

THE BELLEVILLE MESSENGER

September 9

2018

Editor's Note: After last week's lesson on Joseph in which we noted that one can be faithful in doing God's will regardless of his lot in life I thought the following article would be a good follow up to that lesson. (JH)



If Only...

If only my boss wouldn't be so rude and domineering, I would be more cooperative at work. *"Servants, be submissive to your masters with all respect, not only to those who are good and gentle, but also to those who are unreasonable"* (1 Peter 2:18).

If only my husband weren't so lazy and self-centered, if only he would learn to control his temper better, I would live with him. *"...wives, be submissive to your husbands so that even if any of them are disobedient to the word, they may be won without a word as they observe your chaste and respectful behavior"* (1 Peter 3:1-2).

If only the brethren were friendlier and that preacher not so dry, I would go to church more often. *"...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..."* (Hebrews 10:24-25).

If only I had more income and less bills, I would give a lot more.

"...in the churches of Macedonia...in a great ordeal of affliction their abundance of joy and their deep poverty overflowed in the wealth of their liberality" (2 Corinthians 8:1-2).

If only my family would be more supportive, I would become a Christian. *"He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me..."* (Matthew 10:37).

Do you notice that what God expects of us, He expects regardless of our particular circumstances? Instead of excusing ourselves due to adverse conditions, let us commit ourselves to our Creator and Benefactor. If only we would be like Jesus, who said, *"...I do not seek My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me"* (John 5:30). He not only said it, He lived it - even to the point of death.

✍️ Frank Himmel



Are You Attending and Enjoying Less?

There are some brethren who are very sporadic when it comes to attending worship services. However, when they are approached about their irregular or random attendance they are very quick to give a variety of excuses for their sporadic attendance. So, perhaps those brethren who are attending and enjoying worship services less need...

1) To Be Reminded of The Purpose For Attending Worship Services.

You see, the Scriptures teach and command Christians to come together on the first day of the week to worship (Acts 20:7; 1 Corinthians 16:1-2). When we come together to worship our Almighty God we must do so in spirit and in truth (John 4:24), we are to sing songs of praise to God (Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:16), we are to pray (Acts 2:42), we are to abide in the doctrine of Christ (Galatians 1:6-9; 2 John 9), we are to remember the Lord's death (1 Corinthians 11:23-26), and we are to cheerfully give back a portion of our means (2 Corinthians 9:7). Therefore, faithfully attend worship services, stir up love and good works (Hebrews 10:24-25), and be one

who obeys the commandments of God (Matthew 7:21; Revelation 22:14).

2) To Better Prepare Themselves For Worship Services.

Unfortunately, some of our brethren are not making the proper preparations needed to regularly attend worship services. For instance, some stay up or out way too late on Saturday evening, and then fail to attend worship services on Sunday because they claim to be too tired. However, do you really think that the excuse of being too tired to attend worship service is acceptable to God? Think about that! You see, instead of making excuses for missing worship services we need to be a people who take the Ezra approach, and we need to likewise prepare our heart's to seek the law of the Lord and to do it (Ezra 7:10). So, let's make the proper preparations needed to regularly attend worship services, and let's all serve the Lord with gladness (Psalm 100:2).

3) To Be More Spiritually Minded.

Sadly, some of our brethren are regularly missing worship services because they do not have their priorities straight. For instance, some are choosing to engage in leisure activities on Sunday's, or some are constantly volunteering to work on Sunday's so they can receive double time pay, rather than choosing to worship and obey God. However, my friends, we must always put God first in our lives (Matthew 6:33), we must not be conformed to this world (Romans 12:2), and we need to be a people who are setting our minds on the things above rather than on the things on the earth (Colossians 3:2). Therefore, let's all strive to be more spiritually minded, and let's store up for ourselves treasure in heaven (Matthew 6:19-21).

4) To Examine Themselves As To Whether They Are In The Faith.

In 2 Corinthians 13:5, the apostle Paul instructed the saints in Corinth to, "*Examine yourselves as to whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves.* He then goes on to say, "*Do you not know yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you?-unless indeed you are disqualified.*" Ladies and gentlemen, we all need to make and take some time to

examine ourselves as to whether we are truly in the faith, and those who are known to frequently miss worship services, they need to be doing some serious self-examining, and they need to be honest with themselves to see if they really do stand the test. For, the fact of the matter is, self can often be our greatest problem.

5) To Posses A Greater Desire For Heaven.

Last, but certainly not least, maybe those who are attending and enjoying services less need to posses a greater desire for heaven. You see, many will often say "I want to go to heaven," but unfortunately their actions do not speak louder than their words. Therefore, don't just say you want to go to heaven, but rather be like God's faithful people of old and act like it (Hebrews 11:13-16). So, now I ask, how about you? Is pressing toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus the one thing that you do (Philippians 3:13-14)? If not, why not?

My friends, I understand that there are and will be certain circumstances that will come along that may prevent one from attending services. However, along that line, I have heard, "do not be concerned about those who would be there if they could be, but rather be concerned about those who could be there, but choose not to be." Now, think about that statement, and may each and everyone of us always take advantage of every opportunity we have to come together to worship God.

✍ Brad Phillips

Belleville church of Christ

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Schedule of Services

Sunday Bible Study 9:30 a.m.
Sunday Morning Worship 10:30 a.m.
Sunday Evening Worship 5:00 p.m.
Wednesday Bible Study 7:00 p.m.

Evangelist

James Hahn (317) 443-1938