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## To Go, or Not to Go

By Melvin E. Barnett

Lately, I have met too many people that claim God speaks to them about every imaginable topic. The latest thing is, "Should I, or should I not, go to church this week or next?" Let me parallel this statement in another question. "Should I return home from work to spend quality time with my spouse and family today?" Theologically, you cannot separate Christ from the Church. The Scriptures continually equate Christ as the groom and the Church as the bride. Of course you should go to church!

While I must admit that I struggle with understanding the omnipresence of God, I am grossly bewildered in understanding how God constantly speaks to people concerning when, or even if, they should go to church -- or Wal-Mart for that matter. Out of pure respect for the awesome responsibilities of our Father in Heaven, shouldn't we use some common sense in our judgments on matters such as questioning if we should go to Church or not, eat whole wheat or white bread, or shave before or after our shower?

Nothing is more commendable than for people to graduate in the faith from milk to meat, a point in one's life that Pastors dream of. But today, there are an ever-increasing number of spiritual "wanna-be" giants that appear a mile wide in their faith; but if measured in depth they fall short of an inch. They attempt to mimic someone that is operating in the power of the Holy Ghost by using gestures, vocabulary, demeanor, and even seizure-like behaviors as if they have been elevated into deep wisdom and knowledge by God himself.

Elevation in this faith is happening faster than ever. From the time a person is Born Again into the Faith they are plugged into this supernatural communication in no time. In their sight, Christian maturity that has been proven over time is mocked. Seasoned Christians who have stood the test of time and studied Scripture for decades of their lives are ridiculed.

The demise of many of these new Christians is spiritually tragic. They watch their world implode around them while waiting on God to give detailed telepathic instructions. They cling to cheap prophesy that is uttered in groups seeking to be

enlightened. Unfortunately, they have settled for watered-down or vague prophetic words that are so generic they would fit the lives of a criminal. If dates, times, and places are not met according to prophesy, they shrug it off and/or make excuses such as "It was not received by faith."

Their fall is quick and lasting. They stand looking toward heaven and wondering, "Why God? Why me? How could this happen to me? I served you." The fact is that much of their problem from the start was all about "me". They felt like they were in a race and had to compete for the lead. When down for the count they act pathetic and whine and complain, often not returning back to church again for many years, or perhaps never. They often go on to harbor a bad taste in their mouth. They either return to a life of sin or seek approval as they lead a pseudo-Christian life as a renegade, taking every opportunity to speak ill against organized church and decent men and women of God who have been anchored in the faith for many years.

I tell people all of the time, "Life isn't as spiritual as it may seem. The sun comes up and goes down. Roads lead to places, and automobiles require fuel. Fuel costs money. Money is either inherited, stolen, or earned. If you're fat lose weight. If you can't play the piano take lessons."

My attempt to expose the foolishness of our topic seems a little crude, totally out of character for my writing; but I swell with righteous indignation at the thought of one honestly contemplating the question of attending Church or not. The point is, if you want to live a good life pleasing only yourself, by all means go ahead. But if you can't stand church, or perhaps haven't found contentment going to church, don't spin lies about the Lord not directing you to attend any given service. Instead of trying to receive a Word from the Lord, try reading His Word as He has inspired and anointed it.