

# IMPACT

**I** **M**ust **P**ersonally **A**cknowledge **C**hrist **T**oday  
Trust in the LORD with all your heart, And lean not on your own under-  
standing; *in all your ways acknowledge Him* and He shall direct your path.  
Proverbs 3:5-6

**Passage:** Hebrews 10:24-25 “And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, *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.”

**Quote:** “Active local church membership is imperative to living a life without compromise. It is only through the ministry of the local church that a believer can receive the kind of teaching, accountability, and encouragement that is necessary for him to stand firm in his convictions. God has ordained that the church provide the kind of environment where an uncompromising life can thrive.” J. MacArthur

**R**easons that professing Christians use for not becoming involved in a local church are boundless. Busy work weeks to maintain a chosen life-style, or to make ends meet cause some to use Sunday as an escape from the bondage of making money. The rat race of kids’ extra-curricular activities and the elevation of vacations and outings to a top-priority level make it easier for others to see church attendance as just one of many options on their docket of choices. The challenges of single-parent homes and the complexities of blended families add their own frustrations and temptations. On-line options that “save time” and allow more flexibility tempt some to never “plug in” to a local church.<sup>1</sup> The shift in the over-all values of a culture that has minimized the spiritual and maximized the secular has allowed people to “feel religious” if they attend church once-in-a-while. A consumer mindset towards church causes folks to shop and choose what meets their perceived needs (or image) for the smallest investment of time and money. Attending periodically as “the thing to do” over engaging in ministry enables individuals to float in and out of church without commitments. Last but not least, retiring from work can often lead some to retire from serving and to place spiritual things on cruise control.

Our text in Hebrews states that we are to stir up love and good works by meeting together. We are to exhort one another as we see the signs of Christ’s return.

The regular assembly with other believers is a matter of obedience to Scripture. It affords an opportunity to give and to get blessings as we interact with other Christians, and share prayer requests. It is a means through which we can demonstrate our love for God along with others through corporate worship. It is an avenue through which we can grow in the grace and knowledge of God and thereby become more like Christ through teaching and preaching of God’s Word. It affords us the privilege of sensing the Lord’s presence in a special way for He has promised that where two or three are gathered together in His name, *He is there in the midst of them.*<sup>2</sup> For those of us who are members of a local, Bible-preaching church, it gives the added benefit of accountability, and enables us to examine ourselves as part of celebrating the Lord’s supper.

Christ placed a high priority upon the growth and service of His followers. He said, “If you love Me, keep my

## God’s A Honor Roll, Attendance

commandments. To equip believers to do so, “He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the *equipping* of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.”<sup>3</sup> God works through the local church to grow Christians towards the likeness of Christ. If an individual does not show any desire to fellowship with Christians, to hear the Bible taught, and to bring his life into line with what he has learned, he ought to examine his own relationship with the Lord. If an individual minimizes or marginalizes membership in and service through a local church where the Word of God is central and serving the Lord is paramount, he or she needs a priority check. Friend, what does the pattern of your attendance say about your priorities?

<sup>1</sup> Some are wonderful for “shut-ins” who truly cannot attend church. <sup>2</sup> Matt.18:20 <sup>3</sup> Ephesians 4:11-13 **Also see:** Matthew 6:33; Ephesians 4:14-16; Colossians 3:16; Hebrews 13:7, 17; I Thessalonians 5:11-15; I Corinthians 12 and Romans 12 that detail spiritual gifts given to individuals for the good of the church. Acts 11:26; II Timothy 2:15; Galatians 6:2