

WE WILL NOT FORSAKE THE HOUSE OF OUR GOD - [Neh 10:39](#)
[Neh 10:39](#) "We will not forsake the house of our God"

After the return from captivity the walls of Jerusalem were rebuilt about 445 B.C. under the guidance and encouragement of Nehemiah. Because of the enemies around them, the walls were erected by the Jews under great difficulties and hardships. Every man who worked on the rebuilding of the walls carried his sword or weapon by his side to meet any surprise attack from his foe. When the walls were finally completed the people were instructed from the Word of God, and a religious revival followed. The people repented of their sins and made a solemn promise to the Lord that they would never forsake the house of God. We read in verse 29 of this chapter, "They entered into a curse, and into an oath, to walk in God's law which was given by Moses the servant of God." Our text is a part of their sincere vow.

We should also repent and have a renewed life among us, therefore let us follow their example and repeat this solemn oath.



"WE WILL NOT FORSAKE THE HOUSE OF OUR GOD"

1. THIS IS AN OATH MADE TO OURSELVES

NEED OF SOUL

We cannot be happy in this world without God. We long for some communion and contact with God, as David expressed it in [Ps. 42](#), "My soul thirsteth for God." As the body has definite needs which must be

satisfied if we are to be healthy and content, so the soul has its needs which must be supplied if we are to be happy on this earth. To neglect the soul's needs is to court eternal disaster.

FOOD FOR THIS SOUL

Only God's word can satisfy the hunger and thirst of the soul. When the soul is given a steady diet of the Word, the conscience is at peace, the soul is uplifted, the mind is enlarged, life takes on a new and wonderful meaning.

FOOD FOUND IN CHURCH

The church is like a grocery store for the soul. In it there is an infinite variety of food to satisfy all conditions of the soul. We mold our families and unborn generations by bringing them up in the church. Here we learn how to become more Christ-like day by day. In church our souls are satisfied because there "Thou preparest a table before me, [Ps 23](#). Are we ready to repeat this oath? Before we do, let us consider another reason for taking this solemn vow.

2. THIS IS AN OATH MADE TO THE CHURCH.

LOCAL CHURCH

People often say they can be Christians without belonging to a church. But they overlook the fact that by not joining a church they are telling the world they are not of Christ. A person need not climb to the roof of a house and shout, "I am a Christian." Just come to church and belong to it and everyone will know what you believe and what you stand for. "Whosoever shall confess me before men, him will I also confess before my Father which is in heaven," says our Lord in [Matt. 10:32](#). Then too, by refusing to join a church we miss joint prayer, joint offerings, joint strengthening, joint worship.

CHURCH AT LARGE

How can we stretch out our arms and voices all over the world? How can the church become catholic, or universal? How can we carry out the wishes of Jesus to preach the Gospel to every creature? It ought to be self evident that an individual Christian, or even a single

congregation cannot evangelize the world. Many congregations must band together to support schools and colleges in order that a large number of ministries may be sent out into foreign fields. And a synod is only as strong as the support of the local congregation.

BROTHERLY OBLIGATION

We owe it to all our brothers and sisters in our synod "not to forsake the house of God." They sorely need our help and prayers to carry on a wide scale program of the church. So we owe it to the synod and local church to take this solemn vow. And there is another compelling reason to do so.

3. THIS IS AN OATH MADE TO GOD HIS HOUSE

We dedicated our church to the Holy Trinity, so it is His house, He owns it, He has the title to it. A church is different than any other building in the world. In God's house, God's Word alone rules. The 3rd commandment says that when the Word of God is preached in the house of God we should gladly hear and learn it. We honor God when we honor His Word.

HERE HE DWELLS

Is not God omnipresent? Can the great creator be confined within the four walls? Of course God is omnipresent, but He chooses to dwell among us with His gracious presence. "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them, [Matt. 18:20](#). It pleases the Lord to make the church the place of grace where He displays His heart of love to us in Christ. In that sense the Lord dwells in the church.



SALVATION FOUND HERE

In our Gospel lesson for today we find the boy Jesus in the temple. He is always present in His church. In the house of God we also learn of the "Father's business." Jesus did the "Father's business" by suffering and dying for us on the cross. Salvation is now ours as a free gift, by faith in Jesus who paid for all our sins. These words of Jesus also apply to the church, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if any man hear my voice and open the door, I will come to him, and will sup with him and he with me," [Rev. 3:20](#).

APPLICATION

As the workman goes to the factory, as the farmer turns to his fields, as the merchant looks to his business, as the pupil hurries to school, as a baby turns to his mother, as the hungry think of the table, so a child of God longs for the house of God. Every true believer says with David, "I was glad when they said unto me, lets us go into the house of the Lord, " ([Ps 122](#)) and again, "Lord I have loved the habitation of thy house, and the places where thy honor dwelleth." [Ps. 26](#).

Surely we are now ready to repeat this solemn vow and joyfully make it our own, "we will not forsake the house of our God." We come to the house of the Lord because we want to "dwell in the house of the Lord forever." AMEN.

PRAYER O Lord Jesus, who as a child was found in the house of God hearing and learning His Holy Word, help us also to love the place

where thy honor dwelleth. Thou has set us an example for all ages to come. Help us always to find thee in the house of God that we also may be about our Father's business. O Thou who livest and reignest with the Father and the Holy Ghost, keep us in the saving faith that we may dwell in Thy house for ever. AMEN