

not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.

Hebrews 10:25 ESV



BEREAN BIBLE CHURCH

Worship Service

Sunday, 5 September, 2021

Live-streamed Services: Morning - 10:40am & Evening - 6pm

 <https://www.youtube.com/user/bereanbarbados/live>

 <https://www.facebook.com/BereanBarbados/live>

Midweek Online Service (Wednesday)

7:30 pm | ZOOM links provided

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15 Reasons Your Soul Needs Gathered Worship, Not Just a Livestream

By Dane Ortlund

The pandemic continues. Physical attendance in many churches remains sparse—or at least sparser than before. For various reasons, some may need to continue staying home. But other low-risk or fully vaccinated congregants seem to prefer the livestream far longer than we expected.

Amid these various circumstances and uncertainties, we need to lead our people well. Part of that means we need to remind our people of what we lose when we don't physically gather in worship. Below, I've written 15 reflections on all that is lost when we choose to worship from the couch instead of the pew.

1. As Bonhoeffer said in *Life Together*, “The physical presence of other believers is a source of incomparable joy and strength to the believer.” The mere presence of other Christians has a fortifying effect on our souls, beneath what we're even able to consciously recognize. That's one reason the Bible exhorts us to meet together. We are Christ's very body, organically connected to each other, the life and strength of Christ himself flowing into us *through* one another.

2. A virtual worship gathering is one-way participation, not two-way. You're receiving, but you can't give. You are seeing those leading worship, preaching, praying—but they can't see you. They don't see your eyes, your body, your solidarity. At best you're a number, piping in on a livestream.

3. We use our screens for work and for entertainment. But corporate worship is neither. Watching worship on our screens can subtly dilute the special-ness of corporate worship, as the very medium tends to mush it into other more mundane realities of life like work and entertainment.

4. Coming in for worship takes more effort. You have to get out of your pjs and put on jeans. You have to get in the car. If you have kids, you have to go through the routine of getting them all presentable and into the minivan. Up here in the north, you have snow and ice and cold to deal with. *Good*. We're teaching our kids, and we're training our own souls, to value corporate worship. The very effort to come in trains us in a healthy direction, reinforcing the irreplaceable value of gathering with other Christians.

5. There's not only the worship service itself; there's all the hallway time, the passing conversations, the wave across the sanctuary, the smile in the parking lot, the greeting while washing your hands in the restroom. All of that is lost in virtual worship from home. Instead of getting in the car at 9:10 for the 9:30 service, arriving at 9:25, and having several minutes of passing fellowship—along with the unhurried fellowship and encouragement after the

service—you open your laptop at 9:29 and close it one second after the benediction. A protracted period of virtual worship weakens our relationships.

6. There's something else that's harder to articulate, though it's related to the above point. Mentally and psychologically, there's a certain "ramp-up" as you drive to church, park, walk into the building, settle into your seat or into the pew. And there's a certain reflective "ramp-down" as you leave the sanctuary, drive home, and reflect on what just happened. All of that is lost when the ramp-up and ramp-down is replaced with opening your laptop and closing it. Corporate worship must be prepared for and then absorbed, and going in physically helps facilitate that in a way that's almost certainly diluted with couch worship.

7. Prayer. With whom can we pray if we're staying home? With a spouse, perhaps. But we need other Christians to pray with. We need other Christians to pray for. We want to keep learning how to move through life as if God is actually there, because he is. That growth atrophies in protracted isolation.

8. Encouragement. We grossly underestimate the spiritual power of encouragement, both for the encourager and for the encouraged. One reason we gather is to encourage, that is, to build courage into one another. I greet a friend; he asks how my week was; I mention a challenge I'm navigating; he says, "Hang in there; God is with you." A 30-second exchange, come and gone just like that—and my soul just got enlarged.

9. It's harder for your preacher if you are home. He can't see you. He knows some of you are out there, and he's trying to acknowledge you from the pulpit as he glances at the livestream camera from time to time. But he doesn't know if you're nodding along or nodding off. He has zero feedback from you. You could be jumping up and down with excitement and he'd have no idea. Healthy preaching is dialogical—your preacher is feeding off of your eyes, your nods, your attentiveness, as he preaches. He needs to see you.

10. And the preaching is harder for you if you're home. Sitting on your couch watching your preacher as a head on a screen simply isn't as enjoyable as sitting 20 feet away, in a room with better acoustics, surrounded by dozens of other Christians who are also listening with you. Attentiveness to a 2-D preacher necessarily wanes compared to a 3-D preacher.

11. In corporate worship inside your church, not everything is scripted. You'll greet someone you didn't expect to see. A visitor might sit near you and you'll get the opportunity to welcome them. You might even play a role in leading someone to Christ. From your couch, none of that happens. Everything is scripted. It's nearly impossible to have a fortuitous interaction.

READ THE REST OF THIS ARTICLE ONLINE AT:

<https://www.9marks.org/article/15-reasons-your-soul-needs-physical-gathered-worship/>

Order of Service

September 5, 2020, 10:40 am

“Our Invitation to Worship the Lord”

1. **Welcome**
2. **Notices**
3. **Meditation/Prayer**
4. **Chorus** - Come let us worship and bow down
5. **Song 90** - Come Christians join to sing
6. **Scripture Reading** - Psalms 95 (unison) KJV
7. **Song 32** - I sing the mighty power of God
8. **Song 44** - Be Thou exalted (vs 1, 2, 3, then chorus)
9. **Prayer**
10. **Chorus Medley** - Lord, I lift your name on high
Oh how marvelous.
11. **Song 525** - Jesus, Thy blood and righteousness (vs 1, 3, 4)
12. **Message** - Pastor Paul Garnes
13. **Song 498** - Jesus calls us (vs 1, 2, 4)
13. **Prayer/Benediction**



PLEASE REMEMBER TO PRAY FOR:

- That the recent spread of COVID-19 would be contained
- For the saints Haiti and persecuted church in Afghanistan.
- For Steve Brestwer and his family as they mourn their recent loss.
- Pray for the ministry and wellbeing of our Pastor and family.
- For healing for our sick members and grace for our shut-in members.
- For the Berean Church families in The DR Congo.
- For the friends of Berean – The Gilmours, Haecks, Hulls, Moores, Montagues, Porchers, Rogers, Rudders and Taylors.
- For our unemployed members to find meaningful employment.
- For the economic recovery of our country Barbados.
- For the peace of Jerusalem.

September Birthdays



2nd – Mikeala Smith-Clarke	13th – Kenny Maycock	24th – Marva Springer
7th – Myrna Belle	14th – Peyton Garnes	25th – Esmay Maycock
9th – Julia Ifill	15th – Stephen Mendes	26th – Adrian Greenidge
– Gavin Neblett	17th – Shelah Alleyne	– Aubrey Maloney
10th – Cynthia Trotman	19th – Diana Bentley	27th – Cardinal Alleyne
11th – Shelley Peters	– Sherry-Ann Wiltshire	– Sylvine Marshall
12th – Ormenta Hoyte	20th – Anne-Marie Cruickshank	30th – Beverley Wason

Anniversaries



2nd – Joan & Michael Aimey	23rd – Shurley & Marilyn Reece
15th – Leon & Debra King	26th – Lauraine & Ian Bovell
22nd – Nicholas & Rachel Williams	27th – Patrick & Eartha Skeete