

Fellowship

Does God expect us to go to church?

Heb 10:25 not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.

It may be popular to think that a Christian can decide if they want to go to church or not, but God's Word says otherwise; we are to increasingly be involved in church as the return of Christ approaches.

To fellowship is a command; lack of fellowship is disobedience.

What is church?

Col 1:24 I now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up in my flesh what is lacking in the afflictions of Christ, for the sake of His body, which is the church,

Church is not a building, or a church service; it is the body of Christ, and we are members of His body.

So ultimately, the church is people, believers in Christ.

What if a person loves God but doesn't go to church?

1 John 4:20 If someone says, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen, how can he love God whom he has not seen?

Basically, God says, "If you love Me, you'll love My people".

It is not possible to love God and yet want to be distanced from His people.

Mat 25:45 Then He will answer them, saying, "Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to Me."

The way we treat even the least of Christ's followers is the way we treat Christ Himself.

Isn't it more an issue of the heart?

1 John 1:7 But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.

It definitely is an issue of the heart.

According to this verse, if a person walks in the light, the natural result of walking in the light is that they will have fellowship with other believers.

Therefore, if a person is not in regular fellowship with other believers, it is an indication that they are not walking in the light no matter what they say; in other words, they are backslidden.

Are there any benefits to fellowship?

Ps 92:13-15 Those who are planted in the house of the LORD shall flourish in the courts of our God. (14) They shall still bear fruit in old age; they shall be fresh and flourishing, (15) to declare that the LORD is upright; He is my rock, and there is no unrighteousness in Him.

Those who are planted in God's house will be fruitful in their old age and will flourish.

1 Tim 3:15 but if I am delayed, I write so that you may know how you ought to conduct yourself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.

The church is the house of the Lord, and that's where God wants us to be planted.

What about people who are difficult to get along with?

Prov 27:17 As iron sharpens iron, so a man sharpens the countenance of his friend.

Those kinds of people exist in every church; you might even be one of them!

But God uses other people to “sharpen” us and make us more Christ-like.

How do I find my place in the body?

Eph 4:11-16 And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, (12) for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, (13) till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; (14) that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting, (15) but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head; Christ; (16) from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love.

There's a lot in this passage, but in answer to the question, the purpose of apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers, is to equip others for the work of ministry.

That means that if you want to find your ministry and be equipped for it, you need to be where these equippers are.

The result is that “every joint supplies” and “every part does its share”.

That's a description of a properly functioning church where each member has found their place.