will come at an unexpected time and they will be punished. However, there is another servant who is simply faithful and wise, who does the master’s will for love of the master. He doesn’t procrastinate when the master is gone or lounge about when the master isn’t looking, but for love of his master simply fulfills his role properly whether the master is watching or not. Which servant are you?