EXCUSES FOR ASSEMBLING

By Jared Hagan

Many people grew up with their parents taking them to church. For them, assembling to worship God is like second nature. It’s habit. They do it without even thinking about it, but that isn’t everyone’s background. Some people make a conscious decision every week as to whether they will “*go to church*” or not. This may be because they weren’t taught the habit of assembling as children. It could also be that despite what their parents taught them, life has become full of other things and every week they are making a decision between family, work, vacation, and assembling together.

I have observed that many people find excuses not to come, and there are more excuses than I can count. Family is in town. Kids have a sports game. Kids have homework. I’m a little sore and don’t feel like getting out. I’m in a bad mood. I couldn’t sleep last night so I’m too tired to come. I don’t have anything nice to wear. And on and on the list goes.

It isn’t hard to find an excuse not to assemble, but what if we were working from the opposite direction? What if, instead, we were searching for reasons to assemble and worship God? What if we spent more effort and time talking ourselves into assembling rather than talking ourselves out of it?

I started my own list of reasons to assemble. Here are some of my ideas:

1. I’ve been down lately and could use some encouragement.
2. I’ve been so busy lately; I need to get refocused on God
3. Someone has been struggling and I haven’t been able to see them or help them all week. I should be there for them.
4. I want God to know how important he is to me
5. I want to meet the visitors and encourage them to love and know God… and maybe even help save a soul
6. I want my family to be closer, stronger and headed the right direction
7. I don’t want things in this life to get in the way of my relationship with God.
8. God deserves worship. I want to give Him what He deserves.
9. God has done so much for me, I want to thank Him as much as I can
10. I want to be challenged by God’s word to improve and be more pleasing to Him.
11. There is nothing better I could be doing.
12. Worshipping God is a privilege that I don’t want to take for granted.
13. I want to encourage others to be strong Christians this week and overcome the temptations they are going to face.
14. I want to remember Jesus the way He asked me to.
15. ???

What excuses for assembling can you come up with?

I admit that some of the things on my list can be done outside of the assembly. We shouldn’t limit our worship to the assemblies, but worship is one of the primary purposes of the assemblies. We could (and should) encourage one another outside of the assemblies, but that is one of the main purposes of the assembly (Heb. 10:25).

Did you come up with a list of excuses for worshipping? If so, I have another question. How many of the reasons on your list only apply to one assembly a week? Will the same reasons to worship God apply on Sunday night? What about Wednesday night? Does God deserve less worship on Sunday night? Don’t others need encouragement on Wednesdays too? Talk yourself into assembling, even if you’ve already assembled once this week.