

THE GREEK MEANING OF “FORSAKE”

The word “forsake” in Hebrews 10:25 means to: “leave behind, abandon, desert, leave in straits or helpless.” The idea of this word is not only that one decides to quit the church and never return, but also includes the neglect of attending any of the assemblies.

The obvious meaning of the verse regards those who choose to forsake, abandon, not attend, the assembling of the church. A faithful child of God will be at the services whenever and wherever they may be if it is within his power. The only time one will miss is because there is no way for him to be there, not because he chooses not to be.

Far too many use whatever “excuse” to forsake the designated assemblies and then attempt to cover it over by saying “I was providentially hindered,” when in actuality, they could have been there and had they “really” wanted to, they would have been! God knows the difference between the two and, he is the judge! The faithful child of God will not miss! All the brethren should know that if “brother or sister so and so” is not at services, it is because it is not possible for them to be.

Hebrews 10:25 is often read like this: “not forsaking the **assembly** of ourselves together.” Supposing the Sunday morning assembly where the

Lord’s supper is observed is the one spoken of, they’ll usually try to be there. That is not the way the passage reads! It says we are not to “forsake the **assembling**...” No one certain assembly (singular) is spoken of. The wording is regarding whatever assembling (plural) — whenever the saints meet — do not forsake those assemblies! When the church assembles Sunday morning, Sunday evening, Wednesday night, be there! **WHENEVER** the church assembles, be there! To forsake any assembly of the church points out a definite problem with one’s heart (Matt.6:33).

“Assembling” (v.24) is a time for provoking (stirring up) one another “unto love and to good works.” Why would one not want to be there and do that? Would any be so brazen as to claim they can obtain the same benefits from “not assembling” that they can by assembling? Surely not!

How can it be said any other way than to conclude that to forsake, abandon, desert, leave behind, leave helpless, just one assembling of the church is a SIN!

The Lord’s command is straightforward and simple. Do NOT FORSAKE THE ASSEMBLING OF OURSELVES TOGETHER! To be faithful unto the Lord, you’ll do what the Lord said! What’s more important?

— *Garland M. Robinson*