

Preacher's Pen points

Neglecting to “Break Bread”



It is a Serious Problem

The decision to be a Christian involves not only an acceptance of God's terms of forgiveness (i.e. faith, repentance, confession, and baptism) but also acceptance of God's terms of discipleship. One of those terms of discipleship is Jesus' command to His disciples to break bread in His memory (Lk. 22:19). Clearly, NT disciples on the basis of apostolic teaching assembled each Lord's Day with this as their stated reason for coming together (Ac. 20:7; 1 Cor. 11:20ff). They were “devoted” to the practice (Ac. 2:42). Thus, the Hebrew writer reveals that it is a part of our priestly duty in “drawing near to God in full assurance faith” and “holding fast the confession of our faith without wavering” (Heb. 10:22-25).

Why does it happen?

- Some are not serious about the commitment of being a Christian. People may obey the gospel without “counting the cost” (Lk. 14:28). Soon they learn that being a Christian requires more than they ever intended to do and simply abandon the quest.
- Sometimes more mature members fail to properly instruct new converts in the “discipline” of discipleship. Perhaps we have worked so hard to see them “baptized” that we forget that there is still another step in our work: “teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you”! (Mt. 28:19-20).
- New converts and members are never really “enfolded” into the group. Members may give

them the traditional “glad-to-have-you” hand shake; but that's about all. There is little effort to build a relationship with a person who comes from a different background or socio-economic class. And many new converts sense that they don't quite “fit in” and quietly drop out.

- People who attend erratically are often going through challenging life struggles: divorce, job problems, health problems. For many, attending services just adds an additional burden to an already difficult life. It is easier to withdraw or hide than to reveal problems.

What Can We Do?

- All of us must take responsibility for new converts as well as place responsibility on new converts.
- We need to get to know their names, include them in our get-togethers after services and at home.
- We need to continue studying about discipleship and its obligations.
- We must be sensitive to people in their life struggles and be as ready to help them through problems rather judge their actions.
- We need to respond quickly to those who show weakness rather than respond after months of inactivity.
- We must patiently encourage new habits and respond affirmingly to conscientious effort.

—Johnny Felker

Nearly 90 percent of Perry Height's members break bread with the church each week. This is encouraging; but we should not be satisfied until we have 100 percent participation! Will you help us reach that goal?