

Meaningful Membership

What it Means to be the Church

Some Assembly Required

Hebrew 10: 19-25



The Broader Context of Hebrews

1. Authorship

- The author of Hebrews is uncertain, as is its date and where it was written.
- Nonetheless, this book was not anonymous to the original readers.

The Broader Context of Hebrews

2. Original Readership

- Jewish believers who have stepped out of Judaism into Christianity.
- They are considering reversing their course in order to escape persecution by their countrymen.

The Broader Context of Hebrews

3. The Message: the Superiority of Christ

- He is better than the angels, for they worship Him. (*Chapters 1 & 2*)
- He is better than Moses, for He created Him. (*Chapter 3*)
- He is better than the Aaronic priesthood, for His sacrifice was once for all time. (*Chapters 5-7*)
- He is better than the Law, for He mediates a better covenant. (*Chapters 8-10*)

¹⁹ Since therefore, brethren, we have confidence to enter the holy place by the blood of Jesus, ²⁰ by a new and living way which He inaugurated for us through the veil, that is His flesh, ²¹ and since we have a great priest over the house of God, ²² let us draw with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. ²³ Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful; ²⁴ and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, ²⁵ 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.

(Hebrews 10:19-25)

To whom are these verses directed?

1. Hebrew believers
 - Yes, as discussed earlier.
2. Believers in Jesus Christ
 - All who "... have confidence to enter the holy place by the blood of Jesus." (*verse 19*)
3. The church
 - You and me – we, us.

The Exhortation to the Church

1. The what: Draw near and hold fast
 - Draw near to God with a sincere heart, knowing that we are now washed clean.
 - Hold fast the confession of our hope, for God is faithful.

The Exhortation to the Church

2. The how: Stimulate good works and assemble
 - Consider one another and in so doing learn how to stir up or stimulate love and good in each other.
 - You cannot do this without assembling together.

Episunagōgē (ep-ee-soon-ag-o-gay')

- Greek for "assembling (gathering) together" (*Strong's, #G1997*)
- The only other usage is 2 Thessalonians 2:1-2, where it refers to our gathering together with the Lord at his return.
- Comes from *episunago*, which means "a complete collection" (*Strong's #G1996*)
- Thus, to assemble together is more than meeting together.

Assembling Together

- Parts brought together, collected to be put together, assembled.
- There is already an executed design, which was developed by the designer, for anything that is being assembled.
- This is true for the body of Christ. God has designed His Temple according to His own desires.
- He has pre-determined (chosen) the parts (living stones) and has a pre-determined placement and function for each one.

Assembling Together for What?

- Acts 2:42 Devoting themselves to:
 - the Apostles teaching
 - fellowship,
 - the breaking of bread, and
 - prayer.
- Hebrews 3:12-13 & 10:25 Encouraging one another
 - Spiritual health and accountability.

Application to Crossroads Bible Church

Meeting together is definitional to being the church

1. Corporate gatherings on Sunday morning
 - A unique context for public singing, praying and hearing the Word of God. *Essential but not sufficient*
2. Small Groups
 - A primary means for mutual edification, exhortation, and prayer.
3. 1-on-1/2/3, Mentor-Mentee, Disciples making Disciples
 - Perhaps the best venue for real accountability.

The Church's Charter

➤ What is a Local Church?

"A group of Christians who regularly gather in Christ's name to officially affirm and oversee one another's membership in Christ Jesus and His kingdom through gospel preaching and gospel ordinances."

(J. Leeman)

My Challenge to You

- Is Jesus your Lord and Savior?
 - If yes, then you are automatically a member of the Body of Christ, the church
 - With that comes the exhortation to assemble together.
- How is the Holy Spirit convicting you about assembling together?