

Below are the Questions that were submitted and answered on March 29, 2020 and a brief summary of each answer that Josh gave in His lesson. Thanks to everyone who submitted questions.
You can view the video of this lesson at www.CharlotteHeights.org or on **Facebook**.

“I strongly state that I’m just a humble servant of the Word. I’m not the authority, but God is.”

--Josh Barnett

Question 1: Are we forsaking the assembly by not meeting in person?**Answer**

No.

Consider these things.

- Are shut-ins that watch faithfully on Facebook Live “forsaking” because they are unable to attend?
 - Are those who are sick and listen to a CD or Facebook Live “forsaking” because they are unable to attend?
 - Are those who are taking precautions not to drive at night or in the rain “forsaking” because they are not here?
1. First, we are not skipping, deserting, or abandoning worship because we have the live-stream, CD, and DVD.
 2. Second, we are not skipping, deserting, or abandoning worship because of the strong suggestion from our eldership.
 - It’s one thing to have a service and not come.
 - It’s another thing to not come physically.
 - Our Elders have prayerfully considered this. It is not to hinder our faith but to exercise precaution with local, state, and federal authorities.
 3. Thirdly, what is the full meaning of Hebrews 10:25?
 - In the context, was the writer warning us not to skip worship service?
 - Was the meaning much deeper than that?
 - *“not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching”* (Hebrews 10:25).
 - Many of them had *“struggled with sufferings”* (Hebrews 10:32).
 - They were *“made a spectacle both by reproaches and tribulations”* (Hebrews 10:33).
 - They joyfully accepted the plunder of their goods (Hebrews 10:34).
 - They were to hold fast under tough circumstances that they faced at that time.
 - This was not missing service out of convenience as we use or see it today.
 - The writer’s concern was for them not to *“trample the Son of God underfoot”* or *“profane the blood of the covenant”* (Hebrews 10:29).
 - They were not to throw away their confidence (Hebrews 10:35).
 - They were not to forsake the assembling of themselves.
 - The word “forsake” is also used in Matthew 27:46, 2 Timothy 4:10, and Hebrews 13:5.
 - All of these point to something much more than missing a worship service.
 - The church is designed to be together because we are the church.
 - We are the spiritual body of Christ.
 - We are to love one another, consider one another, pray for one another, be kind to another, etc.
 - Being together should be of the upmost importance, but I’m thankful, under strange times as this, that we have other means to meet this need.

Question 2: Does the church have to follow government orders for not having large groups?**Answer**

The answer to the question is “No”; however, God has given us the ability to discern, use wisdom, and use good judgement. It’s a decision that no Eldership takes lightly.

From a Governmental standpoint

- Our bylaws confirm this in Amendment 1: *Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.*
- Our governor signed, several days ago, Executive Order 17, which limits public gathering and urged us as to take it seriously.

- This “executive order” is not because of our faith in Jesus Christ. We are not being persecuted because of our faith. It’s to help flatten the curve of COVID-19. In other words, it has to do with the health of everyone, especially the ones who are vulnerable because of underlying issues.
- The reason why we are not assembling is not because of government but because of the suggestion of our Elders.

From a Biblical standpoint

- Peter proclaimed, “*we ought to obey God rather than men*” (Acts 5:29).
- They were being told not to preach and teach the good news.
- Peter refused to listen to the governing powers at that time in regard to this request.
- This does not apply to our state in 2020 in Tennessee.
- The governor nor mayor nor president have told us to stop meeting and preaching the good news.
- We are ordered not to be in groups larger than 10 for the sake of everyone’s health.
- This is a big, big, big difference.
 - Consider most prayers and announcements when we assembly.
 - We are mindful of the physical nature of our loved ones and friends.
 - We don’t want people to come if they are feeling sick or not well.
- There is a time for us to live by faith and show our faith, and there is a time to use common sense.
- Read Paul’s dialogue in Romans 13:1-5.
 - Government was established by God along with the church and the home.

Question 3: Is it okay to use individual crackers and not break off from the larger piece?

If I am concerned about catching a disease from passing the plate, it is okay to use individual crackers instead?

Answer

Yes, for the simple fact that if you don’t, you might focus on “catching something” rather than the sacrifice of Jesus. Our minds must be on Jesus. “*Do this in remembrance of me*”, not for your worries, concerns, and what if’s. I also say “Yes” considering the convenience of worshiping at home like we have done for the past two Sundays. We use them for shut-ins and those and nursing facilities.

Consider these texts

- “*And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to the disciples and said, “Take eat this is my body.”* (Matthew 26:26)
 - Did they all break the bread?
 - Jesus broke it and gave it to them
- “*And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, blessed and broke it and gave it to them and said, “Take eat this is my body.”* (Mark 14:22)
- “*The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?*” 1 Corinthians 10:16
- According to these verses, Breaking Bread can be
 - To divide as Jesus did with His disciples in the upper room.
 - To eat as in I Corinthians 10:16.
- Paul said, “*the bread which we break.*”
 - The “we” included Paul and the church of Corinth and any other person meeting.
 - Paul was not there with them when he wrote the letter to the church at Corinth.
 - They were separated by geography, but they were able to take the one bread.
 - Christians all over the world partake of the one bread.
 - The one presiding over the Lord’s Supper can break the bread as it is being divided and served to us.
 - Or, we can each break the bread and eat it.
 - Both ways seem appropriate from the text.
- Therefore, the travel communion would be acceptable as long as our minds are focused on the right things.
- I believe the remembering is the main concern.