

An Assembly Of Ghosts

As you are reading this article, you may be sitting in the auditorium of your church building. If that is the case, look around you. Notice what time it is and how many people are in the building right now. Notice what they are doing. Notice what they are not doing. Then sit back and think to yourself, what should they be doing?

There's no doubt in my mind that worship services are for the glory of God, to praise Him and glorify His Name. But what the God of Heaven knew, in his infinite wisdom, is that these services would be beneficial to us as a church family as well. We come together, bonded by a common faith and by a common mission. Hardships and trials await us in everyday life, things that worldly people don't want to think twice about. Between the time of the opening and the closing of the service, however, you are among family. You are among people that understand you, that are facing similar trials, and are fighting the good fight constantly. And for roughly an hour (or however long your services are), you are not alone.

Probably the most quoted passage to authorize such assemblies is Hebrews 10:25: *"Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some ..."* The preceding verse plainly states also, one of the purposes of coming together, "Let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works." That being said, are we doing this?

Jesus said in John 13:35, *"By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."* This should be an identifying mark to others when they come into our assemblies, that we are a congregation that loves each other. A congregation that cares for each other. A congregation that actively seeks to help each other. It's not enough to flash a smile and say hello; we must honestly look at each other and try to encourage each other to keep pressing on, and keep up the fight.

A long time ago, Plato made the famous statement: "Be kind, for everyone you meet is fighting a hard battle." If we take this approach in our lives, and in our dealings with our brethren, both in and out of the assembly, then we will be on our way to fulfilling the command given by Jesus in John 15:12, *"This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you."*

Look back at the building that you are in. By now, more people have come in, taken their place, and about to start the assembly. Is the person sitting four rows in front of you struggling with something? Maybe a kind word of encouragement or a nice gesture would brighten their day. Take the time to

"stir up love and good works." Only not right now, the man doing announcements is at the podium.

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