

## Welcome to the MetaChurch

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by Wayne Goff

*The following comes from the e-bulletin CHURCHHUMOR published by PreachingToday.com. It was written by Drew Dyck, a contributing editor, and makes a tongue-in-cheek point that is worthy of our consideration.*

### Welcome To The Metachurch

You probably saw the recent announcement from Facebook founder, Mark Zuckerberg. He has officially changed the name of the company from Facebook to “Meta.”

The name change signals a bold new direction for the company. They’re going all in on the “metaverse,” a 3-D, virtually reality world.

I had a couple of thoughts when I saw the announcement.

First, I’ll admit I was a little peeved. After all, I own two shares of Facebook stock and I was not even consulted on the name change! I may air my grievance directly to Mr. Zuckerberg at the next shareholders’ meeting, which they keep forgetting to invite me to.

Second, it made me wonder if churches will follow Facebook into the brave new world of augmented reality. Perhaps 10 years down the road, instead of loading the family into the ol’ minivan, we’ll be strapping on VR goggles to worship with fellow believers in a souped-up cyberspace. With the immersive technology that’s coming down the pike, you could shake virtual hands, have online conversations, even sing “together.” Of course, it could compromise the authenticity of community. You’d never know if the young, attractive avatar sitting in the pew beside you wasn’t 87-year-old Mildred who decided to shave a few years off her metachurch persona. Taking communion would be weird too.

Come to think of it, I’ll probably stick with good, old in-person church. Those VR goggles always looked dorky to me anyway.

— Drew Dyck

### Virtual Reality Church?

During the pandemic, we were compelled to go virtual, online for our Bible classes and worship services, like so many others. While this was a blessing, it also came with **pros** and **cons**. The “cons” were the unbelievable amount of work this placed on Scott Morrell and the fact that some became so comfortable *staying at home* that they decided to, well, *stay at home more* after we began meeting in-person again! The article I copied above points out the futility of the virtual reality world. And think about it: “**virtual reality**” means “**not reality**”! It is not the same, and it does not accomplish what assembling together was intended to do! So God is not pleased with us when we can **actually** assemble and choose not to for **convenience’ sake**! And we had better be careful that our “reasons” aren’t really “excuses” in disguise! Another “**con**” is that brethren have become **even more alienated** than they were already! The **connectedness** of assembling is seen in **Hebrews 10:24-25a**: “**And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together...**” When we choose to stay home, we are thinking only of ourselves, and not “*one another*”!

The “pros” are that those who are physically unable to attend due to illness, disease, or disability can still tune in to the livestream and receive some much needed spiritual nourishment. So each of us needs to examine ourselves when it comes to our attendance habits, and make corrections where needed. Convenience can be good, but it can also make us lazy. **Beware!**

— Wayne

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