I'M NOT GOING TO CHURCH TOMORROW

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Category: Christian Life

It's latish on Saturday evening and the internet connection is fast enough for me to risk trying to post something here. All I need now is inspiration!

Well, tomorrow is Sunday (that often seems to be the case on Saturdays) and I won't be going to Church(which is less often the case). The thing is, when I'm away from home, I rarely go to church. I'm away from home a lot and I visit lots of new countries and lots of new cities and if I do return to a place, it's generally after a gap of a year or more. Now don't get me wrong, I enjoy visiting new countries, and I like to see how Church is done in different places too. But, to go to a service in a new city means meeting a whole lot of new people that I may never meet again and I find this very stressful. At the end of a working week, I can rarely muster up the energy to go out and meet with a group of strangers - even if they are strangers who serve the same master as me. As a result, my Sunday mornings away from home tend to be spent on my own, in quietness while everyone else is out at church. Sometimes I sit and worship and enjoy God in the quietness, and sometimes I listen to music and read a book - but I always enjoy the time on my own.

I was asked by a colleague tonight whether I would be going to church in the morning and I replied much as I did above. His response fascinated me - *"church isn't about meeting people, it gives you the chance to meet with God".*

Does it?

I know that meeting with a group of Christians and doing churchy-stuff can help us draw closer to God and to get to know him more, but do I really need to go to a service to meet with God. All this week, I've been working with Christians, we've prayed together, we've meditated on Scripture together and we've talked about Bible Translation strategy together. Wasn't God present then? Do we really need to go to a special building somewhere to experience God's presence?

Yes, I am aware that Scripture encourages us not to neglect meeting together - and when I'm home, I'll go to church, and home group, and meet Christian friends to chat and perhaps pray together.

No doubt if I went to church tomorrow, I'd find much to be edified and encouraged by. But I'd find the process so stressful and tiring that I don't think I'd benefit greatly. And you know what? - I'm pretty sure that even if I don't consciously think about God during that time, he will look down on me as I sit outside with my second cup of coffee and smile; happy that I'm being wise enough to rest when I need it.

Your comments would be welcomed!