

Sermon Outline for FBC Nov. 24, 2019

“Why Do We Gather Together?”

Today the message is entitled “Why Do We Gather Together?!”

Why do we “gather together?” Is it some impulse or desire for companionship? Maybe a natural need to be together. Are we following a tradition or mandate?

I am talking to every person who has ever gathered together, for any reason, anywhere. The message is about our unity in knowing Christ as Savior, so if you do not know Christ at this time, please hear the message and consider if Christ should be a part of your life.

Back in the Old Testament times, we are told people “gathered together”:

Jeremiah 3: 17 NIV

At that time they will call Jerusalem The Throne of the Lord, and all nations will gather in Jerusalem to honor the name of the Lord. No longer will they follow the stubbornness of their evil hearts.

Zephaniah 2: 1-2 NIV

*1 Gather together, gather together, O shameful nation,
2 before the appointed time arrives and that day sweeps on like chaff, before the fierce anger of the Lord comes upon you, before the day of the Lord's wrath comes upon you.*

God wanted His creation to be together, to worship together. God knew that mankind would struggle alone so God created the desire to be together and to worship Him together. God is always there when we are together!

Then in the New Testament we find many references to “gathering together.”

Matthew 12: 30 NIV: Jesus is talking to the Pharisee's:

He who is not with me is against me, and he who does not gather with me scatters.

Matthew 18: 20 NIV Jesus talking to the disciples:

For where two or three come together in my name, there am I with them.

Samuel Johnson is quoted: “A man, sir, should keep his friendships in a state of constant repair.” ¹

Acts 2: 46-47 NIV

*46 Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts,
47 praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.*

Vance Havner, in his book, “Pepper ’N Salt”, gives this view on fellowship:

“Christian fellowship has almost become a lost art. I recall how, as a boy, I sat before the open fire on a Saturday night while father and the visiting minister talked long and late about the things of God. I remember John brown, deacon in my first country charge, who used to visit my room and talk until midnight. There was time in those days, but who can take time off today to meditate at the Master’s feet, like Mary of old, or to share His fellowship with other Christians? Fellowship has come to mean a noisy after-session at church with coffee and cookies and a lot of idle chatter about everything on earth but spirit things. How many Christian homes know how to converse about Jesus Christ? Bunyan was helped by overhearing two godly women talk about the things of God. Would anybody listening in on your conversation be helped in his soul?” ²

When we tell others about God, do we talk like God is an important part of our life or do we talk like God is a good idea, a new fad or the latest craze? The Bible gives us that the people who talked about God did so earnestly and with conviction.

1 Corinthians 12: 12-13 NIV

*12 The body is a unit, though it is made up of many parts; and though all its parts are many, they form one body. So it is with Christ.
13 For we were all baptized by one Spirit into one body—whether Jews or Greeks, slave or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink.*

¹ Robert J. Morgan, Pg. 320

² Vance Havner, Pg. 69

Colossians 3: 15-17 NIV

15 Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful.

16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God.

17 And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

A story from Robert Morgan’s “Nelson’s Book of Stories”:

“Once there was a Chinese prince who died and was given a glimpse of both heaven and hell. First, he was escorted to hell, where he found tables laden with various foods and delicacies, but the people were sitting there angry and frustrated, quarreling with each other. They were not permitted to pick up the food with their fingers, and they couldn’t feed themselves because the chopsticks they were given were ten feet long. Then the prince was taken to heaven. Again, he found a beautiful banquet, and again only ten foot chopsticks. But here the people were happy and content, for they sat on opposite sides of the tables, each one feeding the person across from him.”³

1 John 1: 3 NIV

We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you also may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son, Jesus Christ.

1 John 1: 7 NIV

But if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, His Son, purifies us from all sin.

Hebrews 10: 24-25 NIV

24 And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds.

25 Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another – and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

³ Robert Morgan, Pgs. 129, 130

Church growth guru Lyle E. Schaller suggests that if we want our churches to grow we will offer people a “note of hope.” He writes, “Perhaps the most common characteristic of churches that are attracting increasing numbers of people today is not where the minister in on the theological spectrum or the denominational affiliation, but on what people hear and feel during the worship experience. This is a note of hope... The one theme that is common to churches that are attracting more people is the theme of hope... That note of hope and optimism about the future is a powerful factor in determining the size of the crowd.”⁴

**We gather together to support each other, learn from each other, and to reach out together. Together in times of persecution - because united we stand – divided we fall and so the strong will hold up the weak.
We are all part of one body, one hope and one God!**

Bibliography:

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⁴ Lyle E. Schaller, Pgs. 23,24

