

Too Much Emphasis On Attendance?

When we think of attendance, we think of bodily presence.

Vine's expository dictionary defines attendance as, "to continue steadfastly in a thing and give unremitting care to", "to take heed to, give heed". The priests who gave attendance at the altar, did not simply stand near-by, they served, or devoted themselves to offering sacrifices."

I Cor. 11:20 "when you come together"

The attendance that pleases Heaven is not just bodily presence, which is included (Heb. 10:25) but what we do while here and why we are here.

Malachi 2:2 "If you will not hear, and if you will not lay it to heart to give glory unto my Name, saith Jehovah of Hosts, then will I send the curse upon you, and I will curse your blessings: yea, I cursed them already, because you did not lay it to heart."

We may do the "five items of worship" but if we do not lay it to heart our time here is vain.

Matt. 5:23-24

23 Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee;

24 Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.

We cannot worship acceptably when we have made no effort to correct our lives and our standing with our brethren.

Heb. 10:24-25

24 And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works:

25 Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.

The thought is not so much that we encourage each other to meet together, (which we should) but that we are to meet together where such encouragement is available.

My parents forced me to go. Good for them, God bless them for that. We all should reach a point in our lives where attendance is not forced, but done because we need to serve God and Jesus because we love them.

What controls our attendance?

I I Cor. 5:14 For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead:

One last thought that is hard to talk about but we should not neglect it. Our obligations to members who have stopped attending?

Gal. 6:1 Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.

II Pet. 1:13 Yea, I think it meet, as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up by putting you in remembrance;

We may have placed too much emphasis upon attendance alone. We can never overemphasize the true need and reason for assembling with the saints, or meeting our divine obligations.

Dave Richards