

**Hebrews 10:25** not forsaking our own assembling together, as the habit of some is, but encouraging one another; and all the more as you see the day drawing near. (NASB)

1. This verse reveals the standard by which the royal family grows in grace. It cites the location where the church body congregates to collectively concentrate on and simultaneously hear the teaching of the Word of God from the communication gift of its local pastor-teacher.
2. This verse begins with the negative conjunction, **μή (mē)**, plus the imperatival present active participle of **ἐγκαταλείπω (enkataleípō)**.
3. This is the continuation of the compound sentence that began in **verse 23**. It begins with the hortatory, imperatival, present active participle of **κατέχω (katéchō)**: “Let us keep on holding fast our traditions, convictions, or beliefs of our confidence without wavering.”
4. **Verse 24** begins, as we have already noted, with the same hortatory imperatival participle, this time of **κατανοέω (katanoéō)**: “Let us repeatedly consider how to encourage fellow members of the local church.”
5. In **verse 25** we have the third imperatival present active participle, *enkataleípō*, preceded by the negative *mē* which is a command to “not forsake” something.
6. What is not to be forsaken is “our own assembling together.” The noun, **ἐπισυναγωγή (episunagōgē)**. This noun is used twice in the New Testament, here in Hebrews 10:25 and in Paul’s rebuttal to the church at Thessalonica on the subject of the Rapture. It is interesting to see how he uses the term in that verse:

**2 Thessalonians 2:1** Now we request you, brethren, with regard to the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together [ **ἐπισυναγωγή (episunagōgē)** ] with Him.

7. This noun refers to the act of assembling, coming together, congregating for the purpose of worship as in Hebrews 10:25 and the gathering together of believers at the Rapture of the church which is Paul’s subject in 1 Thessalonians 4:13–18.
8. The passage in 2 Thessalonians 2:1 is a follow up because many in the Thessalonian church had interpreted his first dissertation to mean that the Rapture had already occurred.
9. Thus, in the Church Age, there are two “gatherings together.” The first is the assembly of various groups of believers who gather at their local **συναγωγή (sunagōgē)**: “synagogue,” defined in *Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary* as, “assembly, synagogue: to bring together. The house of worship and communal center of a Jewish congregation.”
10. With regard to the biblical context of the two passages mentioned above we have this excerpt:





**ἐπισυναγωγή [episunagōgē]: “to gather together.”** Hebrews 10:25 does not merely denote the assembling for corporate worship as a solitary or occasional act, but as customary conduct. The preposition ἐπί- (epi), “to,” must refer to Christ Himself as the one to whom this assembly was attached. Thus it would have the meaning of not betraying one’s attachment to Jesus Christ and other believers, not avoiding one’s own personal responsibility as part of the body of Christ.<sup>2</sup>

11. Therefore, believers are commanded to “not forsake their gathering together” which is indicated by the noun, ἐπι-συν-αγωγή. The prefix, ἐπι, means “under the authority of”; συν means “along with others who are under authority,” and αγωγή means “come together.”
12. When absorbed into one word, ἐπισυναγωγή means, “Stop consistently forsaking the command to assemble ourselves together.” The word “together” is the plural pronoun, ἐαυτού (heautoú) which expands the command to be fulfilled collectively at a central location, namely the συναγωγή (sunagōgē), literally the synagogue, or church.
13. *Sunagōgē* was their early term for “church,” which is the English translation of the Greek noun, ἐκκλησία (ekklēsia).
14. The verbal impact of this command is found in the pronoun ἐαυτού (heautoú): “ourselves.” This word’s impact in the verse needs some amplification so we’ll take it up with a few subpoints:
  1. *Heautoú*—“of ourselves”—is the genitive plural of this reflexive pronoun.
  2. This is a very interesting pronoun because it is constructed on the intensive pronoun αὐτού (autoú) from a demonstrative pronoun.
  3. A demonstrative pronoun is designed to identify something in the context. An intensive one means to identify something in a special way.
  4. The pronoun ἐαυτού (heautoú) means not only to identify it but to comprehend that it especially applies to the individual believer.
  5. The writer of Hebrews is making this point to its original audience whose specific identity remains undecided. Some suggest it is written to Messianic Jews while others include the presence of Gentile believers.

<sup>2</sup> Spiros Zodhiates, ed., *The Complete Word Study Dictionary: New Testament*, rev. ed. (Chattanooga: AMG Publishers, 1993), 641.





6. Regardless of the genetic background of the congregation, the message is directed to believers who are members of the body of Christ who, when assembled, are one in Christ.
7. However, the writer perceives the danger of reversionism caused by the failure of many to assemble themselves together at the place of assembly which is the local church.
8. Therefore, the commandment in verse 25 is amplified by the intensive pronoun which calls out all the members of the local congregation to assemble themselves together.
9. The writer then calls out those who specifically have chosen not to assemble themselves with the phrase, “as is the habit of some.”
15. The word “habit” is the noun, ἔθος (*éthos*): “custom, practice, manner, behavior.” This refers to “certain ones.”
16. Those who are not interested in the serious study of the Word of God are called out. Specifically, concentration on the teachings of the Bible may be heard, but inculcation for application is missing.
17. These “certain ones” include those who do not attend the assembly or, while there, are distracted. These individuals are not interested and as a result are not functioning members of the body of Christ.
18. The point the writer of Hebrews is stressing is attendance—face-to-face—consistently done, Bible class after Bible class.
19. In the twenty-first century, now into in the last days of its second decade, there are numerous ways by which a believer can consistently study the Bible my means of electronic contrivances.
20. There are legitimate reasons that some choose these sources to stay current with the ongoing studies presented at this church. Hundreds consistently join our live webcasts; thousands of others stream the recordings. There are over 700 subscribers to our ten-page class notes.
21. The majority who choose to use these assets live outside the general geographic area of our church. They consider it their source for spiritual growth when, in their local area, there is no doctrinal teaching available.
22. However, with regard to those local, the next word in Hebrews 10:25 becomes specific to many of them. It is the strong adversative conjunction, ἁλλά (*allá*): “but” which introduces a strong contrast.





23. That contrast is the progressive present active participle of παρακαλέω (*parakalēō*) whose basic meaning is “encouragement,” but the imperatival participle amplifies it to an “exhortation.”<sup>3</sup> Thus, the writer’s language is intended to incite and encourage through exhortation.
23. The active voice means you will produce the action of the verb by not only showing up to hear the communication of the Word of God, but you will be an encouragement to others by consistently gathering together with them for the spiritual advance.
24. The participle is instrumental and therefore is translated, “but by being an encouragement.” This word has a silent impact on the congregation at large. This person does not need to say anything. What he says is his silent but consistent appearance at Bible class.
25. During his time spent at the *ekklēsia*, his presence is a consistent reminder of the value of showing up at Bible class. His confident demeanor, his grace orientation, his wise commentary is testimony to the doctrine he has acquired while quietly concentrating in Bible class.
26. The spiritual growth acquired by the consistent attendee is reflected by his confident persona while mixing with others. In both environments, he is an ongoing encouragement.
27. At this point the writer of Hebrews briefly abandons Koiné Greek and switches to Attic Greek phrase, “and all the more”: καί τοσοῦτος μᾶλλον (*kaí tosoútos mállon*): “even so much more.”
28. For the writer of Hebrews to dramatically switch languages grabs the attention of the reader. The overall importance of assembling at Bible class is to “make hay while the sun shines.”
29. The sudden change of languages indicates the writer’s desire to grab the attention of the reader. The writer is going to dramatically remind the group that they are only one yoctosecond away from being raptured away into the third heaven with a certain appointment before the Evaluation Tribunal of Christ.
30. The point: The overall meaning and inherent power of assembling for Bible class is to accrue the thinking of God since gradually encroaching with each passing day is the prophesied transfer from time into eternity.
31. Now is the time and now is the hour to accumulate doctrine in your soul so that on any given day you are as prepared to meet your Maker as possible.

<sup>3</sup> “To incite by argument or advice: urge strongly. To give warning or advice: make urgent appeals (*Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary*, 11th ed. (2014), s.v. “exhortation.”





32. By doing so you profit from your biblical inventory in time and in so doing you accumulate the doctrinal capital that prepares you for the change of station from time into eternity.
33. The younger a person is the less emphasis he naturally has with regard to his eventual death. But that is not the focus the writer of Hebrew wants the reader to have.
34. Instead, he wants positive volition toward the teaching of Bible doctrine to be a constant motivation to move forward in the plan of God. Why? Since we do not know when we shall leave this earth, and because we do not know, is the reason for the necessity to assemble ourselves together.
35. The real attention getter here is not rally one's physical death, but one far more imminent, the Rapture of the church, indicated by the phrase, "as you see the day drawing near."
36. The verb "to see" is the aoristic present active indicative of **βλέπω (blépō)**. The present tense is a retroactive progressive present denoting what has begun in the past and continues into the present.
37. Those who have studied doctrine and retained it are aware of the immanency of the Rapture. The active voice indicates that those who have grown spiritually produce the action of knowing the Rapture could occur at any moment.
38. Consequently, they realize the urgency of consistent attendance in the local assembly and the consistent pursuit of truth within the environment of the church auditorium in concert with other believers.
39. The indicative mood is declarative and views the action of the verb from the viewpoint of absolute reality—the Rapture event could occur at any time on any day.
40. The lie is then proclaimed as the truth and those who stand fast in opposition are accused of committing sins against individual, societal, and cultural absolutes.
41. The believer's duty is to maintain and stand firm from his fortress of truth. To live by it. To uphold it. To proclaim it. And do so until his physical death or the Rapture of the Church.
42. James concludes verse 8 with this, "for the coming of the Lord is near." The word that begins this final clause is the noun **παρουσία (parousía)**. Its basic definitions are, "a state of being present," "coming to a place," "coming or arrival."

(End JAS3-84.Rev. See JAS3-85 for continuation of study at p. 301.)

