

A. Why should we come to church? What should be our motivation to come to church?

1. **Heb 10:25** “Do not forsake our own assembling together, as is the habit of some”
2. What about our heart’s desires or motivations to worship God Almighty?

How we are to participate in church life in light of God’s grace.	I. <u>GIVE PRAISE & THANKS TO GOD (v15)</u> II. <u>SACRIFICE FOR OTHERS (v16)</u> III. <u>SUBMIT TO THE CHURCH (v17)</u> IV. <u>PRAY FOR YOUR LEADERS (v18)</u>
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I. GIVE PRAISE & THANKS TO GOD (v15)

A. “Through Him [through Christ] we are to continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God.”

→ We give Him thanks & praise because, “Every good thing given & every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights” (James 1:17):

B. Our offering of “sacrifice of praise to God” is defined as “the fruit of lips that give thanks to His name.”

→ 2 important components of prayer: praise & thanks:

1. Praise or adoration to God. → The Psalms are among best places to teach us how to do that.

a. → Turn to **Ps 34:1-4**

b. In our prayers, we are to express how blessed, magnificent, & exalted the Lord is.

WSC 101 “Hallowed be Thy name” → we pray that God would enable us & others to glorify [magnify/exalt] Him in all that whereby He maketh Himself known; & that He would dispose [use] all things to His own glory.

2. Giving God thanks rather than being ungrateful.

C. We are commanded over & over in the Psalms to sing praise to God, giving Him thanks.

II. SACRIFICE FOR OTHERS (v16)

A. In light of God’s grace through Christ, church life ought to be characterized by doing good & sharing.

1. Almost ever church can find Christian brothers & sisters with various needs.
2. For years now, our church has had to help those with transportation needs.
3. Needs are not always financial or physical

B. “Doing good & sharing” are considered “sacrifices” pleasing God. Christ is our example (Phil 2:1-11).

III. SUBMIT TO THE CHURCH (v17)

A. It takes a “leap of faith” to submit church leadership.

1. This is because they sinners like everyone else who is born by ordinary means. Still, Scripture requires elders, deacons, & gospel ministers to meet certain moral standards to hold such offices.
2. Some may ask, what if these men take advantage of me?
3. Get familiar with the elders in a church before taking membership vows. If you note such men are filled with the fruit of the Holy spirit, you will have less reason to fear.

B. **(v17)** is a safeguard for preventing leaders from abusing the flock. They will have to “**give an account**” to God Himself.

1. They will have to answer to God if they neglect or abuse the sheep.
2. An example of God’s calling into account deadbeat shepherds is found in **Ezek 34** (p 614)

B. Congregants have a responsibility to help facilitate their work: **(2nd ½ of v17)** “**Let them do this** [their duty to keep watch over your souls] **with joy & not with grief, for this would be unprofitable for you.**”

IV. PRAY FOR UR LEADERS (vv 18-19)–

A. CH leaders shouldn’t be shy about asking for prayers on their behalf.

1. Satan is often looking to take down the shepherds in var churches to scatter the sheep.
2. Pray that your leaders have a “**good conscience, desiring to conduct ourselves honorably**”
 - a. Conscience –self-awareness or inner thought life— very import word in NT – used 30x.
 - b. → turn back to **Heb 9:9**– for our theological basis for good conscience

B. **Heb 13:18** is a call for prayer for those who preach the Word of God. Pray for their preparation, especially for their sanctification in their work.

1. Spending 20-30 hours studying Scripture does not automatically result in sanctification.
2. WSC 89: “the Spirit of God maketh the reading, but especially the preaching, of the Word, an effectual means of convincing & converting sinners, & of building them up in holiness & comfort through faith, unto salvation.”

Review / Conclusion / Application: