

Soul Business – Community

Introduction:

The Greek word in the New Testament for *church* is the word 'ekklesia.' Simply put, this word is best translated as, 'gathering.' When the early church was forming, there was a high emphasis on gathering together on a consistent basis because the church was not just a location but was the people. Faith was always personal, but it was never private. When we look around at the world today, faith has become a private matter that is often not spoken about, nor actively put into practice. Fewer and fewer see the value in gathering together as the church. However, as followers of Jesus, Hebrews 10:24-25 reminds us that we must never neglect coming together, but must be intentional in not only gathering, but actively encouraging one another in our faith until Christ returns again. In other words, church is not a passive sport. We are called to actively participate. Therefore, when we gather, we do not do so out of obligation, but rather out of celebration, dedication, and application. Celebration of our freedom in Christ through His Crucifixion and Resurrection. Dedication to walking with one another to keep fighting the good fight every day. And application in taking what we are fed with in our gatherings and putting it into practice by word and deed. When this becomes the mission of the church, we will see our role as integral to the commission of Jesus to go into the world baptizing people in the name of the Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit, making disciples by reminding others of all that He has taught, and all the while knowing that He will be with us until the very end of the age (Matt. 28:18-20).

Read Your Bible

- Hebrews 10:24-25
- John 13:34-35

Apply God's Word to Your Life:

1. What value is there when the church gathers?
2. Is this value lost when the church neglects coming together? Why or why not?
3. In Hebrews 10:25, the word "Day" is capitalized. Why do you think this is and what does this mean for us as the church?
4. How would you define the word 'love?'
5. Based on your answer, what does it tangibly look like to 'love one another?'
6. In John 13:34-35, what does Jesus say is the result of the church loving one another? Do you think it is this simple? Why or why not?
7. How can you show the love of Christ to 3 people this week?

Reflecting on the text:

1. What have you learned about God?
2. What have you learned about the world?
3. What have you learned about yourself?

Pray

Eternal Lord, we thank you today for your church. We confess that we are not perfect but have sinned and fallen short of your glory. But we thank you for our redemption that you have purchased for us by your own blood shed on the Cross. By your wounds, we have been healed. Please help us to be the church you have called us to be. To love one another, just as Christ has loved us, until He comes again or calls us home. We pray this in His name. Amen!