

Central CONNECTION

JULY 2026 NEWSLETTER

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"That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God." 1 Corinthians 2:5

WHAT'S THE BIG DEAL WITH CHURCH ATTENDANCE?

By Pastor Steve Owens

"Let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: 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." Hebrews 10: 24-25

When I was born, (according to ancient historical documents) 49% of adults in America attended church in a typical week. Sunday was "blue law" day for most of the country. Blue laws were enacted to force culture to slow down and remember God. Sunday was the day for church, Sunday dinner and afternoon rest. This mandate encouraged generations to see Sunday as holy, not just another day. Most towns shut down on Sundays. Depending on state laws, supermarkets, department stores, hardware stores, general retail, liquor stores, and movie houses were all closed. Even as late as 2019, North Dakota banned all car sales on Sundays.

Things are dramatically different today. Statistics show that less than 3 out of 10 people attend church every week. I have talked to grown adults who have never attended church a single day in their lives. For someone who grew up in church, it's hard to fathom.

The great tragedy of the modern church-age is that the majority of self-professed Christians have adopted the world's attitude about church attendance. From 2023-2025, 64% claim to be "Christian" but only 55% attend church at all. 45% of American Christians have NOT attended church in the past 6 months. We have millions of "Christians" who have already "forsaken the assembling" while still wearing the label.

Excuses for lack of attendance are sky high. "I can worship God anywhere, I don't need to be in church every Sunday." "I'm tired, I need rest." "I work long hours, God understands." For many Christians, Sunday is treated like a *recovery* day instead of a *recharge* day.

On the opposite end of the spectrum, rather than a day of rest, Sunday has become sports for kids, travel baseball, work schedule, and overtime. Sunday is "family day" or "catch-up" day. If those excuses aren't enough, we now have the standard post-COVID excuse, "I watch online." People feel that "virtual attendance" is still obedience.

Regardless of the clamor of culture, Christ's command must be our guide. Is faithful, consistent church gathering a big deal to God?

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BIBLE MEMORY

Psalm 104:33-34

*I will sing unto the
LORD as long as I live:
I will sing praise to my
God while I have my
being. My meditation of
him shall be sweet:
I will be glad in the
LORD.*



COMMENTS/QUESTIONS?

Please send newsletter
comments, questions or
suggestions to:

CentralConnection@mail.com
(Note: @mail *not* @gmail)

WHAT'S THE BIG DEAL WITH CHURCH ATTENDANCE?

(Continued from page 1)

On the very day of His resurrection, Jesus Christ sanctioned the Apostles' assembly by walking into the middle of it. *"Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you."* John 20:19.

Eight days later the Lord met with them again on the "first day" in the evening. *"And after eight days again his disciples were within, and Thomas with them: then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace be unto you."* John 20:26. The Lord showed up again to firmly establish the order and custom.

Fifty days after the Resurrection, on Pentecost, the early church assembled daily in the temple and gathered from house to house. This is still "first day" timing. *"And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved."* Acts 2:46-47. From day one of the early Church, they met daily. Not weekly-only.

The "first day of the week" as the set time for the assembly and offering. *"Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come."* 1 Corinthians 16:2. Why does this matter? Paul wasn't inventing it. He was passing on the apostolic practice. They took offerings when they assembled, which was "first day."

The first day of the week custom continued with "breaking of bread" and preaching. *"And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight."* Acts 20:7. Thirty plus years after the Resurrection it was still "first day" plus breaking bread and preaching. The apostles never changed it.

The Bible Pattern

Jesus started it. He met with the eleven on the first day, then the next first day. The "Lord's Day" began with the Lord Himself. The apostles kept it. The early Church continued it. There is no verse that says "change to Saturday" or "make it random."

The apostles didn't vote on what day to meet. The empty tomb voted for them. Right after Jesus arose, the pattern was set: first day for assembly, every day for fellowship. And now, Hebrews says *"... so much the more, as ye see the day approaching."*

In these last days, the Bible commands Believers to assemble, *"so much the more."*

EDITOR'S NOTE: If you read this far into the article, text 714-745-8086 to be entered into a drawing for a free donut and coffee.

Reasons for "so much the more"

1. Because you're commanded to "DRAW NEAR." Hebrews 10:22, "Let us draw near with a true heart."

Assembling together with other believers in Church is one of the very best places you can be close to God. We do it together. **Matthew 18:20** "For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." Corporate worship pulls you near.

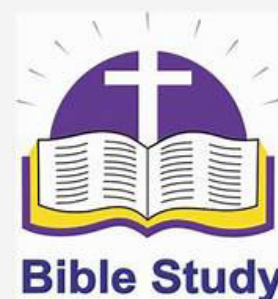
2. Because you need help to "HOLD FAST." Hebrews 10:23, "Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering."

Why? Faith wavers when you're isolated. When the Word of God is preached and you are with other brethren who profess that Jesus is Lord, gathering helps you to keep from drifting.

3. Because people need you to "CONSIDER" them. Hebrews 10:24, "Let us consider one another to provoke unto love and good works."



New Member Arriving Soon!



Weekly Topics of Bible Study

Every church service opens a new truth from God's word - miss one, and you miss something God has for you. Topics of study are chosen to give you a well-rounded diet.

"Old Testament Survey"
Adult Sunday School - 9 AM

"Relevant Preaching for Today"
Sunday Mornings - 10AM

"The Book of Acts"
Sunday Evenings - 5PM

"Biblical Discipleship"
Thursday Evenings - 7PM

If circumstances beyond your control hinder your attendance, you can watch services online and stay informed. All services are live and recorded.



WHAT'S THE BIG DEAL WITH CHURCH ATTENDANCE?

(Continued from page 2)

You can't encourage someone you don't see. Your presence provokes others to love and good works. Your absence removes that provocation.

4. Because God said, "NOT TO FORSAKE." Hebrews 10:25, "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together."

It's not a suggestion. Forsaking is to abandon. Obedience is the reason. God knows we need the Body. When you are not here, you have abandoned the body.

5. Because "THE DAY IS APPROACHING." Hebrews 10:25, "...and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching."

The world is getting darker, temptation is getting stronger. We are in the last days. You need church MORE, not less. 🕯️



Happy June Birthdays to: Precious Ighedo, Angelica Hamilton, Tega Ighedo, Mike Obuhanych, Annika Bilog, Noel Ighedo, and Charlene Parker!

PRIDE AND BROKEN PEOPLE

I truly praise God for the opportunity to share this special presentation pertaining to pride and broken people. This writing truly reminded me of the fact that I display more pride than brokenness in my Christian life. And it made me think, if someone were to ask my friends or family members of me, "Is she a broken Christian?" what would my response be?

Proverbs 16:18-19 *Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall. Better it is to be of an humble spirit with the lowly, than to divide the spoil with the proud.*

This writing is from Mrs. Nancy DeMoss Wolgemuth from her devotional called, "The Quiet Place Daily Devotional Reading" by Moody Publishers.

How can you tell if you're a broken Christian? One way is to consider the difference between a *broken* person and a *proud* person.

Proud people desire to be known as a success. **Broken people** are motivated to be faithful and to make others successful

Proud people are elated by praise and deflated by criticism. **Broken people** know that any praise for their accomplishments belongs to the Lord, and that criticism can help them become more like Christ.

Proud people keep others at arm's length. **Broken people** are willing to take the risk of getting close to others.

Proud people are concerned about the consequences and problems caused by their sin. **Broken people** are more concerned about how their sin has grieved and dishonored a holy God.

Proud people feel worthy of respect. **Broken people** feel a desperate need for God's mercy.

CBCOC MISSIONARIES

1. Dempsey (Missions Evangelist)
2. Duke (Mexico)
3. Goddard (Trinidad/Tobago)
4. Hearn (Nepal)
5. Hoffman (Belgium)
6. Hoffmeister (Ecuador)
7. Jackson (Japan)
8. Johnson (Wings BPS)
9. Lawson (Brazil)
10. Marco (Philippines)
11. Meach (Cambodia)
12. Mislan (Philippines)
13. Morgan (Japan)
14. Navarro (Philippines)
15. Qalo (Fiji)
16. Robinette (India)
17. Robinson (Zambia)
18. Rue (Ukraine)
19. Russell (Papua, New Guinea)
20. Trembly (Thailand/China)
21. Veldhuis (Cocopah Indians)
22. Wells (Papua New Guinea)

How Can you Support our Missionaries?

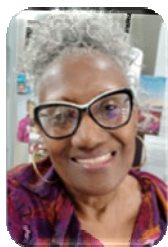
1. ATTEND: Women can be a part of Phebe's Fellowship on the first Wednesday of the month at 7:00. This group is vital in the prayer and support of our missionaries.

2. GIVE: Your sacrificial giving makes a difference!

3. PRAY: Remember to pray for our missionaries daily!



Use this convenient QR code for online giving.



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CENTRAL IN PICTURES



Grill Master Mark

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Silence while we focus

This 'n That



**MARK YOUR
CALENDAR FOR OUR
UPCOMING
MISSIONS CONFERENCE!
SEPTEMBER 25-27**

A pastor was ten minutes into his sermon when he noticed his young son in the balcony with a pea-shooter. He was leaning over the balcony aiming, and popping people in the head. As the pastor prepared to deliver a very public scolding of his boy, the 8 yr old son hollered out, "You keep preaching, Dad, and I'll keep 'em awake!"

We Can't Ask God

For help, if we are not making any effort.

For strength, if we have strength we are not using.

For guidance, if we are ignoring the guidance we now have.

For faith, when we are afraid to act on what we already know,

For forgiveness, if we continue hating someone.

For mercy, if we intend to commit the same sin again.

MISSIONS



Missionary Mike Robinette reports on India



Missionary Andy Hearn is excited about Nepal

CONGRATULATIONS TO MIKE AND VICKY!



WEDDING RECEPTION FOR DYLAN AND DEICY

