



Fairgrounds Road  
C H U R C H O F C H R I S T

# MESSENGER

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“And this is the commandment we have from Him, that the one who loves God should love his brother also.” 1 John 4: 21

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**Sunday – December 10, 2017**

## Heart to Heart...

Over my many years I have heard quoted over and over Hebrews 10:25 using it to control anyone who misses a worship service. If someone is absent, they are called as “*forsaking the assembly.*” That includes Wednesday evening Bible study time. I still hear it today being used in this fashion. Let’s briefly examine this and I pray you will look with an honest heart.

The book of Hebrews was written to Jewish Christians. Jesus was rejected by the Jews as their Messiah and so anyone who was converted to Jesus being a Jew came under great persecution. Just read Hebrews 10:32-34 and you can see their struggles. Not only were they reproached and afflicted but they had their property seized! In turn, these Jewish Christians felt the strain to go back under Judaism and follow the Law of Moses giving up Jesus.

The writer of Hebrews is encouraging them to not give up Jesus as He alone is their guide and Savior. There is no hope left if people leave the Lord for something else. To reject Jesus and His sacrifice leaves one no other way to be saved. That’s the Hebrew book’s message.

When we get to Hebrews 10:25 it reads: “***Not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more as you see the day drawing near.***” First of all, this is not a complete sentence by itself. Verse 23 is the beginning of the sentence: “***Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful; and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more as you see the day drawing near.***” Note “*holding fast*”, “*consider how*” and then comes “*not forsaking.*”

The word “forsaking” means “to abandon” or “to desert.” It’s the same word Paul used in II Timothy 4:10 where he states that Demas has “*deserted*” me. Demas abandoned Paul. It’s also used in Hebrews 13:5 of the promise of God: “*I will never desert you.*” The word for “*forsaking*” is about abandoning or deserting completely. For one to use this verse as a passage to condemn for missing a worship service is not the proper way. Am I saying we shouldn’t be here? Not at all but this verse has been used by many to bring guilt on those who miss on occasions but they have not abandoned!

Being together as the church is what Jesus calls us to. It should be desired greatly. We are His church, His body, His brethren and we need to encourage each other and stir each other to do loving and good deeds. Being together with Jesus and His body should be a priority in our lives, something of most importance. Watch those who drift from assembling together and it will be a matter of time and they will “abandon” the assembly as a habit! To miss on occasion is not what this is speaking of. To use verses like this as a tool to control and condemn is an improper use of Scripture. Let’s reach to Jesus individually and as His body. We need His Supper, His word and encouragement and that only comes by being together. Think about it!!!

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