

## The Impact of Character upon Church Attendance

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by Bryan Gibson

Here are some **character traits** which every faithful Christian should possess, and the impact each has on his/her attendance.

One who **loves the Lord**, who deeply appreciates what He has done for him, needs no prodding to come to the worship assemblies. For him, these are just another opportunity to “sing His praises,” another opportunity to give thanks. And because his affections “have been nailed to the cross,” he looks forward to the Lord’s Supper, when he can once again reflect on that great event (1 Corinthians 11:23-29). Furthermore, one who loves the Lord does not measure out his worship; he doesn’t ask foolish questions like, “Do I have to go on Sunday night or Wednesday night?”

One who **fears the Lord** will “fall down before Him,” if not *literally*, at least in spirit. In other words, he already has the heart for worship, and so when presented with the opportunity, he will take full advantage of it. And because he fears God, he trembles at God’s word. “*Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together*” (Hebrews 10:25) – that’s God talking and he doesn’t want to do anything against God. All the warnings about falling away (e.g. Hebrews 3:12-13) – he trembles at those, too, realizing that if he misses these opportunities for worship, it may just happen to him.

A **humble person** won’t forsake the assemblies, either, not when their very design is to praise and honor the One to whom he owes everything. And the edification that results from these assemblies (1 Corinthians 14:26) – he’s humble enough to realize that he needs that, too.

One who has **faith in God** trusts in every provision of God’s grace (1 Peter 4:10), including this arrangement of the local church, with the worship He prescribes. The last thing he wants to do is to “*receive the grace of God in vain*” (2 Corinthians 6:1), which is exactly what he would do if he neglected these assemblies. And don’t forget another provision of God’s grace, His word. Yes, one can study at home, but if that person is truly hungry for God’s word, he’ll go where he can be fed – to the assemblies where God’s word is preached, and to the Bible studies that may precede or follow this period of worship.

We’ve all heard some of the lame excuses for missing worship, but the unselfish person – he’s not into excuses. He has denied himself (Matthew 16:24) and so he is much more focused on his responsibilities to the Lord than he is on his aches and pains and assorted other problems. It’s going to take a lot to keep him away.

**Deep love and concern for his brethren.** Notice how many times the word “*together*” is used to describe the relationship between brethren (e.g., 1 Corinthians 1:10; 2 Corinthians 6:1; Ephesians 4:16; Philippians 1:27; Colossians 2:2). Together in heart and mind, brethren should naturally look forward to the opportunity to actually meet together. And when they do come together, it brings them even closer. “When we meet in sweet communion where the feast divine is spread; hearts are brought in closer union while partaking of the bread” (*The Lord’s Supper*, T.S. Teddlie). “Before our Father’s throne we pour our ardent prayers; our fears, our hopes, our aims are one, our comforts and our cares” (*Blest Be the Tie*, Fawcett, Nageli).

**SEE YOU SUNDAY!**

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