

A SHARED EXPERIENCE

By John Gibson

There's something special about shared experiences. Ask those who have seen combat in the military, or suffered as prisoners of war, or played in the band together, or shared a winning season on the football field, or the baseball diamond.

It takes togetherness to build camaraderie, develop rapport, or form a brotherhood. The Lord in His wisdom provided for shared experiences in the assembling of the saints in worship. Together we sing. Together we pray. Together we eat the Lord's Supper—"Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread."

It's these shared times which unite and truly make us one. Those who try to have a "Lone Ranger" form of Christianity miss rich blessings, and are not ministering to others as they should. The Bible enjoins, *"And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teach and admonish one another in all wisdom, and sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs with thankfulness in your hearts to God."*

In the assembly we not only worship God, but minister to one another as well. There is a place for private prayer and devotion. Jesus said so. But it was never intended to supplant our coming together as a body of the Lord's people. The biblical admonition still remains, *"not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near."*

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