

# Be the Church

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About a month ago, I preached a sermon titled Be the Church. As I reflected on it, I realized it might be helpful to take some of that message and share it in writing. For those who were there, consider this a reminder. And for anyone else reading, I hope it's a fresh encouragement to step more fully into the beauty of what God designed the church to be.

Let's be honest with ourselves. A lot of us have settled into a routine that doesn't reflect the richness and depth of church life. We stroll in late, slide quietly into a seat, and leave as soon as "amen" is said on the closing prayer. Sometimes we leave even before that. And while it may seem harmless or even efficient, that pattern slowly pulls us away from the heart of what the church is supposed to be. It turns worship into an appointment rather than a gathering of the body. Little by little, we miss out on the gift of real community.

I think most of us have heard someone say, maybe we've said it ourselves, "Well, at least I went to church." It's a phrase we throw out when we know our heart wasn't really in it, but we want credit for showing up. And yes, attendance matters. But the goal isn't to collect spiritual gold stars. The goal is connection, transformation, worship, growth, fellowship, and mission. None of that happens when our involvement is limited to walking in and walking out.

Hebrews 10:24–25 reminds us of something so much greater: "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."

This passage is often quoted when we talk about church attendance, but it's not really about checking a box. It is about building a body, a family, a people who love one another so much that they come together with purpose.

The first part says, "Let us consider one another." That word "consider" is deeper than it sounds. In the original Greek, it means to think carefully, to fix your mind on someone else, to show up not just for yourself but for those around you. That kind of mindset doesn't begin when you walk through the church doors. It begins at home, in prayer, in intentional thought. It looks like asking, "Who might be hurting today?" or "Who could use a word of encouragement this morning?"

When we come to church with others on our hearts, our experience changes. We stop rating the sermon or the song selection and start looking for moments to serve, speak life, and share love. We become less focused on what we get and more focused on what we can give.

Hebrews also says we gather "to stir up love and good works." That is not passive. That is not just sitting in a pew and nodding. That is active. It is showing up ready to inspire someone else toward greater faith and obedience. It means we are not just churchgoers. We are spiritual encouragers. People who, by our words and actions, help each other draw closer to Jesus.

And that stirring doesn't just happen from the pulpit. It happens in the lobby, in quiet conversations, in prayer circles, and in helping someone carry a burden they've never shared out loud. Church isn't meant to be a solo experience. It is a shared one.

Then Hebrews gets even more specific. We are not to “forsake the assembling of ourselves together,” which doesn’t just mean skipping church altogether. It means giving up on the habit of gathering. It’s when presence becomes optional, when we start to drift from the body and forget that our part matters.

Your presence matters more than you think. It’s not just about what you receive during worship. It’s about what you bring to the people around you. Your voice, your smile, your prayers, your testimony. These things can be life-giving for someone else. When you show up, you remind someone that they’re not alone. When you stay and connect, you make space for love to grow.

And that last phrase in the passage, “so much the more as you see the Day approaching,” gives everything a sense of urgency. Jesus is coming back. Life is hard. Faith is being tested. Now more than ever, we need one another. The world is full of distractions and spiritual pressure. Encouragement is no longer a nicety. It is a necessity.

That is why church should never be just a routine. It should be a lifeline. A place where we are reminded of truth. A place where hope is renewed. A place where we lift each other up, not just for an hour on Sunday, but for the sake of eternity.

So if you have been going through the motions, I say this with love. It is time to step in deeper. If you have been showing up late and leaving early, maybe this is the season to linger, to invest, and to connect. If you have been sitting on the sidelines, now is the time to engage. There is someone who needs your story. Someone who needs your encouragement. And you need theirs too.

Jesus didn’t die so we could fill a pew. He died so we could be filled with His Spirit. Forgiven, restored, made new, and joined to a family that will walk with us into eternity.

The church is not a building. It is not a time slot. It is not a performance.

It is us.

Let’s stop just going to church. Let’s start being the church.

