

# Me To We

As we continue our series on what we believe, let's examine the 16<sup>th</sup> of the 22 tenets in the Foursquare Declaration of Faith: **Church Relationship - We believe it is our sacred responsibility to identify ourselves with a congregation of believers with whom we can worship God, observe the ordinances (Marriage, Baptism and the Lord's Supper), exhort and support one another, work together for the salvation of others and the advance of the Lord's Kingdom (Acts 16:5; Hebrews 10:24, 25).**

Everyone is looking for a place to belong. The Me Generation finally discovered that the power of one is compounded when we come together. The new youth movement, Me to We, illustrates how much young people today love the idea of working together for humanitarian purposes. Well, that concept describes the church - at least it should. Check out Hebrews 10:19-25 and see how we should look at church life!

## 1. **Let us draw near to God (Hebrews 10:19-22)**

Most people believe in God and long to know Him personally. Before Jesus came, the only way to God was through a complicated and convoluted system of sacrifices. When Jesus died in our place, the temple curtain that separated God from common man was torn from top to bottom. That marked the beginning of a "new and living way" for anyone to come to God. The promise is that if we draw near to God He will draw near to us (James 4:8). The catch – as we draw near to God we will also have to get closer to His family, the church.

## 2. **Let us hold on to hope (vs. 23)**

We are encouraged to hold on to hope without "wavering". Some of the Jewish believers were starting to lose hope and drift back into their old ways. This letter was written to remind them that an orientation toward Jesus is a life of hope, for the near future as well as their ultimate destination. When believers turn back to their old ways they are returning to a life of hopelessness (Ephesians 2:11-13).

## 3. **Let us spur one another on (v. 24)**

That word "spur" is also translated "provoke". It can mean "irritate" or "arouse anger". Now that sounds like the church sometimes! It also means "to sharpen" as in iron sharpens iron (Proverbs 27:17). When we belong to a truly loving family we will contend for one another's highest good, even if it hurts a little.

## 4. **Let us not give up on meeting together (v.25a)**

At the time this letter was written believers were meeting less often, partly because of errant teaching but mostly because of persecution. It was downright dangerous to get together. But as Christians today in Communist China have discovered, there is no other choice. The church must function as a family. When the Desert Monk, Andrew, was on his deathbed he had one bitter regret – he had never learned how to forgive. Real maturity is learned in the context of relationships. In a day when people are quick to break off relationships at the slightest inconvenience, immaturity is rampant!

## 5. **Let us encourage each other (v. 25b)**

Living a life that moves us closer to God and each other requires courage. When we come together we each have a part in giving courage to one another for that day and for the week ahead. How can you encourage someone today?