
“Come, Let Us Reason About the Bible”
What Is the Church of the New Testament?
Bible Study Series

And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.” —(Matthew 16:18)

LESSON NINE — Do I Have to Attend Church?

Estimated Reading Time: 12-15 minutes

Have you ever heard someone say, “I don’t need to go to church to be a Christian”? Or maybe, “I worship God my own way”? Others will say, “I’m spiritual, but not religious,” as a way of expressing belief in God while rejecting organized religion—including church attendance. These kinds of statements are becoming more common in our world today. But are they biblical? These questions are to be discussed in this lesson.

Look honestly and openly at what the Bible says about church attendance, why it matters, and what God expects from His people.

1. God Designed the Church for Fellowship and Unity

When Jesus established His church, He didn’t intend for Christians to live in isolation. The church is a body—a spiritual family where each member plays a role and supports the others.

1 Corinthians 12:12 says:

“For as the body is one and has many members, but all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ.”

Romans 12:4–5 reinforces this idea:

“For as we have many members in one body, but all the members do not have the same function, so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another.”

When one chooses not to assemble with the church is like a body part that tries to survive apart from the body. Can a hand survive if it's cut off from the rest of the body? Of course not. Spiritually, the same is true—the body is not complete without all of its members.

Acts 2:44, 46–47 describes the early church:

“Now all who believed were together, and had all things in common... So continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart, praising God and having favor with all the people.”

The emphasis is on being *together*. They worshiped, studied, and encouraged one another as a body.

2. The Bible Commands Assembling Together

Perhaps the clearest passage on this subject is found in **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.”

Notice three important things in this passage:

- It’s a **command** not to forsake the assembly.
- Some had already developed a **habit of neglecting it**—“as is the manner of some.”
- We gather to **encourage one another**, especially as judgment draws nearer.

To “**forsake**” doesn’t just mean to miss a service occasionally due to illness or emergency—it refers to a **willful decision to neglect the assembly**. God takes that seriously.

Hebrews 10:26–27 gives a sober warning:

“For if we sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful expectation of judgment...”

This warning is tied directly to forsaking the assembly. Willful neglect is not a small matter.

3. Why Is Attendance So Important?

Think about *why*:

- **We come together to worship God.** Acts of worship like singing (Ephesians 5:19), praying (Acts 2:42), giving (1 Corinthians 16:1–2), partaking of the Lord’s Supper (Acts 20:7), and hearing the word (Acts 20:7) are all done in the assembly.
- **We come to be built up spiritually.** The early Christians “continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship” (Acts 2:42).
- **We come to obey the elders’ leadership.** In **Hebrews 13:17** we’re told:

“Obey those who rule over you, and be submissive, for they watch out for your souls...”

When the elders schedule worship services, Bible studies, devotionals, or gospel meetings, they do so for the spiritual benefit of the members. Ignoring their guidance is not just a matter of personal preference; it is disobedience.

1 Thessalonians 5:12–13 adds:

“And we urge you, brethren, to recognize those who labor among you... and to esteem them very highly in love for their work’s sake.”

4. What About Second Services?

Sometimes people ask, “Do I have to attend Sunday night or Wednesday night?”

If the elders have called the church together, and you are able, then yes—you should attend. This is not about legalism but love and faithfulness.

James 4:17 says:

“Therefore, to him who knows to do good and does not do it, to him it is sin.”

Matthew 6:33 reminds us:

“But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.”

Are we seeking the kingdom first—or only when it fits our schedule?

5. Worship Is a Community Act

While personal devotion is essential, God designed certain acts of worship to be done **together**.

- **The Lord’s Supper:** Meant for the assembly. (Acts 20:7; 1 Corinthians 11:18–33)
 - **Singing:** Done “to one another” (Ephesians 5:19)
 - **Giving:** On the first day of the week (1 Corinthians 16:1–2)
 - **Preaching and Teaching:** In the assembly (Acts 20:7)
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6. The Consequences of Neglect

Failing to attend services doesn’t just mean you miss a sermon or class. It means you are:

- Disobeying God’s commands
- Isolating yourself spiritually
- Disregarding the leadership of elders
- Opening yourself to temptation and spiritually drifting away

2 Peter 2:20–21 warns:

“For if, after they have escaped the pollutions of the world... they are again entangled... the latter end is worse...”

1 Peter 5:8:

“Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.”

7. Worship Is a Privilege, Not a Burden

Some view worship as an obligation, but God wants you to see it as a joy.

Psalm 122:1:

“I was glad when they said to me, ‘Let us go into the house of the Lord.’”

Psalm 84:10:

“For a day in Your courts is better than a thousand [elsewhere]... I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God than dwell in the tents of wickedness.”

When our hearts are right, there is no need to ask, “Do I have to go to church?” Rather think, “I get to go to church.”

8. A Loving Challenge

Friend, if you’ve been hit-and-miss with attendance, or if you’ve been viewing services as optional, I encourage you to think seriously about what God desires. It’s not just about “being there”—it’s about being *involved, connected, and faithful*.

The early Christians met “daily in the temple” (Acts 2:46). While our congregations may not meet daily, their devotion is a powerful example.

Being with people who love the church, cherish the assembly, honor our leaders, and draw near to God every chance is an unforeseen blessing many do not understand.

Summary Points

- The church is a body—each member is vital.
 - God commands assembling together (Hebrews 10:25).
 - Attendance helps us grow, worship, and obey.
 - Forsaking assemblies is spiritually dangerous.
 - Elders have the authority to schedule gatherings.
 - Attending is not a burden—it’s a blessing!
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Questions to Confirm Understanding

Estimated Time to Answer the questions, including scripture lookup: 20 – 25 minutes

Read and answer the following set of questions about this lesson, and circle your answer: “True | False” or “Yes | No”. Look up the scriptures provided to confirm your answers. Then compare your answers with the Answer Key provided after these questions.

1. “I’m spiritual, but not religious” is a biblically supported reason for not attending church.
True | False
 2. God designed the church as a spiritual family, not for isolation. (1 Corinthians 12:12)
True | False
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3. Individual Christians can thrive spiritually without any connection to the church body.
True | False
4. The early church met together daily for worship and fellowship. (Acts 2:44, 46–47)
True | False
5. Hebrews 10:25 teaches that Christians are free to choose whether or not to assemble.
True | False
6. Forsaking the assembly is considered a willful sin. (Hebrews 10:26–27)
True | False
7. Christians are commanded to assemble so that they may encourage one another. (Hebrews 10:24–25)
True | False
8. Singing in worship is meant to be done alone, not together. (Ephesians 5:19)
True | False
9. The Lord’s Supper is intended to be taken in the assembly of the church. (Acts 20:7; 1 Corinthians 11:18–33)
True | False
10. Giving on the first day of the week is a commanded act of collective worship. (1 Corinthians 16:1–2)
True | False
11. The elders have God-given authority to schedule worship services for the church. (Hebrews 13:17)
True | False
12. Choosing not to attend Sunday evening or Wednesday night services without valid reason shows disregard for spiritual leadership.
True | False
13. If we know to do good and fail to do it, we commit sin. (James 4:17)
True | False
14. Seeking the kingdom first means putting God before personal convenience. (Matthew 6:33)
True | False
15. Church attendance has no real impact on spiritual growth.
True | False
16. Neglecting worship can lead to spiritual drift and a return to worldly living. (2 Peter 2:20–21)
True | False

17. The devil poses no threat to Christians who separate themselves from the church. (1 Peter 5:8)
True | False
18. Worship should be seen as a privilege, not a burden. (Psalm 122:1)
True | False
19. A faithful Christian attitude says, “I get to go to church,” not “I have to go.”
True | False
20. Did the early church meet daily in the temple? (Acts 2:46)
Yes | No
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Answer Key

Estimated Time to read the answers and contemplate them: 15 – 18 minutes

1. “I’m spiritual, but not religious” is a biblically supported reason for not attending church.
Correct Answer: False
Explanation: While the phrase may sound appealing, the Bible emphasizes the necessity of the assembly and being part of the church body. There is no biblical justification for rejecting the church yet claiming to follow Christ.
2. God designed the church as a spiritual family, not for isolation. (1 Corinthians 12:12)
Correct Answer: True
“For as the body is one and has many members, but all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ.”
Explanation: The imagery of the church as a body shows God’s intention for unity and interdependence, not isolation.
3. Individual Christians can thrive spiritually without any connection to the church body.
Correct Answer: False
Explanation: A body part cannot function apart from the body. Christians are meant to be connected to the church for spiritual growth and accountability.
4. The early church met together daily for worship and fellowship. (Acts 2:44, 46–47)
Correct Answer: True
“Now all who believed were together... continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house...”
Explanation: The first-century Christians valued daily fellowship and spiritual unity, setting an example of devotion to gathering.
5. Hebrews 10:25 teaches that Christians are free to choose whether or not to assemble.
Correct Answer: False
Explanation: Hebrews 10:25 says, “Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some...” This is a clear command, not a suggestion.

6. Forsaking the assembly is considered a willful sin. (Hebrews 10:26–27)
Correct Answer: True
"For if we sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins..."
Explanation: The immediate context connects willful sin with forsaking the assembly.
7. Christians are commanded to assemble so that they may encourage one another. (Hebrews 10:24–25)
Correct Answer: True
"Let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together..."
Explanation: Assembling is not just about worship but also mutual encouragement and strengthening.
8. Singing in worship is meant to be done alone, not together. (Ephesians 5:19)
Correct Answer: False
"Speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs..."
Explanation: Singing is directed toward "one another" in the assembly. Everyone should sing.
9. The Lord's Supper is intended to be taken in the assembly of the church. (Acts 20:7; 1 Corinthians 11:18–33)
Correct Answer: True
"Now on the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread..."
Explanation: The context of both passages shows that the Lord's Supper is a corporate act of worship.
10. Giving on the first day of the week is a commanded act of collective worship. (1 Corinthians 16:1–2)
Correct Answer: True
"On the first day of the week let each one of you lay something aside..."
Explanation: The command is tied to the church's assembly and shared responsibility.
11. The elders have God-given authority to schedule worship services for the church. (Hebrews 13:17)
Correct Answer: True
"Obey those who rule over you, and be submissive, for they watch out for your souls..."
Explanation: Elders are responsible for the spiritual care of the church and have authority in such matters.
12. Choosing not to attend Sunday evening or Wednesday night services without valid reason shows disregard for spiritual leadership.
Correct Answer: True
Explanation: When elders call for assembly, deliberate absence undermines their leadership and our own spiritual growth.

13. If we know to do good and fail to do it, we commit sin. (James 4:17)
Correct Answer: True
"Therefore, to him who knows to do good and does not do it, to him it is sin."
Explanation: Failing to obey what we know is right is considered sinful.
14. Seeking the kingdom first means putting God before personal convenience. (Matthew 6:33)
Correct Answer: True
"But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness..."
Explanation: God expects our full devotion, above all else.
15. Church attendance has no real impact on spiritual growth.
Correct Answer: False
Explanation: Church attendance fosters learning, worship, fellowship, and accountability, which are essential to growth.
16. Neglecting worship can lead to spiritual drift and a return to worldly living. (2 Peter 2:20–21)
Correct Answer: True
"...they are again entangled in them and overcome, the latter end is worse for them than the beginning."
Explanation: Separation from the body leads to vulnerability and regression.
17. The devil poses no threat to Christians who separate themselves from the church. (1 Peter 5:8)
Correct Answer: False
"Your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour."
Explanation: Christians outside the flock are easy prey.
18. Worship should be seen as a privilege, not a burden. (Psalm 122:1)
Correct Answer: True
"I was glad when they said to me, 'Let us go into the house of the Lord.'"
Explanation: Worship is a joy and opportunity to connect with God and His people.
19. A faithful Christian attitude says, "I get to go to church," not "I have to go."
Correct Answer: True
Explanation: Love for God and His church motivates joyful participation in worship.
20. Did the early church meet daily in the temple? (Acts 2:46)
Correct Answer: Yes
"So continuing daily with one accord in the temple..."
Explanation: The early Christians valued daily fellowship and worship as part of their devotion.
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