Unexpected Visitors

by Steve Higginbotham

“Oh, we had unexpected visitors.” Through the years, this is the reason many have given me for missing worship. This explanation was offered without embarrassment, indicating that in their way of thinking, this was totally acceptable.

But my I ask you to rethink this “excuse” for missing worship services?

Suppose it was the worship hour and instead of participating in this assembly of exhortation, study, and praise, you are at home entertaining some “unexpected visitors.” Just suppose that while you’re entertaining these “unexpected visitors,” another “unexpected visitor” drops in - his name is Jesus.

At that moment, where would you want to be: at home visiting or at worship with your brethren? Without hesitation, I can tell you where I’d want to be, and I think I can answer for you as well. When Jesus does decide to unexpectedly drop in, I don’t think any of us would want to be found neglecting spiritual matters in favor of carnal matters. Nor would I want to be found ignoring the advice of elders who were appointed to oversee my soul and to whom I am commanded to obey and submit (Hebrews 13:17).

Simply put, if I wouldn’t want to die while engaged in an activity for fear of eternal ramifications, then I shouldn’t engage in that activity at all (2 Peter 3:11).

If you miss services because “unexpected visitors” stop by, then what would happen if “unexpected visitors” stopped by at the time of your child’s graduation from high school, or at the time you needed to go to work, or at the time you were to attend a wedding or funeral of a close friend? Again, I believe I know what you would do.

The privilege of wearing the name of Christ requires us to make many sacrifices in life. It may cause some of our friends or family to think we are a bit strange (1 Peter 4:4). It may even anger some of our friends or family (Matthew 10:34-39) to realize they don’t come first in our lives. But so be it! Knowing how great a sacrifice Christ made for me, I think it a rather small thing to sacrifice a couple hours of visiting with friends or family in order to pay homage to the one who died to save me. What do you think?