

“ABLE TO AID”

Bryan Matthew Dockens, 2021

Temptation is certain; there's no need to fear it.

Jesus Himself *“was led up by the Spirit”*
Into the wilderness, where He was fasting,
For an ordeal with Satan, forty days lasting.

The Devil said to Him, Make bread from this stone.

“It is written, ‘Man shall not live by bread alone.’”
Holy Scripture was Christ's primary defense,
But even this the Tempter misrepresents.

The Deceiver quoted and twisted a Psalm:

An angel must hold You aloft in the palm,
So, *“throw Yourself down”* from the Temple's pinnacle.
Still, the Old Serpent just wasn't biblical.

The Adversary set before Jesus's eyes
The kingdoms of the world as a glorious prize.
All will be Yours if me You will idolize.
Again, *“It is written,”* the Lord did reprise.

The lust of the flesh and eyes, as well as life's pride
Will pass away with the world and not abide.
“The way of escape” is through steadfast resistance.
The Savior's example is no small assistance.

We do not lack a sympathetic High Priest,
Tempted *“in all points”* from greatest to least.
“In that He Himself has suffered, being tempted,
He is able to aid those who are tempted.”

(Matthew 4:1-11; Luke 4:1-13; 1st Corinthians 10:13; Hebrews 2:18; 4:15; 1st Peter 5:8-9; 1st John 2:15-17)

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sickness. It is sensible, and loving, for contagious folks to stay home. This is not just about church, though. The rule applies to work, school, gym, grocery store, and wherever else the person would otherwise go. The one who is well enough to venture out for other activities is well enough to be in the assembly. If the one who is ill at home is awake while the sermon is preached, it would be appropriate to utilize the technology available to watch the livestream from bed. If the person is sleeping, so be it, but the recorded sermon can and should be viewed soon to gain what exhortation is available. What the brother or sister does not need to be doing while home from church is scrolling the internet, reading a book, watching TV, or filling out a crossword.

Some illnesses require a parent or other family member to stay home and tend to the needs of the person who is sick, and one person is sufficient in almost all cases. An ill child can be tended by a mother or a father for a couple hours while the rest of the family worships. Keeping both parents and all children in the house when only a single family member is unwell is not reasonable and is not the kind of thing that would likely be offered to excuse absence from work or school.

Not every infirmity requires staying home. Paul suffered from a chronic ailment, his *“thorn in the flesh”* (2nd Corinthians 12:7-10), yet he was the most active Christian who ever lived. He claimed to be *“not at all inferior to the most eminent apostles”* (2nd Corinthians 11:5), who excelled all other ministers of the gospel (23-33), and he made this claim immediately before mentioning his constant infirmity. Sickness can be real and painful, but does not always necessitate absence. If one will be in the same amount of pain in bed as on the pew, he or she may as well get edified and serve as a worthy example to others.

Jesus commended the faith of those men who removed a roof to lower their paralyzed friend into a crowded house where Jesus was (Mark 2:1-12). With enough determination, and sometimes the help of dedicated friends, sick folks who are not contagious can get to the house of the Lord. Unless long distance is a factor, in most churches there are fellow Christians willing to provide transportation to the assemblies, and who **want** to do this good work (Titus 3:8).

Poor health is not always a legitimate obstacle to attendance, but when it is, it is incumbent upon the ailing to keep the church informed. *“Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord”* (James 5:13). Accountability is real. Shepherds must know the whereabouts of the sheep. Prayers are needed.

**"WHAT MUST I DO
TO BE SAVED?"**

ACTS 16:30

LEARN THE GOSPEL

John 6:45; Romans 10:17

BELIEVE IN CHRIST

Hebrews 11:6; John 3:16

CONFESS CHRIST

Matthew 10:32-33; Romans 10:9-10

REPENT OF SIN

Acts 3:19; 17:30

BE BAPTIZED INTO CHRIST

Mark 16:16; Romans 6:3-6

REMAIN STEADFAST

1st Corinthians 15:58; Revelation 2:10

**"THE ASSEMBLING OF
OURSELVES TOGETHER"**

HEBREWS 10:24-25

SUNDAY

Worship @ 10:00 a.m.

Studies @ 11:45 a.m.

WEDNESDAY

Studies & Worship @ 7:00 p.m.

75 Sherrod Boulevard
Belén, New Mexico

**Seekers Welcome.
Members Expected.**

**"IF A MAN IS OVERTAKEN IN
ANY TRESPASS...
RESTORE SUCH A ONE"**

GALATIANS 6:1

CONFESS TRESPASSES

James 5:16; 1st John 1:9

REPENT OF SIN

Acts 8:22

PRAY FOR FORGIVENESS

Acts 8:22

REMAIN STEADFAST

1st Corinthians 15:58; Revelation 2:10

**"A WORD FITLY SPOKEN IS
LIKE APPLES OF GOLD IN
SETTINGS OF SILVER"**

PROVERBS 25:11

"A writer who says that there are no truths, or that all truth is 'merely relative,' is asking you not to believe him. So don't."

– Roger Scruton

"WHOLE COUNSEL"

ACTS 20:27

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TOO SICK FOR CHURCH

Bryan Matthew Dockens

Since Christians are taught to be *"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), gathering with the church should be treated as the priority of each disciple's week and absence must be avoided.

Before the church existed, there was an occasion when all but one of the apostles were gathered, and that sole apostle missed something major, something life changing. *"Thomas was not with them when Jesus came"* (John 20:24). Ten apostles witnessed the resurrected Lord, and one said, *"I will not believe"* (25). Where disciples are together, faith is affirmed, but absence is destructive to faith.

What the church does when assembled – communing with Christ's body and blood (1st Corinthians 10:16-17; 11:17-34), singing to one another (Colossians 3:16), praying for one another (James 5:16), giving (1st Corinthians 16:1-2), and exhorting one another (Hebrews 3:13) – are what make attendance so important. There would be very few reasons not to be present when the church meets.

The Old Law required those with communicable diseases to practice quarantine for the duration of the illness (Leviticus 13:46). While this is not imposed in the New Covenant, per se, it is in keeping with loving one's neighbor as himself (Mark 12:31) to avoid infecting others with – Continued on page 4 –

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