

“THINK ON THESE THINGS”

Philippians 4:8

Assembling Together

By Micky Galloway

I'm thankful for Web Sites and Live Streams, FaceTime, Facebook and Zoom/Video conferencing. I'm sure Paul was thankful for parchment and ink and faithful messengers to carry his letters to the churches. Paul, John, and others used paper and ink, and I'm glad they did. Modern technology is a useful tool, and I'm thankful for it. **However, an indispensable aspect of joy is made “complete” only when God's children are face to face.**

I'm sure most of us are weary with COVID-19 and the social, economic and political impact. Perhaps we have benefitted from the technology to do Online Sermons, Facebook Live, Zoom, Etc. How convenient, we can do this from home. **DO NOT GET USED TO THIS! IT IS NOT A SUBSTITUTE FOR A WORSHIP ASSEMBLY!** It does not supplant the local church and its work. Some may ask, “What is the point of going to worship assemblies?” We quote Hebrews 10:25: *“not forsaking our own assembling together, as the custom of some is, but exhorting (one another); and so much the more, as ye see the day drawing nigh;”* Yet, forget verse 24, *“and let us consider one another to provoke unto love and good works.”* Our worship assemblies are not for the selfish! Our presence is intended to benefit others. Don't we see that it undermines our credibility when we preach on attendance and then we don't attend?

Being a Christian involves others. It is a **“together”** religion. READ THE TEXT! It establishes a pattern.

Acts 2:44-45 - *“And all that believed were together, and had all things common; and they sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all, according as any man had need.”*

Acts 10:24-27 - *“And on the morrow they entered into Caesarea. And Cornelius was waiting for them, having called together his kinsmen and his near friends. And when it came to pass that Peter entered, Cornelius met him, and fell down at his feet, and worshipped him. But Peter raised him up, saying, Stand up; I myself also am a man. And as he talked with him, he went in, and findeth many come together.”*

Acts 11:25-26 - *“And he (Barnabas) went forth to Tarsus to seek for Saul; 26 and when he had found him, he brought him unto Antioch. And it came to pass, that even for a whole year they were gathered together with the church, and taught much people, and that the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch.”*

Acts 12:12 - *“And when he had considered (the thing), he came to the house of Mary the mother of John whose surname was Mark; where many were gathered together and were praying.”*

Acts 15:30 - *“So they, when they were dismissed, came down to Antioch; and having gathered the multitude together, they delivered the epistle.”*

Acts 20:7-8 - *“And upon the first day of the week, when we were gathered together to break bread, Paul discoursed with them, intending to depart on the morrow; and prolonged his speech until midnight. And there were many lights in the upper chamber where we were gathered together.”*

Paul's epistle to the church in Rome had arrived three years before he did in the flesh. Now, finally (after months and more than a thousand miles on the Mediterranean), Paul saw these brothers and sisters in Christ with his own eyes. *“And from thence we made a circuit, and arrived at Rhegium: and after one day a south wind sprang up, and on the second day we came to Puteoli; where we found brethren, and were entreated to tarry with them seven days: and so we came to Rome. And from thence the brethren, when they heard of us, came to meet us as far as The Market of Appius and The Three Taverns; whom when Paul saw, he thanked God, and took courage”* (Acts 28:13-15). Note that he was encouraged by seeing his brethren!

The saints in Corinth came together for their worship in observing the Lord's Supper (1 Cor, 11:17-34). Note: *“that ye come together”* (verse 17), *“when ye come together in the church”* [church assembled - cf. 1 Cor. 14:23, mg] (verse

18), ***“When therefore ye assemble yourselves together”*** [in one place, KJV, NKJV] (verse 20), ***“that your coming together...”*** (verse 34). Small group meetings do not constitute the church assembled!

John tells us why! ***“Having many things to write unto you, I would not (write them) with paper and ink: but I hope to come unto you, and to speak face to face, that your joy may be made full”*** (2 John 12). ***“I had many things to write unto thee, but I am unwilling to write (them) to thee with ink and pen: but I hope shortly to see thee, and we shall speak face to face. Peace (be) unto thee. The friends salute thee. Salute the friends by name”*** (3 John 13-14).

Presently, much of the disciple’s walk is “by faith, not by sight” (2 Cor. 5:7). Peter said, ***“that the proof of your faith, (being) more precious than gold that perisheth though it is proved by fire, may be found unto praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ: whom not having seen ye love; on whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice greatly with joy unspeakable and full of glory: receiving the end of your faith, (even) the salvation of (your) souls”*** (1 Peter 1:7-9).

However, one day we will see Jesus face to face. ***“And he showed me a river of water of life, bright as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb, in the midst of the street thereof. And on this side of the river and on that was the tree of life, bearing twelve (manner of) fruits, yielding its fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. And there shall be no curse any more: and the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be therein: and his servants shall serve him; and they shall see his face; and his name (shall be) on their foreheads”*** (Rev. 22:1-4).

Job expressed his confident delight that he would see God face to face, ***“But as for me I know that my Redeemer liveth, And at last he will stand up upon the earth: And after my skin, (even) this (body), is destroyed, Then without my flesh shall I see God; Whom I, even I, shall see, on my side, And mine eyes shall behold, and not as a stranger. My heart is consumed within me”*** (Job 19:25-27).

Being a Christian involves others! The virtual world is a helpful tool, but there is something woefully lacking in the thought of seeing God “virtually.” Our hope is to be in the everlasting presence of God and see Him face to face. **Let us think of that when it is time to assemble for worship!** David said, ***“I was glad when they said unto me, let us go unto the house of Jehovah”*** (Ps. 122:1). ■



Don’t Forsake Our Assembling Together, Brethren!

Have you ever given deep thought and study to what one **DOES NOT DO** when they violate God’s command: ***“Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together”*** ? Carefully and prayerfully read Hebrews 10:22-39 and note the following. Such brethren **DO NOT**:

- Draw near to God with faithful hearts - vs. 22
- Hold fast the confession of faith; they waver in faith - vs. 23
- Consider and provoke others to love and good works - vs. 24
- Exhort others to consider the day drawing near - vs. 25
- Heed the warning of willful sin – vs. 26
- Respect the Spirit of grace and blood of Christ - vs. 29
- Fear the vengeance and judgment of the Lord - vs. 30
- Remember their former state - vss. 32, 33
- Have compassion for the sufferings of others - vs. 34
- Have confidence in the eternal reward - vss. 34, 35
- Have a saving faith - vs. 38
- Please the Lord in steadfastness - vss. 38, 39

Please consider the magnitude and seriousness of ***“forsaking the assembling of ourselves together”*** (Heb. 10:25) and don’t do this, brethren! – ***tgmc*** ■

Service Times - Sunday: 9:00 & 10:00 AM; 6:00 PM - Wednesday: 7:00 PM

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