**Going to Church -- GOD’S HOUSE**

**Ps. 122:1 “I was glad when they said unto me, let us go into the house of the Lord.”**

Are you glad when it’s time to come to church? Are you glad when you think about coming to church? Hummm… Some may say Yes, some may say No, some may say sometimes; some may say it depends.

Have you ever thought about or ask yourself “WHY” you come to church? Whatever your answer is, may be the reason why you are or are not glad to come to the house of the Lord. Hummm . . .

But as Bishop would tell us and as Minister Alyce reminded us last Sunday – What does the Word say about coming to church.

**To Receive Education, instruction; information; enlighten**

* Eph. 4:11-12 “And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists, and some pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ.”

**Blessings pronounced upon**

* Ps. 84:4 “Blessed are they that dwell in thy house; they will be still praising thee, Selah

**The Lord is At Church**

* Matt. 18:20 “For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.

**To encourage one another**

* Heb. 10:25, in part “not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together . . . but exhorting one another.”

**To Edify, Teach, Improve**

* I Cor. 14:26 “How is it then brethren? When ye come together, every one of you hath a psalm, hath a doctrine, hath a tongue, hath a revelation, hath an interpretation. Let all things be done unto edifying.”

**The Lord’s Command us to**

* Heb. 10:25 “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.

We come to church or we should come to church because the word tells us in Heb. 10:25 -- ***NOT TO*** abandon, neglect, the gathering together of ourselves.

**(“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.**”).

When we don’t come together as a body in this building, we are being disobedient to God and we may cause others to do so as well.

**NOT TO** forsake the assembling of ourselves, does not give us any options to come when we feel like it, or when we have nothing else or better to do. We forsake the assembly whenever we can be here, but choose to be somewhere else. Now, are there times or legitimate reasons one cannot come to church – Why of course. However, I would caution us to examine those reasons very carefully. We can justify our actions or lack of actions to be appropriate or right based upon our own reasoning. However, Prov. 21:2 (in part) says “Every way of a man is right in his own eyes. . .”

It is written, I Cor. 12:18, God has set the members every one of them in the body, as it has pleased him. We are not just here by happenstance; we are here because God placed us here together as one united body. And since He placed us here, He has a purpose for us and we should not take it lightly by coming to church when we feel like it or not or come when we have nothing better to do.

We are united together as one body, the body of Christ, and members in particular. When we come together we all have different assignments (apostles, prophets, teachers, miracles) and we have unique gifts (healing, helps, governments, diversities of tongues) for the body of Christ. And when one of us is not here, something is lacking; someone will miss something that God has given you to give to someone who has a need (e.g. encouragement, exhortation, healing, etc.). You may say, O’ I will give it to them the next time I see them or I’ll call them. What you had to give that person or persons was for that appointed time and there may not be a next time.

When we assemble and do the things God commands, it builds us up and makes us stronger. When we don’t assemble ourselves together at the appointed time, whether it’s one time or more, we become weak and weaker and weaker. And we open the door for satan to attack us and our families in every which way possible.

As I stated earlier, unfortunately, there may be circumstances beyond our control that we are unable to attend church. In these instances, we can struggle to stay strong and may even fall away. Therefore, it is the responsibility of those who can and will come to church to encourage others when they are unable to be at church.

Remember, when we assemble ourselves together we strengthen and encourage each other. You may give someone a kind word, encouragement, a smile, a hug or just your presence at church can change and make a difference to someone or even yourself. Just think about what could have or may have happened if you had not shown up at church at the appointed time.

Let me give you three questions to write down and ponder over, while removing our personal desires from the decision making process on what Jesus would do in a particular situation.

1. If Jesus were here today, what are the reason(s) He would miss church?
2. If Jesus were here today, what would He think about people who missed church for other reasons, especially in light of the fact that He paid the price with His blood for us to have the freedom to gather together?
3. If you knew Jesus was going to be at church, under what circumstances would you miss?

Finally, let me leave with you several thoughts to motivate yourself the next time you are tempted to do something other than come to church:

1. You are commanded to come to church
2. You can forsake the assembly by missing just once
3. Jesus died on the cross so you can go to church
4. You are encouraged to love and do good deeds when you come to church
5. You Love the Lord so much; you want to come to church.
6. Jesus would be at church, if He were here today.

Finally, let us all purpose in our hearts to assemble together “Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.” (Eph. 4:13-16, in part)

**I was glad when they said unto me, let us go into the house of the Lord.”**