FORSAKE NOT THE ASSEMBLY

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ACCORDING TO VINE'S DEFINATION OF GREEK WORDS, THE WORD "FORSAKE", MEANS FORBEAR; TO LEAVE UNDONE; TO FORSAKE.

"ASSEMBLY", MEANS TO CALL A BODY TOGETHER; SUMMONED FOR A DEFINATE PURPOSE; CONGREGATION; A COMPANY OF PROFESSED BELIEVERS.

"ASSEMBLING", MEANS A COMPLETE COLLECTION; MEETING FOR WORSHIP; GATHERING.

LET US KEEP THESE DEFINATIONS IN MIND AS WE STUDY THIS IMPORTANT SUBJECT. ACTS 2:42-47: "AND THEY CONTINUED STEDFASTLY IN THE APOSTLE'S DOCTRINE AND FELLOWSHIP, AND IN BREAKING OF BREAD, AND IN PRAYERS.---- AND THE LORD ADDED TO THE CHURCH DAILY SUCH AS SHOULD BE SAVED." SO IT WAS THE CHURCH THAT CONTINUED WITH THE APOSTLES.

ACTS 20:7, "AND UPON THE FIRST DAY OF THE WEEK, WHEN THE DISCIPLES CAME TOGETHER TO BREAK BREAD, PAUL PREACHED UNTO THEM.----." PAUL AND HIS COMPANIONS WERE TRAVELLING. THEY STOPPED IN TROAS FOR A WEEK; AND WHEN THE "DISCIPLES CAME TOGETHER TO BREAK BREAD", PAUL PREACHED UNTO THEM. JUST AS WE CALL ON VISITING PREACHERS TODAY, WHEN THEY MEET WITH US WHEN WE COME TOGETHER TO BREAK BREAD. BUT THAT THEY WERE IN THE HABIT OF COMING TOGETHER TO BREAK BREAD IS BORNE OUT BY 1 CORINTHIANS 16:1-2, "NOW CONCERNING THE COLLECTION FOR THE SAINTS, AS I HAVE GIVEN ORDER TO THE CHURCHES OF GALATIA, EVEN SO DO YE. UPON THE FIRST DAY OF THE WEEK LET EVERYONE OF YOU LAY BY HIM IN STORE, AS GOD HATH PROSPERED HIM, THAT THERE BE NO GATHERINGS WHEN I COME." DOES THIS MEAN "EVERY" FIRST DAY OF THE WEEK? THE SCRIPTURES SAY, THEY CAME TOGETHER ON THE FIRST DAY OF THE WEEK; AND EVERY WEEK HAS A FIRST DAY. TO FOLLOW THE EXAMPLE, WE THEREFORE ASSEMBLE ON EVERY FIRST DAY OF THE WEEK. AND UNLESS IT IS ABSOLUTELY IMPOSSIBLE, BECAUSE OF DISABLEING ILLNESS; OR BECAUSE WE ARE UNABLE TO OBTAIN TRANSPORTATION, AND IT IS TOO FAR TO WALK: IF WE JUST FORSAKE, OR LEAVE UNDONE THE ASSEMBLING, THEN WE ARE JUST IGNORING THE WORD OF GOD AT OUR CONVENIENCE. REMEMBER OUR LORD KNOWS OUR HEARTS AND REINS; HE KNOWS WHAT IS REALLY IMPOSSIBLE FOR US, AND WHAT IS JUST INCONVENIENT OR JUST A LITTLE HARD FOR US. HE KNOWS IF WE REALLY HAVE A REASON, OR ARE ONLY GIVING AN EXCUSE.

IN REVELATION 1:10, JOHN SPEAKS OF IT AS THE LORD'S DAY.

IN LUKE 22:29,30, THE LORD SPEAKING TO HIS APOSTLES, SAYS: "I APPOINT UNTO YOU A KINGDOM, AS MY FATHER HATH APPOINTED UNTO ME: THAT YE MAY EAT AND DRINK AT MY TABLE IN MY KINGDOM,----." AND IN HEBREWS 12:28-29, PAUL SAYS: "WHEREBY WE RECEIVING A KINGDOM WHICH CANNOT BE MOVED, LET US HAVE GRACE, WHEREBY WE MAY SERVE GOD ACCEPTABLY WITH REVERENCE AND GODLY FEAR: FOR OUR GOD IS A CONSUMING FIRE." THIS IS SPEAKING TO US. THE LORD SAID HIS TABLE IS IN HIS KINGDOM; AND THAT HIS KINGDOM CANNOT BE MOVED. THAT WE MAY EAT AND DRINK AT HIS TABLE IN HIS KINGDOM. WE HAVE LEARNED THAT THE EARLY CHRISTIANS DID COME TOGETHER (ASSEMBLE THEMSELVES TO BREAK BREAD. THAT THEY HAD PREACHING AT THAT TIME; THE 14TH CHAPTER OF 1 CORINTHIANS TELLS US THAT WHEN THE WHOLE CHURCH HAD COME TOGETHER IN ONE PLACE, THAT THEY HAD PRAYERS AND SANG PSALMS. ALSO WHEN HE INSTITUTED THE SUPPER, THE LORD CLOSED WITH THE SINGING OF A HYMN (MATTHEW 26:30). BUT THE POINT I WANT TO MAKE IS: THEY ASSEMBLED. THEY CAME TOGETHER EVERY FIRST DAY OF THE WEEK.

IN 1 CORINTHIANS 11:23-26, PAUL INSTRUCTS US HOW AND WHY THEY AND WE, EAT AT THE LORD'S TABLE IN HIS KINGDOM, ON THE FIRST DAY OF THE WEEK; WHY WE ASSEMBLE FOR THIS FEAST. PAUL TELLS US IN THIS SCRIPTURE THAT HE DELIVERED UNTO US THAT WHICH HE ALSO RECEIVED OF THE LORD. "FOR I HAVE RECEIVED OF THE LORD THAT WHICH I ALSO DELIVERED UNTO YOU, THAT THE LORD JESUS THE SAME NIGHT IN WHICH HE WAS BETRAYED TOOK BREAD: AND WHEN HE HAD GIVEN THANKS, HE BRAKE IT, AND SAID, TAKE, EAT: THIS IS MY BODY WHICH IS BROKEN FOR YOU: THIS DO IN REMEMBRANCE OF ME. ----AFTER THE SAME MANNER ALSO HE TOOK THE CUP, WHEN HE HAD SUPPED, SAYING, THIS CUP IS THE NEW TESTAMENT IN MY BLOOD: THIS DO YE, AS OFT AS YE DRINK IT, IN REMEMBRANCE OF ME. FOR AS OFT AS YE EAT THIS BREAD, AND DRINK THIS CUP, YE DO SHEW THE LORD'S DEATH TILL HE COME." NOTICE THAT WE KEEP THIS SIMPLE MEMORIAL SUPPER, WAS THE LORD'S LAST REQUEST OF HIS LOVED ONES, BEFORE HE WENT TO TORTURE AND DEATH ON THE CROSS; TO REDEEM US FROM ETERNAL CONDEMNATION. OUR LOVE AND GRATEFUL REMEMBRANCE OF HIM, AND WHAT HE DID FOR US, SHOULD BE ENOUGH TO MAKE US BRAVE ANYTHING WITHIN OUR POWER IN ORDER TO ASSEMBLE WITH THE SAINTS AT HIS TABLE IN HIS KINGDOM; TO REMEMBER HIM, AND SHEW FORTH HIS DEATH TILL HE COME. WE DO THIS ON THE FIRST DAY OF THE WEEK. THE LORD'S DAY. EVERY WEEK HAS A FIRST DAY.

IN MATTHEW 18:20,"WHERE THERE ARE TWO OR THREE GATHERED TOGE-THER IN MY NAME,THERE AM I IN THE MIDST OF THEM." IF CIRCUMSTANCES ARE SUCH AT ANY GIVEN CONGREGATION THAT ONLY TWO OR THREE MEMBERS COULD OR WOULD ASSEMBLE (GATHER THEMSELVES TOGETHER) TO BREAK BREAD AT THE LORD'S TABLE IN HIS KINGDOM:HE HAS PROMISED TO BE IN THE MIDST OF THEM.THERE DOSEN'T HAVE A BIG CROWD,FOR OUR WORSHIP TO BE ACCEPTABLE.BUT EVERY MEMBER WITHIN DRIVING DISTANCE,AND ABLE TO BE UP AND ABOUT,AND HAS TRANSPORTATION:IF HE DOES NOT GATHER (ASSEMBLE) WITH THE SAINTS HAS NEGLECTED HIS DUTY TO THE LORD.HE HAS WORKED AGAINST THE ASSEMBLY OF THE LORD,WEAKENING AND DISCOURAGING IT.

TOO MANY CHRISTIANS TODAY FIND IT ENTIRELY TOO CONVENIENT TO MERELY "HAVE COMMUNION" AT HO ME,WHEN THEY FEEL A LITTLE BAD,OR FIND IT INCONVENIENT WITH THEIR OTHER PLANS TO ASSEMBLE.TO JUSTIFY THEMSELVES,THEY USE THE SCRIPTURE:"WHERE TWO OR THREE ARE GATHERED TOGETHER THERE AM I IN THE MIDST OF THEM." TO SU PPORT THIS PRACTICE THEY ALSO USE SUCH SCRIPTURES AS ROMANS 16:3 & 5 & 23;"GREET PRISCILLA AND AQULIA MY HELPERS IN CHRIST JESUS;LIKE WISE GREET THE CHURCH THAT IS IN THEIR HOUSE"------"GAIUS MI NE HOST,AND OF TH E WHOLE CHURCH SALUTETH YOU." BUT THESE SCRIPTURES DO NOT EXCUSE ANYONE FROM GATHERING WITH THE SAINTS TO BREAK BREAD.OF COURSE THE CHURCH IS IN YOUR HOUSE,IF YOUR HOME IS THE REGULAR MEETING PLACE OF THE SAINTS:IF IT IS THE PLACE OF ASSEMBLY OF THE SAINTS,THE CHURCH.IF THAT IS THE CA SE,THEN YOU WERE AT THE PLACE OF ASSEMBLY,EVEN THOUGH NO ONE ELSE CAME.OTHERWISE,YOU HAVE NOT GATHERED OR ASSEMBLED;BUT RATHER YOU HAVE FORSAKEN THE ASSEMBLY.IF YOU ARE ABSOLUTELY TOO SICK TO DO ANYTHING ELSE ABOUT IT.OR IF IT IS ABSOLUTELY IMPOSSIBLE FOR YOU TO GET THERE;AND ABSOLUTELY IMPOSSIBLE FOR YOU TO DO ANYTHING ABOUT MAKING IT POSSIBLE FOR YOU TO ASSEMBLE:THE LORD KNOWS.BUT IF YOU ARE JUST TOO SICK;OR IT IS JUST TOO INCONVENIENT,UNTIL TOO LATE TO GATHER YOURSELVES TOGETHER WITH THE SAINTS THE LORD KNOWS.IF THEN LATER IN THE SAME DAY YOU CAN DO OTHER THINGS, AND GO OTHER PLACES.THE LORD KNOWS.AND THIS SOUNDS VERY MUCH LIKE SNUBBING THE SAVIOUR;AND ON THE LORD'S DAY.HOW TERRIBLE.

IN MATTHEW 23:37,JESUS WEEPING OVER JERUSALEM,SAYS:"O JERUSALEM JERUSALEM,THOU THAT KILLEST THE PROPHETS,AND STONEST THEM THAT ARE SENT UNTO YOUHOW OFTEN WOULD I HAVE GATHERED THY CHILDREN TOGETHER,EVEN AS A HEN GATHERETH HE CHICKENS UNDER HER WINGS,AND YE WOULD NOT."

WHEN A HEN SEEING DANGER THREATENING AND CLUCKS FOR HER CHICKS TO BE "GATHERED TOGETHER UNDER HER WINGS," IT IS ONLY THE OBEDIENT CHICKENS WHO ACTUALLY GATHER UNDER HER WINGS THAT CAN BE SAID TO BE GATHERED TOGETHER.NOBODY WOULD CONSIDER THE TWO CHICKS WHO DIDN'T WANT TO BE BOTHERED TO GO AROUND THE BIG CLOD,STAYING WHERE THEY WERE,AS BEING GATHERED TOGETHER,OR ASSEMBLED.OF COURSE THE LITTLE CHICK WHOSE FOOT WAS HUNG IN THE WIRE,AND COULDN'T FREE HIMSELF WOULD HAVE A REASON,NOT JUST AN EXCUSE FOR NOT GATHERING TOGETHER UNDER HIS MOTHER'S WINGS.IN FACT THIS WAS THE CONDEMNATION OF THE JEWS.ONLY A HANDFUL ANSWERED THE CALL OF CHRIST,AND GATHERED UNDER HIS WINGS,IN HIS CHURCH.THOSE WHO REFUSED TO CONFESS HIM FOR FEAR OF BEING CAST OUT OF THE SYNAGOGUE CANNOT BE SAID TO BE GATHERED TOGETHER WITH THOSE WHO DID GATHER UNDER HIS WINGS.

THE EARLY CHRISTIANS CAME TOGETHER TO BREAK BREAD.THOSE WHO ASSEMBLE WITH THE SAINTS,FOLLOWING THIS EXAMPLE,ARE WITHOUT A DOUBT GATHERED UNDER THE WINGS OF THE SAVIOUR.BUT WHAT ABOUT THOSE WHO FIND IT INCONVENIENT TO ASSEMBLE WITH THE SAINTS FOR MINOR REASONS,WHICH ARE REALLY ONLY EXCUSES????? WHEN YOU PRESUME TO MERELY "HAVE COMMUNION" AT HOME,WHEN BY PUTTING FORTH ENOUGH EFFORT YOU COULD HAVE ASSEMBLED WITH THE SAINTS:THEN YOU HAVE CREATED A DIVIDED ASSEMBLY,TO SAY THE VERY LEAST OF IT.AND PAUL SAYS IN 1 CORINTHIANS 1:10,"---THAT THERE BE NO DIVISIONS AMONG YOU;BUT THAT YE BE PERFECTLY JOINED TOGETHER IN THE SAME MIND AND THE SAME JUDGEMENT."

HEBREWS 10 :25-31,"THEREFORE WE OUGHT TO GIVE THE MORE EARNEST HEED TO THE THINGS WHICH WE HAVE HEARD,LEST AT ANY TIME WE SHOULD LET THEM SLIP.FOR IF THE WORD SP OKEN BY ANGELS WAS STEDFAST,AND EVERY TRANSGRESSION AND DISOBEDIENCE RECEIVED A JUST RECOMPENCE OF REWARD; HOW SHALL WE ESCAPE,IF WE NEGLECT SO GREAT SALVATION;WHICH AT FIRST BEGAN TO BE SPOKEN BY THE LORD,AND WAS CONFIRMED UNTO US BY THEM THAT HEARD HIM."THE WORD "NEGLECT" HERE MEANS:TO BE CARELESS.HOW SHALL WE ESCAOE IF WE ARE CARELESS ABOUT ASSEMBLING WITH THE SAINTS TO REMEMBER OUR LORD TILL HE COMES AGAIN? WHEN UNDER THE LAW OF MOSES,EVERY TRANSGRESSION AND DISOBEDIENCE RECEIVED JUST RECOMPENCE OF REWARD?

DEUTERONOMY 16:16-17,"THREE TIMES A YEAR SHALL ALL THY MALES APPEAR BEFORE THE LORD THY GOD IN THE PLACE IN WHICH HE SHALL CHOOSE; THE FEAST OF UNLEAVEN BREAD,AND THE FEAST OF WEEKS,AND IN THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES:AND THEY SHALL NOT APPEAR BEFORE THE LORD EMPTY:EVERY MAN SHALL GIVE AS HE IS ABLE,ACCORDING TO THE BLESSING OF THE LORD THY GOD WHICH HE HATH GIVEN THEE." THIS WAS IN THE LAW OF MOSES,AND A LOT OF THESE PEOPLE LIVED A LONG WAY FROM JERUSALEM.AND NONE OF THEM HAD CARS. NOT ALL OF THEM EVEN HAD ENOUGH BURROS FOR EVERY ONE TO RIDE.BUT TO FAIL TO ASSEMBLE THESE THREE TIMES A YEAR WAS CONSIDERED TO "DESPISE THE LAW." AND THEY DIED WITHOUT MERCY,THE SCRIPTURE SAID,COMPARING HOW MUCH MORE IMPORTANT IT IS NOT TO DESPISE THE LAW OF CHRIST BY FAILING IN OBEDIENCE.

THE WORD "DESPISE" AS USED IN THE FOL LOWING SCRIPTURE MEANS TO REJECT;MAKE VOID;DISHONOR;SET AT NAUGHT;REGARD LIGHTLY.CAN'T THIS BE SAID TO B E THE ATTITUDE SHOWN BY THOSE WHO WILLFULLY FORSAKE THE ASSEMBLING OF THEMSELVES WITH THE SAINTS,BECAUSE OF INCONVENIENCE,OR A SUNDAY HEADACHE,THAT GETS BETTER WHEN IT IS TOO LATE TO GATHER TOGETHER FOR WORSHIP?? SO THEN FEELING BETTER,THEY CAN SPEND THE REST OF THE LORD'S DAY IN THEIR OWN PLEASURES OR BUSINESS?

HEBREWS 10:25-31:"LET US READ PRAYERFU LLY JUST HOW SERIOUS IT IS TO FORSAKE THE ASSEMBLY.REMEMBER ONE OF THE DEFINATIONS OF FORSAKE IS "LEAVE UNDONE." "NOT FORSAKING THE ASSEMBLING OF YOURSELVES TOGETHER,AS THE MANNER OF SOME IS;BUT EXHORTING ON E ANOTHER;AND SO MUCH THE MORE AS YE SEE THE DAY APPROACHING.FOR IF WE SIN WILFULLY AFTER THAT WE HAVE RECEIVED A KNOWLEDGE OF THE TRUTH,THERE REMAINETH NO MORE SACRIFICE FOR SINS,BUT A CERTAIN FEARFUL LOOKING FOR OF JUDGEMENT AND FIERY INDIGNATION,WHICH SHALL DEVOUR THE ADVERSARIES.HE THAT DESPISED MOSES' LAW DIED WITHOUT MERCY UNDER TWO OR THREE WITNESSES:OF HOW MUCH SORER PUNISHMENT,SUPPOSE YE,SHALL HE BE THOUGHT WORTHY,WHO HATH TRODDEN UNDERFOOT THE SON OF GOD,AND HATH COUNTED THE BLOO D OF THE COVENANT,WHEREWITH HE WAS SANCTIFIED,AN UNHOLY THING,AND HATH DONE DESPITE TO THE SPIRIT OF GRACE?" BRETHREN,MAY GOD HELP YOU TO REALIZE THAT WHEN YOU FORSAKE (LEA VE UNDONE) THE ASSEMBLING OF YOURSELVES TOGETHER WHEN BY ANY MEANS YOU COULD HAVE MADE IT:THEN YOU ARE GUILTY OF ALL THESE TERRIBLE THING S THE APOSTLE HAS SPOK EN.NOWHERE HAS HE SAID THAT FORSAKING THE ASSEMBLY IS EXCUSED IF YOU HAVE THE COMMUNION AT HOME INSTEAD,WHEN YOU COULD HAVE BEEN IN THE ASSEMBLY;IF YOU HAD TRIED HARD ENOUGH.IF YOU HAD PUT OUT ENOUGH EFFORT.THIS IS SO SERIOUS. LETS READ THE REST OF THIS SCRIPTURE:"FOR WE KNOW HIM THAT HATH SAID,VENGEANCE BELONGETH UNTO ME,I WILL RECOMPENCE,SAITH THE LORD.AND AGAIN,THE LORD SHA LL JUDGE HIS PEOPLE.IT IS A FEARFUL THING TO FALL IN TO THE HANDS OF THE LIVING GOD."

YOUR S FOR THE TRUTH,THE WHOLE TRUTH,AND NOTHING BUT THE TRUTH,

CURTIS C.MCCLUSKEY

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