

## Why Are You Here?

Why are you here? Have you ever really stopped to think about it? You decided to get up on a Sunday morning, change into your nicer clothes, and sit from one to two hours in a different looking building among people you only see a couple of times a week. All of this and it is your day off as well (for most anyway). Why are you here? The answer to this question is so important that it may very well indicate where you will spend eternity after this life is over. Could there be any more important question? Let's consider four possible answers:

"My wife or husband will be upset if I do not come." If that is your answer we are glad that you are here but it says a lot. Does this mean that you feel you do not need to be here (other than for your spouse)? Or do you feel the Lord is not concerned one way or the other? Perhaps you are not concerned how the Lord feels, one way or the other. Is this what the Lord wants from those who worship Him? Just a warm body filling a space on the pew? Jesus said, *"God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth"* (John 4:24). Just being here does not "count" if you refuse to worship God in spirit. As the law of God is now within the heart, God desires that worship come from the heart (Hebrews 8:10).

"My parents make me come." Many stop attending as soon as they have the choice. Young people, there are many things your parents make you do, like going to school, doing your homework, practicing cleanliness and brushing your teeth. Which of these will you stop doing once you have the choice? Do you really think you will regret having a good education? How much more important are the spiritual values your parents are trying to instill in you? The Lord uses young hands and feet in His service as well as older hands and feet. Paul told Timothy in 1 Timothy 4:12, *"Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity."* The wisest man in the world said that we should *"Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them"* (Ecclesiastes 12:1). Be busy in the Lord's work. You can be a tremendous encouragement to your local congregation.

"I am here because God said I have to come." In many respects this is not a bad reason at all. We often do things just because God said so, even when we do not understand why. But what often accompanies this kind of reasoning is an attitude of doing ONLY what I HAVE to do. In other words, it is not, "God how much can I do?" It is, "God how little can I do and still get by?" Many seem to think that as long as they partake of the Lord's Supper they

have met their “minimum weekly requirements” and are free to go wherever they please the rest of the week. Typically these folks never teach a class, visit the sick, talk to their neighbors about the Lord or offer much encouragement in the work of the church. Why? They are not here! Sunday evenings and Wednesday evenings come and go and they are never seen. God requires worship for a reason. He said through the apostle Paul, *“And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching”* (Hebrews 10:24-25). Do you think God wants those who only go through a ritual of service to Him? Does God want children whose main claim to being His child is that they are there for the Lord’s Supper? Here is what God said to the children of Israel when they only “went through the motions” of worship to Him thinking that was all He wanted: *“I hate, I despise your feast days, and I will not smell in your solemn assemblies. Though ye offer me burnt offerings and your meat offerings, I will not accept them: neither will I regard the peace offerings of your fat beasts. Take thou away from me the noise of thy songs; for I will not hear the melody of thy viols”* (Amos 5:21-23). Serve God out of love from a pure heart.

“I am here because I love the Lord.” I am here because I am a sinner and need a Savior. I am here because of all the Lord has done for me. I am here because I love my brethren and enjoy being together. I am here because I like to worship God. I am here because I NEED TO BE HERE! I need my brethren praying with me and for me. It lifts me up to sing praises to God. The Lord’s Supper is so much more than juice and bread. It is a communion together of the body and blood of our Lord and Savior. God’s word should be sweeter than honey to us; therefore, we enjoy studying from God’s book. And our Lord has blessed us in so many physical ways. Is it not a blessing to be able to give back to Him? Then when it is time to leave, you feel better prepared to face the world. Our worship together helps to “disarm” Satan somewhat as we go about the rest of our week. Be glad for the privilege of worship. Come because you love the Lord. Truly our God is the Most High, deserving all honor, glory and worship. *“I will call on the Lord, who is worthy to be praised: so shall I be saved from mine enemies”* (2 Samuel 22:4). Now, why are you here?

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