

**April 29, 2020**

## **Commandment #4**

Before moving on to the fifth commandment, I would like to continue our thoughts on the fourth commandment. The fourth commandment deals with keeping the Sabbath or honoring the Lord's Day. As I was meditating upon this commandment last week, this question came to mind, "Why do most people go to church?" I believe there are two main reasons why we go to church, one is social and the other is spiritual. At this point I am not counting those who go because their parents make them, because those individuals usually quit as soon as they can, or they continue based on one of the two former reasons. By the way, the same two reasons are at the root of the decision-making process when choosing a church.

Experience has taught me that many people, when looking for a church, often base their decision upon the social aspect of the ministry, more than the spiritual aspect. People generally look for a church where there are others their age or in their social group. They may not agree with everything the church believes or stands for, but they are willing to conform as long as their social need is met. Unfortunately, the social aspect of the church, while important, is not the primary factor in selecting or attending a church.

There are many things that we can learn about ourselves and our spiritual walk during this time of difficulty and separation. When one's primary reasons for going to church are social based, when the gathering together is taken away, church itself, ceases to be significant. If, however, one's primary reasons for going to church are spiritual, then even when we are unable to meet together, they will still pursue spiritual things, taking advantage of whatever spiritual resources are made available to them. Take a moment to read **Hebrews 10:22-29**. Verse 25 admonishes us to gather together as a church body, but you need to read the entire passage to understand the context and significance of the verse.

Verse 22 begins with the admonition to draw near to God. Verses 22-23 both deal with the matter of our faith. Our faith is the basis for our gathering together in verses 24-25. Verses 26-29 deal with the consequences for despising the principles of verses 24-25. Verse 26 teaches that when we forsake the church, we are sinning willfully, and we can expect a certain fearful judgment.

We have been unable to gather together now for six weeks, and yet I still have people asking me how to find the webcast services, which tells me they haven't "been to church" in the past six weeks. If we are truly motivated by the spiritual aspect of church, we will make every effort to "attend," even if it is only via an on-line webcast. I realize that "attending" on-line is not the same as physically attending church, but there are some things you can do to make it spiritually profitable.

1. Treat it like a real service. Plan a specific time to watch the webcast as a family. Make sure everyone is up and "dressed" for church. Keep in mind that you are worshipping the same God. If attending church requires a degree of respect, the same applies at home, even if there is no one else present. We are still entering into worship and we should do so with an attitude of reverence and respect.
2. Remove all distractions. Turn off any electronic devices you do not need to watch the service. Put away all food, drink, toys, etc. If you would not have it at church, put it away before church begins at home.
3. Have your Bible, writing utensil and notebook ready when the service begins. Take notes just like you would in church.
4. Participate in the service. Pray along with the Pastor and sing along with the hymns. If a copy of the music is available, have it ready before the service begins. What you get out of the service, depends entirely upon what you are willing to put into it.