



HIDDEN ASSUMPTIONS

Subtle Assumptions That Can Affect Your Faith

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Assumption No. 2

"I can grow spiritually just as well by myself"

Question

"If you had access to the best sermons online, excellent Christian books, and a solid prayer life, would you actually need other believers to grow spiritually?" Why or why not?

Case Study: Mark's Independent Faith



Mark and his wife have attended church almost their entire lives. It was a regular part of their Sunday morning routine. One Sunday, Mark decided to take a break from church and stay home. It was nice. He didn't have the hassle of getting ready to go to church, driving through heavy traffic, and sitting through the church service. It felt so good he decided to do this for the next few Sundays. He even found a good church service on TV.

Mark had been a believer for nearly 15 years, he loved reading Christian books, listening to sermons during his commute, and filled notebooks with insights from Scripture. He described himself as being serious about spiritual growth.

But overtime Mark slowly disengaged from church life altogether. At first it was understandable with his busy schedule, trying to meet work deadlines, keeping up with family demands, etc. He told himself that church was helpful but not essential. He felt his walk with God was more personal and he didn't need church to grow.

Mark continued watching sermons online, reading Christian books, praying regularly and learning deep doctrinal truths. From the outside he appeared spiritually informed. However, he began to feel that something was missing. An emptiness began to creep into his life. He realized he no longer had close Christian friends to talk to when he was dealing with life's issues. It was becoming clear to him now that his faith had become informational rather than transformational.

One Sunday he decided to attend church again after many years. During the service the pastor preached from Hebrews 10:24-25 *"Let us think of ways to motivate one another to acts of love and*

good works. And let us not neglect our meeting together, as some people do, but encourage one another, especially now that the day of his return is drawing near.” Mark suddenly realized he had developed a Christian life where no one could encourage him and he was unable to encourage others.



After a few Sundays of attending church, a leader of the high school group approached Mark and said he was having difficulty explaining certain Christian beliefs to his high school class. He asked if Mark could help him. Mark agreed and attended the next high school class where he was able to clearly explain Christian beliefs and answer difficult Bible questions the high schoolers had.

He began to realize that he not only needed church but that the church needed him. Slowly something changed. The emptiness he was feeling before was disappearing and a special joy began to grow as he realized that maturing spiritually doesn't happen in a vacuum. He saw his need for Christian fellowship and how other fellow Christians needed him. It all made sense now.

Discussion Questions

1. What conditions today tend to keep Christians from attending church regularly?
2. What did Mark substitute for church?
3. How was Mark becoming weaker even though he was still reading and praying?
4. What would have happened if Mark never returned?
5. What does Mark's story reveal about God's design for growth?

Key Lessons and Application

1. You are _____ with others (Hebrews 10:24-25)

Hebrews 10:24-25 -- "And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another-- and all the more as you see the Day approaching

2. Be a church _____ (Ephesians 4:15-16).

Eph. 4:15-16 -- "Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ. From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.

3. Be a _____ not just a _____ (1 Peter 4:10).

1 Peter 4:10 "Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others..."

The Bottom Line

Hebrews 10:24-25 NIV "And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, ²⁵ not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another-- and all the more as you see the Day approaching."