

C. We should gather for spiritual purposes as in 1 Corinthians 11 and 16. We will gather to honor the Lord in remembrance and to edify one another in ministry and care (1 Cor 14). Your very presence is edifying if you do nothing other than to sit and look solemn. We will gather to pray, to give, etc. Whatever the corporate fellowship thinks appropriate (so long it as does not try to supercede the Scripture) we will gather to honor the Lord , His program, and His people.

D. We should gather but the gathering should not be an end in itself. The early church gathered and then went out. The gathering is a beginning or a continuance of our lives, not an end. If following a meeting for ministry one goes home and places one's Bible on a shelf not to be consulted until the next meeting, the meeting has lost its purpose. The gathering has become an end in itself and nothing in Scripture suggests this. (But it is never quite stated this way and that is why no Biblical passage is cited at this point.)

III. Conclusion: The practical authority of the Scripture is the determining measurement of our gatherings. There are valid reasons why some cannot be at meetings of various kinds but we must be careful that we do not allow our personal circumstances to be more important than our fellowship with the Lord and His people. I cannot be more particular than that and regret I cannot answer every situation with a specific fiat from the Lord.

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MESSAGE # 3: PRACTICAL AUTHORITY IN OUR GOVERNANCE

Biblical Passages: 1 Peter 5, Acts 20, 1 Timothy 5

I. Introducing the Subject:

It is important to observe that a company of believers is not a democracy, a dictatorship, or an oligarchy but a fellowship with defined functions and offices by the Word of God. The Head of the order is the Lord Jesus, the motivating power is the Holy