

## Pastor's Ponderings

September 2008

***"Remember to observe the Sabbath day by keeping it holy."*** Exodus 20:8 (NLT)

***"And let us not neglect our meeting together, as some people do, but encourage and warn each other, especially now that the day of his coming back again is drawing near."***

Hebrews 10:25 (NLT)

Old and New Testament alike exhort us to worship God. In the Old Testament, it is actually one of the Ten Commandments (#4 to be exact). In the New Testament, it is called "meeting together" (NLT & NRSV) or "assembling together" (KJV & NKJV). Whatever interpretation of these verses you read, you can know for certain that God wants and expects you to worship Him.

Without question we find strength, help, renewed hope, joy, and encouragement from one another and the Lord when we worship together. Conversely, when we choose to not attend worship regularly, we are spiritually weaker, feel more helpless and hopeless, have less joy, and are more easily discouraged with the circumstances surrounding our lives. Worship is not just important, it is vital. Worship is "food for the soul."

In Luke 4: 5-8 we find these words about God and worship, ***"<sup>5</sup>Then the Devil took him (Jesus) up and revealed to him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. <sup>6</sup>The Devil told him, 'I will give you the glory of these kingdoms and authority over them—because they are mine to give to anyone I please. <sup>7</sup>I will give it all to you if you will bow down and worship me.' <sup>8</sup>Jesus replied, 'The Scriptures say, 'You must worship the Lord your God; serve only him'"*** (NLT). According to Jesus Christ then, we must worship and we must worship the one, true God.

Ask yourself these questions and answer them honestly: What are you feeding your soul? Is worship important to you? Better

yet, do you consider worship a must or vital? Do you wish there was a certain time and place every week where you could focus on God and be fed real "soul food"?

Let's face it. You know the answers to these questions. So does God. The Good News is...**God desires your worship.** God didn't command you to worship so that you would feel guilty when you missed once in awhile. God commanded you to worship because He knew it would nourish your soul and bring Him pleasure.

God loves it when His children gather together and worship Him. Ephesians 1: 5-6 says, ***"He destined us for adoption as his children through Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of his glorious grace that he freely bestowed on us in the Beloved"*** (NRSV). Matthew 4: 4 records Jesus words to Satan when Satan challenged Him to turn stones into bread; ***"But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God"*** (KJV). Only worship provides that kind of "soul food." Singing, praying, preaching, giving, reading scripture, praising God are all elements of worship that please God and feed your soul.

No matter how long it's been since you were last at worship and contrary to popular belief, the church building will not "come tumbling down the minute you darken its door!" God misses you when you aren't at worship.

Want to bring joy, peace, comfort, and hope back into your soul? Come to church on Sunday morning and worship God. Talking about all the glories of heaven, Revelation 21:7 says, ***"All who are victorious will inherit all these blessings, and I will be their God, and they will be my children"*** (NLT). A God with a promise like that deserves worship.