

## Attitudes Toward Assembling {concluded}

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by Bill Crews

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acknowledged that he **dreaded** "going to church" about as much as he dreaded anything. So, he had concluded that if he would go ahead and "go to church" anyway, the Lord, knowing how much he dreaded it, would surely overlook some of the sinful things he enjoyed doing through the week. (I have not encountered that extreme among any brethren.) Two Christians planned to attend a family reunion on a week-end, and so they sought to locate a congregation of the Lord's people with whom they could assemble. A non-Christian relative, learning of their intention, said, "Well, if you just have to go to church, there is some kind of church meeting not too far from where we're having the reunion." To that person any kind of church ought to do for those people who "just **have** to go to church."

Brethren, we would be happier, and far more productive spiritually if we would take this matter of serving the Lord very seriously. If our attitude toward assembling is improper, let's change it!

## Tips For Effective Listening

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by Wayne Goff

**O**ur speaker for the week has spent hours preparing each lesson, has dedicated his life to the effective presentation of God's Word, and will do the best job he can of enthusiastically share the Message with us. Are you prepared to listen well? Here are a few tips on hearing well. It does take some effort.

### 1. Be attentive, **Nehemiah 8:1-3; Acts 2:14; Luke 19:47-48**

Ask questions like: (1) What is the **purpose** of this particular message? (2) What is the main point? (3) What proof is being offered? (4) What will this mean to me today? (5) Do I need to change something in my life?

### 2. Be reverent, **Hebrews 12:28; Matthew 13:15; Acts 13:46**

At every assembly, be aware that you are in the presence of God! This is not a sporting event, a social gathering, or a school function. God is with us, and we are to serve Him with reverence and godly fear. If the message is presented accurately from God's Word, then God is speaking to us. What is He saying to you?

### 3. Be honest, **1 Samuel 3:10; Matthew 13:15; Acts 13:46**

We can judge ourselves to be unworthy of everlasting life by our failure to carefully listen and honestly apply the message to ourselves. "Hearing" God's Word is more than letting the speaker's words fall on our ear drums! It involves hearing, considering, accepting, believing, and obeying.

### 4. Make a personal application, **2 Samuel 12:1-7**

David understood clearly the parable of Nathan, but he failed to see himself in it! Ask yourself humbly when being convicted by God's Word: "Am I the one?" If so, do something about it. If you need to correct a bad attitude, then change it. If you need to repent of a sin, repent and pray God for forgiveness. Don't wait until time and opportunity have passed you by. Satan always wants you to wait for a more convenient season. Today is the best day to hear and obey.

### 5. Be obedient, **James 1:21-25**

The Word heard, believed but not practiced is *worthless* to our lives. It may take time. It may require sacrifice. But humbly obeying God's Word is worth every bit of effort put forth. "But grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ," **2 Peter 3:18**.