

## FORSAKE NOT

That absenteeism is the most common problem every congregation of the Lord's church faces is readily agreed to by all. There are surely no preachers, elders or concerned Christians who are not at least to some degree frustrated by the blatant forsaking of the assembly by faint-hearted brethren. This article shall consider again those things a Christian misses by not assembling with the saints as he/she ought.

The very least a Christian has turned his back upon is the privilege of coming before the Creator of all things, as a faithful child in worship and giving a sacrifice of praise in the name of Jesus. What person would throw away an invitation to have an audience with the President, or perhaps with a monarch, let alone an invitation to actually converse and sit at table to eat with such? The main problem is those afore described have not really thought through nor taken seriously their relationship with God, what the purpose of worship is, nor what their duty is to their God and Savior.

Those who forsake the assembly miss out on the fellowship designed to last eternally. It seems really strange how some act like they could not care less about the brethren, whether in worship or other planned fellowships, by never or rarely ever showing up. Yet, they think they will go to Heaven with those same brethren and be together forever!

Closely linked to fellowship, the Christian who forsakes the assembly also misses out on edification. Edification is strictly personal. It is not so much the design of worship, but it is one of the "built in" benefits or "by-products" of worship.

A third item forsaking brethren miss out on is instruction. This is usually the point about which some, who try to justify their sin, will quibble. They allege they can get as much or more out of their own personal Bible reading at home as at worship. This writer finds it hard to believe that those who forsake the assembly actually take time at home to study their Bible. If they truly studied their Bible, they would soon learn of their error, repent and not forsake any longer!

The fourth and fifth aspects of worship the lazy member misses are those of privilege of giving and the sobering proclamation of the death of our Lord in the Supper. The dedicated Christian knows the joy and reward of dutiful, bountiful and sacrificial giving to the Lord's cause. It is the grateful Christian who would not within his or her power, willfully forsake meeting with those of like precious faith about the Lord's table.

Now, though it is (or should be) obvious to all that outright disobedience is involved, we shall list those sins involved in forsaking the assembly.

1. There is the foremost disobedience of Hebrews 10:25, from which our title is taken.
2. There is the failure to edify the brethren when opportunity was present to do so.
3. There is the willful disobedience of not giving as per I Corinthians 16.
4. There is the failure to eat the Lord's supper as was a part of the apostles' doctrine and practice which all faithful first century Christians followed (Acts 2:42; 20:7, etc.).

The most frightening point in all of this is: Christians who willfully forsake the assembly and, thus, willfully sin in all areas listed above will miss Heaven. That is the point made in the context of Hebrews 10:25 as verse 26 clearly teaches.

Reader, if you are guilty of the sin of forsaking the assembly on the first day (or any assembly of the church) we implore you: "Repent therefore of this thy wickedness" (Acts 8:22) and cease that which is so obviously sinful!

- Robin W. Haley, *Defender*, Bellview Church of Christ, Pensacola, FL

*O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness: fear before him, all the earth. - Psalm 96:9*

## News & Notes

**SYMPATHY:** To David and Sarah Nelson at the recent passing of David's mother, Phyllis Nelson. God bless the family.

**CONFESSION & REQUEST FOR PRAYERS:** Bill Robinson.

**NEW CONVERT CLASS:** Each Sunday a.m. Bible Class in Room 406.

**FELLOWSHIP DINNER & EARLY SERVICE:** TODAY at about noon at the Fellowship Building followed by our early afternoon worship service at 2:00 p.m. at the church building. This schedule also for Sunday, Sept. 23rd.

**CARE & SHARE BEARS:** Each Tuesday, 9:00 a.m. All ladies invited.

**GOSPEL MEETINGS & SING:**

McKinleyville ..... Sept. 7 (7:00 - 8:30 p.m.) ..... *Friday Night Sing*

St. Clair Ave., ELO ..... Sept. 9-12 (7:00 p.m., Mon.-Wed.) ..... Steve Stevens

**CHESTER** ..... Sept. 23-27 (Mon. - Thur., 7:00 p.m.) ..... **Tim Hatfield**

**MEN'S BREAKFAST:** Next Saturday, Sept. 8th, 8:30 a.m. at the Columbiana, OH Church of Christ. Sign-up sheet on the desk in the foyer.

**MEMBER VISITS:** Elders and Minister visits with members can be scheduled in your home or to meet here at the building by signing the sheet on the desk, or arrange an appointment by talking to Rico.

**PANTRY:** Noodles and tuna fish.

**SICK & SHUT-IN: Weirton Medical Center:** Ernie Robinson. **At Home:** Jenny Rhodes, Charlie DeLong, Bill & Carol Stillwell, Russell Martin, Blondenia Orr, Doris Dunham, Alex Harless. **FOX NURSING HOME:** Mary Jane Bowers (Room 19).

**CROSSROADS:** Sarah Miller. **AUBURN NURSING HOME, SALEM, OH:** Jim Mick. **IN FLORIDA:** Ilene Rayl. **IN CALIFORNIA:** Cindy Moore (Pat Allison's cousin).

## If I Miss Heaven ...

- √ I'll miss the greatest, grandest, most glorious place ever conceived (Revelation 21:1).
- √ I'll miss a grand reunion with family who preceded me (Genesis 49).
- √ I'll realize the tragedy of taking the blood of Christ shed in sacrifice for me for granted (Hebrews 2:9).
- √ I'll never again see the light of day (Matthew 25:30).
- √ I'll suffer unbearably and unendingly (Mark 9:43).
- √ I'll never again have the opportunity to praise and worship Jehovah God (Matthew 25:41).
- √ I'll be punished with the demons (Matthew 25:41).
- √ I'll not have one friend or loved one to care about my fate (Revelation 21:4).
- √ I'll have no hope (Romans 8:24; Titus 1:2).
- √ I'll be lost forever (Revelation 14:10-11).

- Bulletin Digest -

*Home from the earthly journey,  
Safe for eternity;  
All that the Savior promised -  
That is what heaven will be.*