
BIBLE TALK

This week the question is: ***May people worship at home instead of assembling with the church?***

There are three common ideas which people have to which I call your attention:

Common idea #1: The idea that ***all churches are the same***. Even though each particular church has some small difference from the others in town, yet they all basically teach and practice the same thing. The differences are considered so trivial that no one should be discussing those differences.

Common idea #2: The idea that ***no church is really essential for salvation***. While people generally agree each church has its good points, no church is considered essential for salvation.

Common idea #3: The idea that ***worship at home with one's own family is just as good as assembling with a congregation***. Because this is a common belief, many people "*home church*." Just like they homeschool their children, some families have their own church in their own home and see no need to assemble with a congregation for worship.

Let me briefly explain why all three of these common ideas are wrong.

1) Not all churches are the same.

The teachings of the apostles of Christ are the standard of religious authority (Acts 2:42). They wrote their teachings down on paper (Eph 3:3-5). Those writings were preserved by the providence of God (Mt 24:35). Anyone teaching any doctrine differently than the apostles will be cut off from God on the Judgment Day (Gal 1:8-9).

Therefore, not all churches are the same. There is the church which the Lord promised to build (Mt 16:18) and there are churches which men themselves have devised. The churches devised by men are not the same as the church built by the Lord.

2) The Lord's church is essential for salvation.

According to Eph 2:16 the church is the body by which God saves men from their sins. According to Eph 5:23-25 the church is like the Lord's bride. He loves the church so much He gave Himself for her – that means He died for the church. Since He died for the church, it is certain no one can be saved without the church.

3) **Worship at home cannot become a substitute for assembling with the Lord's church.**

Yes, it is true that families may worship at home and they should worship at home. Families should sing praises to God, pray to God and read God's word together at home. But this cannot become a substitute for assembling together with the Lord's church.

Hebrews 10:25

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.

Here Christians are to "*assemble themselves together*" and it is sinful to purposefully forsake such assemblies.

The assembly under consideration is the assembly held on the first day of each week when the disciples gather to break the bread (Acts 20:7). The apostle Paul wrote this:

1 Corinthians 11:33

³³ Therefore, my brethren, when you **come together** to eat, wait for one another.

May people worship in their homes? Yes.

May worship in the home become a substitute for corporate worship with the church? No.

For emphasis, let me point out: The issue is not whether a house is being used by the church for its assembly. The church in the days of the apostles often met together in people's homes (Rom 16:5). On one occasion the church met together in a school building (Acts 19:9). The issue being discussed is whether people may worship at home ***instead of*** or ***in place of*** assembling with the church. The answer is: **NO**. People may not do this as we noticed in the scriptures cited.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

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