

Foreword by **HERSHAEL YORK**

**JONATHAN
GRIFFITHS**

GATHERED
for GOOD

*GOD'S GOOD DESIGN for
the LOCAL CHURCH*



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To the saints of The Metropolitan Bible Church—
gathered for much good

Acknowledgments

THIS BOOK HAS TAKEN SHAPE WITHIN THE LIFE OF A REAL and vibrant church family. I am so grateful for the fellowship and stimulus of brothers and sisters in Christ at The Met, who together strive to live out the biblical principles set out in this book. It has been a joy to teach these truths to a congregation that desires to grow more and more into the kind of church that honours and pleases the Saviour. As ever, I am thankful for the encouragement of our elders to view writing as part of my ministry and service to the wider family of God.

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Foreword

FOR YEARS I HAVE LAID CLAIM TO THE TITLE OF “GOD’S spoiled child.” I genuinely consider myself the most blessed man alive. With full awareness that God loves all His children perfectly, I nonetheless feel that I have lived a life brimming with more blessings and overflowing with greater favor than any of my contemporaries. Others may certainly have more money, but no one has greater wealth. Undoubtedly many have more possessions, but no one could have a greater treasure of people than those God has placed in my life. From my childhood to today, the matrix of faithful family, heartwarming friendships, and rich relationships constantly testifies of God’s benevolence.

Most of those relationships have a common source: the church. Not only was I born and reared in a Christian home, but in a *pastor’s* home. My father was my mentor, evangelist, discipler, best friend, and example. His warm and joyful spirit helped me to love the church and the people of God—which

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was a great grace, because we went to church *all the time!* We attended services on Sunday mornings, Sunday nights, Wednesday nights, monthly youth fellowship meetings, revival meetings, Vacation Bible School, and Bible conferences—*lots* of Bible conferences. Nearly all holidays were spent at a church holding a conference where I would hear (mostly) good preaching and hang out with other preachers' kids, many of whom have remained lifelong friends.

Though I don't assume everyone should attend church as frequently as we did, I count it as one of God's greatest blessings in my life. I have had a front row seat to closely observe God's gracious work in thousands of lives, marriages, and homes. I have seen brokenness, waywardness, sinfulness, and a lot of quirkiness, but I have also witnessed repentance, redemption, restoration, and deep relationships. I have watched the bonds of mutual mercy and grace weave disparate lives together like nothing else on earth can. All those years I thought we were just going to church, but we were really joining with our brothers and sisters to hear our Father tell us all how much He loved us and how wonderfully we fit in His family, how much we *belong*.

Every heart yearns to belong. We look for our group. We connect with our cluster. We hunt in packs. Even misfits find each other and hang out together. We seek solace or sustenance or reassurance in assembling ourselves together.

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People who love the same thing find themselves inexorably drawn to each other. We search for others who share the same devotion we feel for whatever passion we pursue: our preferred sport, favorite team, chosen career, or dream car. Upon discovering others who love what we love, we organize ourselves into fan clubs, alumni chapters, career guilds, service organizations, or some other league that expresses and affirms our mutual affection. The deeper the love, the greater the gravitational attraction pulling us into the same orbit. Doesn't it make sense that the saving love of Christ, the greatest love the world has ever known, would result in the strongest bonds the world has ever experienced?

We desire fellowship, companionship, and love, not primarily because we are deficient or needy—though we may be—but because we are created in the image of God. Affection, fellowship, and love, after all, are at the very center of the Godhead. Father, Son, and Holy Spirit share perfect love and maintain perfect fellowship and perfect unity.

Salvation makes it possible for us—fallen, broken, and sinful, but redeemed—to enter into the life, love, and glory that existed in the Triune God before the world was formed. Though God sets His love on us as individuals, His love draws us also to others whom He loves. The very nature of God and of His love makes us seek to express that love as He does—in loving fellowship and unity in the character and will of God.

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To put it quite simply and starkly, we cannot fulfill the commands of the New Testament by ourselves, nor can we express the character of the love that God has shed abroad in our hearts by living a solitary, ascetic, monkish kind of Christianity. Jesus chose twelve “that they might be *with* Him” (Mark 3:14, emphasis added). He prayed that “the love with which you have loved me may be in them, and I in them” (John 17:26, emphasis added). He taught that the worst thing that could happen to one of his disciples was not death, but *solitude*. “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains *alone*; but if it dies, it bears much fruit” (John 12:24). Most important, He established His church—His *assembly*—so that we might be together. No honest reading of the New Testament can justify a Christian life without regularly gathering with other Christians for worship, prayer, encouragement, teaching, and sharing life together.

Reading *Gathered for Good* stirred my heart and warmed my soul more than any book I have read recently. Jonathan Griffiths writes like a father inviting his large, extended family to a beautiful banquet, whetting our appetites by telling us just how good it will feel to be together. The food will be sumptuous and plentiful. The fellowship will be encouraging and joyful. Our tired hearts will be reminded just how blessed we are to have each other and to go through life together.

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The challenge of maintaining meaningful connections has never been greater. Our age is characterized by technological advancements and societal shifts that roil our lives, yet the call to gather remains ever relevant and even more deeply necessary. *Gathered for God* serves as both a reminder and a guide, urging us to embrace the biblical mandate of community, encouraging us to move beyond virtual interactions and seek the richness of face-to-face and heart-to-heart fellowship, where love, accountability, and spiritual growth flourish.

I'm sure I am not the only one of God's children who feels like I have enjoyed more of my heavenly Father's blessings than anyone else. I suspect many other believers, cognizant of God's daily mercies and eternal love, feel especially favored. But I am equally convinced that this awareness of the depth of God's love and the goodness of God's grace is inextricably linked to the frequent experience of those things in the gathered church. That is where the matrix of faithful family, heartwarming friendships, and rich relationships constantly testifies of God's benevolence. Who would not want that?

Hershel York

Dean of The School of Theology and the Victor and
Louise Lester Professor of Christian Preaching

INTRODUCTION



God's Good Design for Gathering

THERE IS A STRONG TEMPTATION TO GO IT ALONE IN THE Christian life, to try Christianity without church. After all, church is costly. People are complicated, and many of us have had experiences with churches that have been painful and heartbreaking. Added to those negative factors, the draw of remote and privatized faith has increased with technology. We can access fabulous resources for learning and growing from all over the world. We can enjoy “worship experiences” of various kinds from the comfort of our home. Many of us have been forced to experience aspects of church life remotely during the

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time of the coronavirus pandemic. For some, this has been a welcome change, and going back to church holds questionable appeal.

But let me ask you: Have you been less involved in church life lately? If you have never really committed yourself to a local church, how has it been going for you? How have you found walking alone and flying solo in the Christian life? How is your spiritual health? How is your mental health? Do you feel surrounded by other believers or supported in your Christian walk? How is your battle with sin? How is your walk with the Savior? How is your growth in knowledge of the Word? Are you holding lightly to the things of this world and prizing the things of God's kingdom?

I ask these questions because, as a pastor who has the privilege of interacting with many believers, I have found that our spiritual vitality is tied closely to our involvement and investment in a healthy local church. If we do not value, prioritize, and invest in church, we cannot walk in strength and grow in maturity in the Christian life.

It may well be that you are struggling in your own spiritual life. You may feel dry, isolated, trapped in sin, or even despondent. You have been caught in a bad place, and you have felt stuck for a long time. You are aware of the symptoms of joylessness, loneliness, discouragement, or despair, but you have not been able to pin down the cause. Now, I can hardly pretend to

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know you and your situation, but in light of experience, I would want to ask, “What is the nature of your involvement in the life of a vibrant Christian community?” The correlation between our spiritual health and our church involvement is often much closer than we may think.

Further questions require our attention and careful reflection in light of Scripture. How far can I go it alone in following Jesus? What is the place of Christian community in my own discipleship? What is a healthy model for the local church, and what are the key elements of the biblical mandate for church life? If I am to participate in church for my good and for the good of others, what should this look like? What should I expect to give and to receive?

This short book is an invitation to look afresh at the goodness, necessity, and value of Christian community within the local church. After a season of unprecedented disruption to global church life by the coronavirus pandemic, we have the privilege of an opportunity to make a fresh start in church life according to healthy patterns and biblical principles. Above all, I hope to encourage you to invest deeply in the life of the local church for your own benefit, for the encouragement of others, and ultimately, for the glory of God.

The conviction underlying this book is that God speaks to us through His Word. If God has made His will for us known to us in His Word, then we can only expect to flourish and grow

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as His people through listening and responding in repentance, faith, and obedience. We will attempt to trace out some key themes and emphases from the Bible relating to the community life of the people of God.

As we do so, I believe we will see together that church is not an optional extra for the Christian, but rather lies at the heart of the saving purpose of God. You may know that the words *church* and *congregation* are English translations of the Greek word *ekklēsia*, which means “gathering.” The church is the “gathering” of God’s people. This idea of “gathering” is loaded with meaning in the Bible and takes us to the heart of the gospel.

In the beginning, when God made Adam and Eve, these two first humans lived in the presence of God, in His place of sanctuary and blessing within the garden of Eden. When they rebelled against Him, they were sent out of His presence into the wider world with all its uncertainties. This was the first “scattering” of humanity. As the human family grew, they sought to gather together to build a great tower to the heavens, even to ascend to the place of God (Gen. 11). But God scrambled their language and scattered them once more in another act of judgment.

At this point, it may appear that God was only in the business of *scattering* sinners. But God’s plan was not only to scatter in judgment but also to gather in grace. He called the people of Israel to Himself and brought them out of bondage in Egypt to

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the wilderness, where they were His own “congregation” en route to the promised land. They, too, experienced scattering in judgment, not least through the Assyrian assault and the loss of the ten northern tribes. Nonetheless, God still engaged in gathering people—and not just from one nation but from all the nations of the world.

Ultimately, God demonstrated His remarkable grace in Jesus, who called all people to repent, believe the gospel, and follow Him. Jesus promised that when He was lifted up on the cross, and then raised in His resurrection and ascension, He would gather all people to Himself (John 12:32). And that is what He did. He gathered people from every tribe, tongue, and nation, and He is still gathering. He broke down the barrier between God and us and between each of us. His church is the demonstration and manifestation of His saving plan to draw together a people scattered by sin into wholesome, life-giving community.

God has called us together to something profoundly good: gathering shaped by grace that nourishes God's people in grace and extends the message of grace to a needy world. *Gathered for Good* invites us to invest deeply in the work of God and the people of God because Christ's grace has captivated and transformed us. Our project now is to see how that is meant to work and how we can invest, for our good and God's glory, in the life of the local church.

1



Gathered to One Another

IN THE GLORY DAYS OF THE AGE OF SAILING, SHIPS WOULD fly their national colors on their mast as they entered battle. If a ship ever lowered its flag—lowered its “colors”—it was a sign of distress or even surrender.

In October 1797, British and Dutch ships met off the coast of Holland at the Battle of Camperdown. The fighting was fierce and, in the middle of the skirmish, the British ship *HMS Venerable* was damaged and its main mast was broken. It was a disaster. The *Venerable* carried the Union flag, the command flag of the admiral of the fleet. Things looked bad, to say

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the least. If the British thought their admiral was sinking, the battle was almost certainly lost. But rather than accept defeat, a low-ranking crew member named Jack Crawford climbed what was left of the mast. Under heavy fire from Dutch canons, he nailed the colors to the splinters of the mast. Buoyed by his courage, the British went on to win the battle and capture eleven Dutch ships without a loss to their fleet.

The Battle of Camperdown is the substance of nautical history and, indeed, legend. Ever since, the phrase “nail your colors to the mast” has meant to pledge your undying loyalty to your people, to commit to standing firm to the end.

Scripture calls us to unwavering devotion to one another. As we consider what kind of community God calls us to be, my prayer is that you will be moved to nail your colors to the mast and, out of love for Jesus, affirm your devotion to His church. If you are committed to a local fellowship of believers, I encourage you to go deeper into that commitment. If you are on the periphery of church life, I want to invite you to move to the core.

For those of you who are part of a large church, I particularly want to speak to you at the outset of this chapter. Attending a large church can be a wonderful blessing with many ministry opportunities and mission and outreach initiatives. Nevertheless, this privilege can bring dangers. Perhaps chief among them is that it is easy to stay on the margins, to be

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only nominally involved, to slide in and out on Sundays without being noticed or becoming engaged. In a smaller fellowship, that is harder to do. For some readers, that dynamic may well be the reason you started attending your church in the first place. Maybe you needed a lower profile for a season. That can be understandable. However, when marginal Christian living becomes your pattern and a part of your church culture, it soon becomes a problem.

This chapter addresses commitment and gathering to one another. We instinctively commit to people we care for; we want to be in their lives instead of on the margins. Even so, commitment can be difficult to read about and even more difficult to put into action. I want to encourage you to nail your colors to the mast and to devote yourself to your local church community in the way the Bible teaches: gathered to one another.

What follows is a broad vision for Christian life, or *four reasons why you should nail your colors to the mast*.

One, you need to care for others. Caring for others is a central New Testament theme. In his letter to the Romans, the apostle Paul explains how the gospel will impact and transform their lives. In chapter 12, he makes an impassioned call for the Roman church to give themselves as living sacrifices in response to God's mercy. He calls on them to use their gifts to serve the body of Christ, and then he writes:

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Let love be genuine. Abhor what is evil; hold fast to what is good. Love one another with brotherly affection. Outdo one another in showing honor. Do not be slothful in zeal, be fervent in spirit, serve the Lord. Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer. Contribute to the needs of the saints and seek to show hospitality. (Rom. 12:9–13)

You and I can easily think of our faith in individualistic terms. My spiritual life is about *my* sins being forgiven, *my* walk with Jesus, *my* hope for the future, *my* needs, *my* growth. Yet the whole sweep of God's salvation plan demonstrates His interest in not only saving individuals but also creating a wholly new people and a wholly new society. God gathers us to one another for our good and for His glory. We need others to care for us, and we need to care for one another. In this new society, God says we will interact with one another in ways that might seem strange to the watching world. Scripture calls each of us to honor our brothers and sisters above ourselves and to share with those who are in need (Rom. 12:10, 13). The local church is to be the place, in the midst of a lonely world, where there is true and rich community. It is to be the place, in a heartless and insensitive world, where there is abundant care. It is to be the place, in a greedy world, where there is abundant generosity.

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In short, the church is to be a new kind of society where love, as Paul makes clear, is genuine and deep; where evil is abhorred, but good is treasured and practiced (v. 9). It is where brotherly and sisterly affection mark relationships, where people are tripping over one another to outdo one another in showing honor in the way they speak to and about one another (v. 10). The church is where people are serving together zealously (v. 11); where they are rejoicing together in the hope of the gospel and waiting patiently through difficulties, praying together in all things (v. 12). It is to be a place where those who have resources are contributing to the needs of other believers so that God's people will not be in need. It is a place where homes are open and hospitality is the norm (v. 13).

Paul's picture is a wonderful vision of Christ-centered living. And it is thrilling and joyful to see this biblical vision lived out—as I have seen personally in a number of churches where I have had the privilege of ministry involvement and leadership. People step in to help financially when others face challenging times; the sick are visited and cared for; meals are made for those going through a difficult season; homes are furnished for the young who are starting out. These are wonderful things to see. Nonetheless, such care only happens when the church is together and engaged in one another's lives. Such commitment only happens when you nail your colors to the mast and say:

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This is my church. This is my family. These are my people. This is my spiritual home.

Have you done that in your own church? If not, will you? God's design for your Christian life is that you belong to a community and commit to others in this way. If you are someone who comes and goes quietly and is not really a part of the life of the church, let me gently say to you: "You are missing out, and your church is missing out too." We need to care for one another. This is just one reason to devote ourselves to one another in the local church.

Two, you need to minister to others. How easily we imagine church as a spiritual vending machine, as a place to go as a consumer to receive ministry. The design of many church buildings can compound this impression. Often, in many modern church buildings (at least in North America), if we squint our eyes a little and blur our vision, we can imagine that we are sitting in a movie theater with a platform at the front and comfortable seats in rows. We may feel more like spectators than participants.

In fact, I had a conversation recently with someone who asked me which church I worked for—she knew I was a pastor somewhere, but did not know where. I told her it was The Metropolitan Bible Church in Ottawa.

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She responded by saying, “Oh yes, that is the one that used to be down on Bank Street, in an old movie theater.” She was *almost* right, but not quite.

I said, “Well, yes, the church was on Bank Street, but the building was never a movie theater. It just looked a little like one.”

(The façade of the old building still does look like a movie theater.)

I continued, “When the church was built at the end of the Great Depression, the bank would only risk financing the construction if it was built in such a way that it could easily be converted into a movie theater if the venture failed.” It was wonderful that the church secured the financing to build, but the visual association was a little unfortunate!

How easily we can come to church as spectators. Sometimes all that is lacking is popcorn, we might think.

Of course, that was never God’s design or intention. The New Testament teaches us that the church is to be a community where all the members are active in ministering the Word of God to one another. In fact, Paul writes in his letter to the Ephesians that the risen Lord Jesus gave specially called people as gifts to His church:

And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building

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up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes. Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love. (Eph. 4:11–16)

The risen Jesus gave particular people to the church (v. 11). These people included shepherds (or “pastors”; it is the same word in the original Greek) and teachers. These two terms probably refer together to just one kind of person: “the pastor-teacher.” Now, we might assume, given the way in which many churches seem to function, Paul would go on in verse 12 to say something like: *The pastor-teacher is given to the church to do all the ministry so that the saints can be blessed when they come to church on Sunday morning.* But he does not. What does he say? The risen Jesus gave these leaders in order “to equip the saints for the work of ministry.” That is, the saints are to *be equipped*

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for the heavy lifting together. The saints are to minister to one another. And that is why we must close the popcorn kiosk; Paul is telling us that we go to church not to take in a show but to engage in ministry. The pastor-teacher's role of spoken word ministry is important, yes, but its main goal is to equip the rest of the church for the ministry they are going to do: ministry from one another and to one another.

In other words, Paul indicates that pastor-teachers are not the frontline players—which is good, because I think I would survive about half of a second in a serious football game! No, pastor-teachers are more like coaches. Their job is to help the whole church family get on the field and do the hard work of ministry.

The saints do the work of ministry to build up the body (v. 12), so that everyone might grow in unity of the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God (v. 13). Growing saints are no longer children in doctrinal terms, tossed around by every new idea that comes along (v. 14). Rather, each member of the body speaks the truth of God's Word in love so that all grow in Christ (v. 15). Each does his or her part to help the whole grow (v. 16). What a beautiful picture. What a wonderful design God has for the church!

For many churches, the ministry needs and opportunities that exist within its reach are huge. More often, their pastoral staff (however large or small) will be unable to meet them all.

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But collectively, the church body will know a great deal of what is happening in the lives of its individuals and will often be able to meet those needs.

The collective ministry happens on Sunday, in the first place, when we gather with others to sing and declare words of truth to encourage one another in worship. The ministry continues after the service as members discuss what they have heard from Scripture and share words of gospel-shaped encouragement to one another in conversation. Ministry then continues throughout the week as church members meet formally or informally in Bible study groups, prayer meetings, and one another's homes.

Ministry is a team effort, and we are all involved. We need to minister to one another. That is what it means to be part of the body of Christ. But it will not happen if you are on the sidelines. Ministry will not happen if you are not known and if you do not know others. And so, here again, you need to nail your colors to the mast and declare yourself part of a church family.

Three, you need accountability. I was greatly encouraged recently while having coffee with a man who had visited our church many times over the last few years. The Lord has accomplished an amazing work in his life. He is barely recognizable from who he was. He had moved away to another part of the country but was in town and wanted to meet. I asked him if he had found a church home in his new community. He had, and he added that he looked for a church where he would be kept

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accountable for continuing to follow Jesus and live for Him. He did not want to be in a church where he could hide from others.

This was incredibly wise, but that desire does not come naturally. In fact, for this man, I think it only came because he knew practically and experientially how much he needed that accountability.

We could all go to church and hide if we wanted, but we all need accountability. We need to be where we can be challenged and helped if we are going off the rails in our walk with Jesus. Indeed, the Lord has given and established the local church as a safety net. Consider this verse:

Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they are keeping watch over your souls, as those who will have to give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with groaning, for that would be of no advantage to you. (Heb. 13:17)

According to the writer to the Hebrews, the leaders of a local church have an incredibly significant responsibility: they watch over the souls of the church community. Moreover, they will have to give an account for their care to the chief Shepherd, Jesus. How sobering! Those aspiring to church leadership should think carefully before taking on that responsibility. But speaking from experience (and, here, I know I also speak for others), church leaders are not always certain of the identity of

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the souls that fall under their care. That is, a culture of marginality can obscure who is actually part of the church family and, thus, under the oversight of its leaders.

If you are part of a church and have held back from any formal commitment, then it will likely be difficult for the church leaders to navigate the situation. Godly leaders want to provide oversight, accountability, and spiritual protection for their church. If you have a fluid approach to church life, your church leader may not know where you stand. So let me encourage you: if you have not yet done so, commit yourself to a local church.

Churches in various times and places live out commitment in numerous ways. A formal membership of the kind that exists in the church I pastor is not the only way to do it, I am sure, but Hebrews 13:17 offers guidance. God calls you to commit to honor and follow your church leaders; in turn, the leaders commit to care for you. We all need this. If you are someone who lives on the margins of church life, I want to encourage you, in your local church setting and in the way that is appropriate there, to nail your colors to the mast. We need to be accountable to one another; accountability is essential to our Christian life.

Four, you need to stand with others. In the West, we have enjoyed two or three centuries of incredible favor as Christians. We have lived under remarkable freedom for a long time. Nevertheless, we must recognize significant changes that are taking place as well. We have floated a long way downstream

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from the Judeo-Christian headwaters in our culture and institutions throughout the West. I am sure you are probably well aware of this. You probably see and experience it every day, and you will have your own observations and perspectives, no doubt. The Lord has been gracious in sparing Christians in the West real persecution for a long time, even while believers in other parts of the world have faced terrible opposition. Maybe we will continue to enjoy freedom of religion for years to come here in North America where I live, but I do not think it is obvious that we will. We cannot assume it. Only the Lord knows the future.

Still, however things may develop and change over the coming years, we should prepare ourselves to be increasingly out of step with the culture. We should expect following Jesus to be more difficult and costly. As we prepare for whatever may come, therefore, we must seek to stand together as the people of God. When the pressure rises, the great temptation will be to run into the shadows. We need to commit ourselves to stand firm and to be unashamed of the gospel and of the church of Jesus Christ. The temptation to run when the heat rises is nothing new, of course. Jesus's disciples were tempted to run when He faced opposition, and, of course, they all deserted Him at the cross.

Peter's denial is perhaps the most famous desertion and denial in the Gospel accounts. His beautiful New Testament letters speak into a context of Christians enduring real persecution

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for their faith. Interestingly, Peter underscores the importance of Christians loving one another well through the difficulties they face. In his first letter, having addressed the reality of suffering and persecution for the faith, he writes:

The end of all things is at hand; therefore be self-controlled and sober-minded for the sake of your prayers. Above all, keep loving one another earnestly, since love covers a multitude of sins. Show hospitality to one another without grumbling. As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace. (1 Pet. 4:7–10)

Persecution may be on the horizon. But one day Jesus is going to return. In the meantime, and above all else, Peter says, keep on being the church. Keep on being faithful stewards of God's grace. Love one another. Show hospitality. Use your gifts to serve one another. Do not give up. Do not back away from the fellowship. Do not abandon one another. When the pressure mounts, stick together and continue being the body of Christ together.

We need to prepare ourselves for changing times. We need to anticipate a less comfortable future and ready our hearts and minds for pressure and even opposition. If you are already on the margins of church life, the temptation will be to slip away

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quietly when things become more challenging. But that must not happen. We are going to need one another more and more. We will need to stand together and publicly say we belong to Christ, we honor His Word, we are committed to His people, and we are part of His body.

Your local church community is at the heart of God's plans for the gospel and the world. So nail your colors to the mast. Devote yourselves to one another. And most importantly, gather and commit to others because you treasure Jesus more than anything else. If you love Christ, you love His people.



WE LIVE IN A SEASON WHEN CHURCH ATTENDANCE IS OFTEN THOUGHT OF AS OPTIONAL IN THE LIFE OF A BELIEVER.

Many Christians have been separated from their church communities. How do we resume and re-prioritize church life and join back together? Why do we even need to—especially when online church fits so neatly around our schedules? *Gathered for Good* addresses this felt need with empathy and authority, and encourages believers to commit to their local church community as a way to deepen their spiritual growth and invest in treasure that will last.

Jonathan Griffiths offers a path that calls Christians to “gather.” As believers, Jonathan reminds us that God’s design for our lives is to gather, to serve, to give, and to commit our lives to God’s call on our lives. But above all, God’s gift to His people is that gathering is for our own good.

JONATHAN GRIFFITHS serves as lead pastor at The Met in Ottawa, Canada, executive director of the Timothy Trust, and council member of the Gospel Coalition Canada. His syndicated daily radio program, *Encounter the Truth*, reaches hundreds of thousands of listeners in Canada and the United States on Moody Radio and other networks. He studied theology at the University of Oxford and holds a PhD in New Testament Studies from the University of Cambridge. He is author of a number of books. Jonathan takes a keen interest in politics, economics, and current affairs. He is married to Gemma, and together they have three children.



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