



# The Voice Of Truth

A weekly publication of the

## Hillcrest church of Christ

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## Are You In The Wrong Place?

By Jimmy Pettigrew

It was during the siege of Ramah that David committed adultery with Bathsheba and planned the murder of Uriah (**2 Sam. 11:1ff**). David had been resting when he arose from off his bed, and was walking on the roof top when he saw "a woman washing herself; and the woman was beautiful to look upon." The question that comes to my mind is why was David home? Why didn't David go with his army into battle? Since David did not go to battle with his army, perhaps he was in the wrong place. Since David did not go to battle with his army, perhaps he had too much idle time on his hands. Indeed, there is a certain danger in idleness. David found himself conquered and led captive by his own lust, by yielding to temptation. Instead of following the example of Joseph, and turning and running, and resisting temptation, David sent and inquired about the woman. The apostle Paul said, "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope" (**Rom. 15:4**).

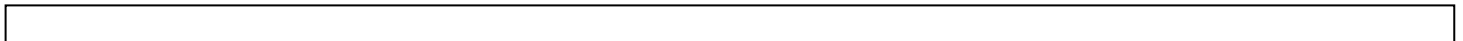
Regarding Bathsheba, why would she so expose herself so she could be so openly viewed from the King's roof? She was in the wrong place. Why not in other room where no one could see her?

There are many Christians that work hard in abstaining from many of the temptations of life. These Christians would not be found in nightclubs dancing the night away. They wouldn't be seen in indecent, impure and suggestive clothing, either. If you are a Christian and you go to a

nightclub or a party where everyone is, you're in the wrong place. However, if you are not in services when the church assembles, wherever you are, you may be in the wrong place. Now God has gone on record in **Hebrews 10:25** as saying "not forsaking our own assembling together, as the custom of some is, but exhorting (one another); and so much the more, as ye see the day drawing nigh." The scripture is clear that a Christian is not to "**forsake**" the "**assembling**" together of the saints. The word "forsake" means to abandon. The "assembling" is a reference to any and all designated assemblies together of a particular congregation of God's people. Please note that the word is "**assembling**" and not "**assembly**" indicating more than one or all appointed gatherings. If you are a Christian, where else would you want to be? Sadly, there are many wrong places that Christians may find themselves when the church assembles.

**You are in the wrong place if you are at home entertaining friends or family.** How can a Christian be of the opinion that it is all right to be at home entertaining friends or family when the church assembles? One of the best ways to show your concern for that company is not to stay home, but to invite them to go with you to worship God.

**You are in the wrong place if you are at home taking it easy when the saints meet.** You should want to worship God. Assembling with the saints is not an option? How would you feel if the Lord came back and



you were at home during services taking it easy? You should want to be where the saints meet, whenever they meet.

**You are in the wrong place if you are on the lake fishing, in the woods hunting, or on the golf course.** David said that he was glad when he was told, "It's time to go assemble and worship God" (**Psalm 122:1**). It is obvious that David's disposition is not universal. Every Christian should have a strong desire to worship God. Do you feel the way David felt? Some don't have to answer that question. Believe it or not, some answer this question with their absence. Is it such a bother to worship God? I have more than once seen Christians with bumper stickers on their cars, or hats and shirts reading, "I'd Rather Be Fishing," and I believe it!

**You are in the wrong place if you are working on some "important" project.** What could be more important than your soul's salvation (**Matt. 16:26**)? Important projects will come and go, yet we only have one soul. If you are too busy to pay attention to your soul, something is definitely wrong.

**You are in the wrong place if you are at home doing chores.** Chores can wait for other time. Remember the one who stated he had to first bury his father. Jesus would not even take this as an excuse for not following Him (**Matt. 8:22**). Why do we think He would excuse any another reason for not putting His kingdom first (**Matt. 6:33**)?

I submit to you that when one deliberately neglects attending the services of the church, he has ceased to worship God, and has willfully sinned (**Heb. 10:26**). Assembling together is a public matter, thus if one forsakes the assemblies, he has committed a public sin and needs to repent and make a public acknowledgment of it. Brethren, let me add this, purposefully forsaking worship on Sunday morning with the idea that one can still partake of the Lord's Supper on Sunday night and be acceptable to God is a false assumption and abuse of the Lord's Supper! It is insulting, taunting, and belittling to our Lord! Many need to repent.

Brethren, when you miss services of the Lord's church, you take a step on the downward path. When you miss one service you have made it easier to miss another. You hinder your prayer life. You can't pray for God to help you live a Christian life when you deliberately forsake those services which are designed to strengthen and help you. You rob yourself of growth. Growth cannot be obtained without the

proper diet. To miss any service is to rob ourselves of nourishment and growth.

The congregation should be well taught enough that when an assembly is coming up in the near future, it should not be necessary for some to stand up and beg for members to please come, or we'll be expecting you. To have to miss Bible study or worship, to the Christian, brings a profound and deeply felt regret. If the Christian will die for Christ, certainly he will assemble faithfully in His presence with those of like mind. If we love the church we will be present at every assembly. Something is deeply wrong if our hearts are not thrilled at the opportunity to meet with the saints in unity and fellowship to worship God. Could I submit to you that when one forsakes the assembly, he has ceased to worship God? He is not serving the Lord. The absentee who could, but does not attend, makes it abundantly clear that he does not love God, nor desires the fellowship of his brethren. Is assembly required? Well, is thy heart right with God? Then you know it is!

Brethren, Pray that God will help us to understand the need, the purpose, and the power of attendance at Bible classes and worship services, whenever the doors are open. Pray for the courage to do your part in making the gathering of the saints a time of love, praise, and spiritual growth! "As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby" (**1 Pet. 2:2**). It ought to be as hard to keep us from Bible study and worship services as it is to keep a baby from its milk. Will a baby stop demanding its milk because; it needs a day to rest? Or there is company in the home? Or we are working on some important project? Or we are going fishing, hunting or golfing? Or doing chores? **NO!** It is a matter of spiritual life and death, really, not only for us, but also for others whom we influence.

**I LOOK FORWARD TO SEEING YOU AT EVERY SERVICE!!!**

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### **CAN WE BE SO FAITHFUL?**

There is a polio victim in South Bend, Indiana, who lives in an iron lung and is permitted by his doctors to spend only four hours a week out of this life-saving instrument. Every Sunday morning he is taken out of the lung to go to Bible class and worship. He has chosen to spend his hours of freedom from the lung machine in worship and study with the church. Truly our choices reflect our spirituality.