

# 101 Excuses Christians Give for Forsaking the Assembling of Ourselves Together

(Compiled by Paul R. Blake from Internet Sources)

Introduction:

- A. Actually, 161 (includes a number of denominational responses)
  - 1. Not going to waste your time and mine talking about them
- B. God has heard them all; He is less impressed with them than you are.

## I. "WHAT ARE ACCEPTABLE REASONS FOR MISSING SERVICES?"

- A. Excuses commonly given by contemporary Christians
  - 1. "I just don't think I need to come on Wednesday evening."
  - 2. "The preacher is paid to be there, not us. I just don't feel we need the classes."
  - 3. "Sunday night worship interferes with my children's supper. Wednesday night the kids need to rest and be fresh for school the next day."
  - 4. "I changed my work schedule to times of church services to have more free time during the rest of the week."
  - 5. "All I have to do is be there for the Lord's Supper and I have fulfilled my duty to God."
  - 6. Excuses accepted by most church leadership
    - a. Deeply troubled by an important matter
    - b. Busy at work
    - c. Traveling or on vacation
    - d. Exhaustion
    - e. No, wait! That's Baal's list of excuses for not coming to His own worship services - 1Kings 18:26-27
- B. What the issue is not
  - 1. It is not about knowledge. You know you need to attend, and you know the scriptures that require it - Heb. 10:25
  - 2. It is not about hardship. You know you are not afflicted nearly as much as Christians in the first century or those in hard places today Acts 14:21-22
  - 3. It is not about reasoning. You know that your excuses are the product of your rationalizing to comfort yourself and will not stand in the Judgment Isa. 55:8-9
  - 4. It is not about your past good works. You know that past good works cannot justify present sinful neglect - Isa. 58:1-5, 13-14
- C. What the issue is
  - 1. Since May of this year, we have seen a third of the members fail to return for Sunday evening worship and Wednesday evening Bible study
  - 2. While some if it can be attributed health concerns of the very aged members, most are members who are young and middle aged.
  - 3. Let me be frank with you: faithful attendance is reliable predictor of long term faithfulness. In most cases, decreasing attendance is a good indicator of an eventual departure from the faith

- D. What message does your absence send?
1. To the children who are eager to go to Bible class? How long will it be before your lack of zeal becomes theirs?
  2. To the teens who come to sit together in the front? How long before they begin making the same excuses as you? How long until that pew is empty? God will hold you accountable if that happens. I know I would.
  3. To the elderly Christians who manage to get to services while you are making excuses? In their old age and many infirmities, do they really need you to add discouragement to it?
- E. Will your priorities be the same in ten years?
1. It seems more important to you to ensure that your children get the proper rest, family time, and education now; and so, you absent yourselves from services to ensure that. What will you want for them after they have left home?
  2. It seems more important to get your children to school activities and part time jobs than to Bible study. What will you wish for your children as you approach your final years?
- F. The question that completely stumps me is how a Christian who professes to love God can want to absent himself from assemblies that are designed to honor Him and learn more of His will

## II. "WHY SHOULD I ATTEND ALL OF THE SERVICES?"

- A. To have fellowship with the crucified and risen Christ - Matt; 18:20; Luke 10:16
- B. To grow in the knowledge of God's Word - 1Tim. 4:13, 15-16
1. We turn to doctors for our health, CPAs for our taxes, auto mechanics for our vehicles, etc. However, when it comes to the Word of God, some apparently know it all. Every Christian can and should read the Bible and measure what is taught. I am not promoting preacher tyranny. I am warning against member anarchy.
- C. To feed your soul - Deut. 8:3; Matt. 4:4; 1Peter 2:2
- D. To be loved, encouraged, and prayed for - Matt. 18:19; Gal. 6:2
- E. To love and encourage your fellow Christians - John 13:34-35
- F. To worship - Heb. 13:15
- G. To promote the Gospel - 1Thes. 1:8-9

### Conclusion:

A. An elderly Christian woman, crippled with arthritis, used to hobble to the services of the church on crutches. It was a great ordeal and required of her a considerable amount of toil and pain. A friend of hers observed her regular and faithful attendance and asked, "How do you manage to be at every service?" Her answer was, "My heart gets there first, and my old legs just follow after."

B. Matt. 22:37-39 - Forsaking the assembling is just loving yourself.