

# Family TableTalk

Conversation 111

## Drawing Near

read

*Ephesians 2:13, 18-22; Hebrews 10:19-25*

think

Ephesians 2:18–22 declares that through Jesus we are given new life with God. Jesus draws individuals to Himself through faith in His life, death, and resurrection. Salvation restores our broken relationship with God, granting us the gift of eternal life with Him. Once enemies of God and children of wrath, we are now sons and daughters at peace with our Heavenly Father. This is an amazing truth. However, life with God is not the only gift we receive.

All followers of Jesus are also given the gift of a new family. We are each brought into something bigger and more powerful than ourselves. While salvation requires personal faith in Jesus, the new life in Him is not meant to be experienced privately. Our Heavenly Father desires for us to enjoy relationships with our fellow brothers and sisters.

Scripture speaks of the “Big C” Church—all followers of Jesus throughout time—and the “little c” church, the local gathering of Christians. God created us to have a meaningful relationship with Him and with other followers of Jesus. Hebrews 10:24–25 reminds us not to neglect gathering together, but to encourage, motivate, and stir one another up to love and good works. Just as a team or band must meet to function, disciples of Jesus are called to gather. Going to church does not make someone a Christian; rather, it is something Christians are called to do. A healthy church gathering redirects our gaze back to God, strengthens our faith, and reminds us that we are not alone in our walk with Him or in life.

It is essential that every Christian prioritize regularly gathering with a local body of believers. We need time set aside for the faithful teaching of Scripture, participation in prayers of praise, confession, and lament, and “singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs” (Ephesians 5:19). All of these practices reorient our minds and hearts to God’s truth and grace. Time together also provides opportunities to serve others while developing and exercising God-given gifts. As you draw near to other followers of Jesus, may you help them draw near to God’s truth and grace.

apply

- Why does attending a church not automatically mean someone is a Christian?
- Every person who gathers with a local church body should ask themselves: Am I a consumer or a contributor in the church?
- Hebrews 10 says we should “stir one another up” to love and good works. What are some practical ways you can encourage friends, family, or people at church to love God and others?
- Next time when we gather with our church, what is one way you can build up or encourage someone?
- Name one person in your church you can pray for specifically by name today.

pray

Heavenly Father, thank you for loving us and drawing us to yourself. Thank you for giving us a place in your family. Help us to be thankful for our church family. When we go to a church service, help us enjoy the gift of your word, prayer, and singing. Show us how we can serve and build up people to help them grow closer to you.

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