

Sermon Notes *by Pastor Jamie Tonge*



Regular Fellowship.

Hebrews 10:25 *Let's see how inventive we can be encouraging love and helping out, not avoiding worship together as some do but spurring each other on, especially as we see the big day approaching. (The Message).*

Church in the 21st century – the world, its misconceptions and reactions.

God's Spirit loves to be where His people meet in His name. Jesus said when ever you meet I will be there with you. Since when has staying in bed been a better option?

Part of our journey in Knowing God is regular fellowship with God's people.

Let's look at five points: -

- The purpose of fellowship,
- The practicality's of fellowship,
- The priority's of fellowship,
- The power of fellowship
- The pitfalls of fellowship.

Missing the big picture how our preconceived ideas affect others.

1 The Purpose of Fellowship.

What do we come to church for? Is it the best use of 2 hours on Sunday morning and 1½ hours mid-week? If not then maybe I should ask myself two questions?

1. What can I do better with the time!!!!
2. Maybe I miss understand what the purpose of fellowship is, or I don't use the time spent in fellowship properly.

What can I do better with my time?

Shopping at Ikea, staying in bed, gardening, wash the car, do the house work, the list goes on. When these things become more desirable than Church I must look at my own heart and ask why I would want to do them more than be in God's presence? Do I see these things as more important? Maybe I have lost sight of what it's about and I should use my time in fellowship differently.

Four Points to Consider when we Come to Church.

- **To bring a joint expression of worship to God.**

Have we ever considered what God sees every Sunday? As a new week begins all across the world for a 24-hour period His people are bringing a wave of worship that runs all around the world he sees individuals coming together with one heart and purpose. Churches across a town, Island, county, nation, continent and world. The only place in all of His creation that human beings made in His likeness willingly bring a heart of worship in their own unique way and form of expression. What a privilege to be a part of this every week. Our first act is not about us it's about Him, giving thanks for what He has done and who He is.

We give thanks in words, song, music, giving, expressions of worship in body, mind, emotion and spirit an act of worship from every individual Christian joining with others to bring a corporate act of worship, as the Holy Spirit moves among his people in adoration of the Almighty God of all creation in spirit and truth **John 4:24**. Why would I want to miss that and stay in bed?

- To Hear from God as one body.

God speaks to His people when they unite in congregational worship we see in **1Corinthians 14:26** that we bring together something from God.

He speaks through the gifts of the Spirit, teaching/preaching, reading of the bible and by testimony. There is always a word from God to us that we can take in to the coming week. Why would I want to miss that and stay in bed?

- To Encourage one Another.

Some times it's tough out in the world, so when we come together it should be a time when we encourage one another. My experience has been that when I miss church, I personally miss out, others miss out and I lose contact with the Fellowship. Why would I want to miss that and stay in bed?

- To Pray Together.

The power of corporate prayer

Buildings shake. **Acts 4:31**

Servants are anointed **Acts 6:6**

Prison doors open **Acts 12:1-17**

Ministries sent out **Acts 13:1-3**

Sick healed, captives set free.

What an opportunity to be part of this. Why would I want to miss that and stay in bed?

2 The Practicality's of Fellowship.

Knowing God is the most important thing in any Christian's life and being with His people is a major part of that relationship we need to know how to get the most out of Church and how we can put the most in.

A Make coming to fellowship a priority in your life.

B Come expecting to meet with God.

C Come early.

D Be a participator not a spectator, spectators only end up being commentators. We speak more positively about what we are involved in, than in what we only spectate.

E Come ready to give and to receive **Ephesians 4:18-19.**

F Staying in bed is never an option.

3 The Priority of Fellowship.

There are many things that could be said about the importance of meeting together with other Christians but I will only say this. (story about China)

Thomas missed out because he went out. **John 20:24.**

Hearing about it is never as good as being there **v25.**

Plan it into your life style. Why would I want to miss that and stay in bed?

4 The Power of Fellowship.

- Power of encouragement **1Samuel 23:16** (Jonathan helps David find strength in God.) Look up the times encouragement is found in the bible (15 times in NT)
- Power of teaching and preaching
- Power of the gifts of the spirit
- Power of prayer
- Power of being together

5 The Pitfalls of Fellowship.

- Familiarity – taking everyone for granted and everything they do breeds a lack of gratitude.
- Church and meeting-itus
- Cloning we are all the same!!!! What a dreadful thought!!!
- Exclusiveness we are the only ones we have all truth all others are at best second rate at worst heretics.
- Making Church just another appointment, give time to coming to church.
- Family and church get the balance right.
- Now you see me now you don't – how I miss out when I stay out (God understands shift work etc.)

Being in fellowship is only part of our relationship with God, the above things we will not see if we don't spend time with God listening to His voice and reading the Bible and maintaining a personal life with God.

Together in the New Testament

Acts	1:6, 1:14, 2:1, 2:44, 2:46, 4:24, 5:12, 6:2 10, 6:24, 14:26, 15:3, 20:7
Romans	15:36
1Corinthians	1:2, 14:26
Ephesians	2:21, 4:16

Encouragement in the New Testament

Acts	15:32
Romans	12:8
Ephesians	6:22
Colossians	4:8
1Thesolonians	3:2, 4:18, 5:11, 5:14
2Thesolonians	2:17
2Timothy	4:2
Titus	1:9, 2:6; 2:15
Hebrews	3:13, 10:25.