

Warm up Questions: What does gathering mean to you? Negative examples of gatherings?
What makes up gathering? What are some common reasons for not gathering in a normative fashion?

Thesis: Gathering is a means of grace to the believer that connects believers to hear the gospel, illustrate the gospel, and confirm the gospel through the church as a primary means of discipleship and edification for the believer.

Key Verse: Heb. 10:23-25 Let's hold firmly to the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful; and let's consider how to encourage one another in love and good deeds, not abandoning our own meeting together, as is the habit of some people, but encouraging one another; and all the more as you see the day drawing near.

From CBC Statement of Faith: We believe that Christ is the Head of the Church, which is His body, established to bring God glory. All who have trusted in Christ as Savior are members of this body. Christians should commit themselves to worship, prayer, instruction, fellowship, stewardship, and service in a local church. The church is responsible to represent Jesus Christ in the world through godly living and evangelism. All believers are commanded to participate in two church ordinances: believers' baptism, by immersion if possible, and the Lord's Supper; the bread and cup symbolizing Christ's body and blood.

Means of Grace: mechanisms given to us for discipleship - various ways that God can bless the believer through the course of a everyday Christian walk.

Thomas Boston - The Christian Life Delineated (1775).

"To pretend to believe without using means, is presumption; to use the means without believing the promise, is lifeless formality."

Worship is the workshop of the Holy Spirit. The means of grace, administered by called and lawfully ordained pastors, are the sacred tools by which God shapes and fashions us into the image of His Son. They are God's chosen means that, by the Spirit, through the exercising of faith, "are made effectual to the elect for salvation" (Westminster Larger Catechism 154). Therefore, to forsake the church's worship is ultimately to presume upon God's goodness and question His divine wisdom.

OT Gatherings - This was the Israelites - God's Chosen People

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. Sabbath Ex. 20:8-11 | 5. Festivals/Feasts - Passover |
| 2. Song w/ Worship leaders and Levites | 6. Assembled Exod. 3:12 Ps 133:12 (Deut. 9:10; 10:4) |
| 3. Prayers | 7. Tithe |
| 4. Sacrifice | |

Why we gather today:

1. Worship - declaration of the greatness of our Lord
Romans 12:1-2
2. Witness-Evangelism 1 cor 9:22

3. Nurture - edifying behavior - preaching, teaching, counseling

Jonathan Leeman, "The Church Gathered," The Gospel Coalition, 2022

Frame, "Systematic Theology" Ch 47-48, 2013

Jon D. Payne, "The Importance of Gathering for Worship," 2021

Worship in practice should be:

1. Biblical Matt 15:8

2. Christ Centered Rev 5:12
3. Edifying (provided Moral Instruction) Heb 10:24-25 & 1Cor 14

NT Gatherings verse _1 Pet. 2:9-10

What makes up NT and current gatherings - verse Acts 2:41-47

1. Sabbath -Exalt the King
2. Rekindled Worship/Revives Col 3:16
3. Powerful Prayer Matt 18:20, James 5:14
4. Sacraments - Baptism / Communion Identify Citizens of the Kingdom—Like Passports
 - a. Baptism - profession of faith Great Commission Matt 28:19
 - b. Communion - profession of continuing fellowship the Peace offering after war signifying reconciliation between the 2 parties
5. Assembly/fellowship Gatherings Form a People—Like Citizenship Classes
 - a. Wise Counsel Proverbs 15:22
 - b. Comfort and Encouragement Psalm 1:3, 1 Thessalonians 5:11
 - c. The Spirit We Fellowship with the spirit to accomplish evangelism : 2 Cor 13: 14
6. Teaching/Knowledge of God's Word
 - a. Sharper Focus/Our hearts are pricked/We are chastened/Edified (provided Moral Instruction) 2 Corinthians 1:4
 - i. Philippians 4:8-9
 - ii. Eph 4:29 - talk should build up one another
 - iii. Being together in a church community sharpens our minds.
7. Shared material goods - cared for one another.
 - a. 2Cor 9: 6 Not commanded to give to destruction -
8. Giving 2Cor 8: 5
9. Grow/Repent/Strengthens
 - a. Eph. 4:11-13
 - b. Gal 6:1 - to reclaim a brother
 - c. 1 Cor 5:5 we discipline sometimes formally

REASONS FOR NOT ASSEMBLING?

Envisioning Christianity on their own terms, without accountability, discipline, or shepherding care.

1 Cor. 12:12–26 Eph. 4:15–16 Heb. 10:32–33a; 11 Heb. 10:23–25,