

The Christian's habitual life

*Not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more as you see the day drawing near.
(Heb. 10.25)*

The writer of Hebrews stated that some Christians had a habit of not gathering with other Christians in worship and fellowship. The word used for habit is a word that shows up in ten other verses in the New Testament. In every case except for Heb. 10.25, the word is translated as, "according to the custom," or "customs." The usage of this word as "custom" would mean what was normally done or expected to be done.

The dictionary defines the word habit as, "a behavior pattern acquired by frequent repetition or physiologic exposure that shows itself in regularly or increased facility of performance." In other words, a habit is something you do over time to the point you do not even think about it when you do it. All of us have habits, some good and some bad. No doubt we have habits we have no idea about because they have become so routine, we do them without thinking. Some habits are hard to break. It is normally easier to establish a habit than to break one. I have been listening to a couple of podcasts on habits which have been interesting. The bottom line I have discovered (so far) when it comes to habits is this: small habits over time make a significant difference.

I put this statement to a test, and I am benefitting from it. My Bible study time is to journal through a book of the Bible. I will read a section of scripture and then comment on one verse. One habit I challenged myself with since Jan. 22 is to write at least one hundred words a day in my journal entry, which equals to about six lines of writing. At first it was a challenge but now I do it without thinking. Here is what those daily one hundred words are teaching me: they challenge me to think through a passage of Scripture, not just write a few words and get on with my day.

So here we are with, "*Not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some.*" Should worship be a habit? Should worship be something we "do" without thinking? Hopefully, worship is not a habit, but what we engage in, in response to God's grace in our lives. However, *gathering* for worship should be a habit, it should be what we do as children of God. When we gather, we can encourage one another, pray for one another, and find out what has been going on in the lives of one another. And yes, you can call, text, Instagram®, snap, tweet, e-mail – you get the picture. We can remotely contact each other without ever having to leave the comfort of our homes. But here is the deal: getting in touch remotely will never replace getting together personally as a family of faith.

I have habits and you have habits; all God's children have habits. I want to encourage you to have as your habit the regular gathering with other brothers and sisters in Christ for worship and fellowship; nothing takes the place of gathering as a body of believers in Christ.