

Marriage Second Time Plus . **Org => A new Web Site:**

A new Web Site: <http://marriagesecondtimeplus.org/>

Keep a **note** to where you **stopped** at in this PDF. So you can return to the same place.

This PDF has 67 pages **I Stopped at Page: _____**

MSTP > 39 Adult Why Go To Church

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This sponsoring Lions Club does **NOT** endorse all information contained this **MSTP => PDF # 39** part.

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Had two prayers and right away **healings** this week. Monday - First one over in Linton. I went to the hardware store and got the part I wanted and on my way past, I **stopped** by for her, the receptionist, to tell Bonnie and her Aunt I am going over a few doors to KEM Elect, as I still had 20 - more minutes before they are done. The week of Dec. 8 to Dec. 11.

Her right arm is in a sling, “Oh. Wow! What happened to your arm?”

She told me she had surgery to remove a golf size hard lump on the inside of her right arm. But. It was **not cancer**. Her right arm is in a sling. “Okay do you have any pain right now.” “Oh. Yes.” “A low pain is a # 1 and a lot of pain is # 10, where is your pain at right now?” “Ah, strong 5, **no** it is really maybe a # 6, if I move it any,” she said back to me. “Are you a Church lady?” “Yes, every week.” I asked to say a short soft prayer for her arm. She told me she had people to pray for her from her Church and other friends.

I had to visit with her for over 15 - minutes before she would let men hold her left hand and say a short soft prayer for her right arm pain. Said she is a every week Church lady. She also told me that God **doesn't** do any **healings** today, plus said a lot more Catholic Church stuff to me. “Okay, prayer **doesn't** do any harm let's see if God maybe has changed HIS mind. What do you expect from my prayer?” “Just a good jester,” She said. I said my sort 20 - second prayer and then I asked her, “Please tell me what is going on?”

“Oh. I feel some tingling I my arm and shoulder.” She is moving her arm around some. “My pain is less.” “A low pain is a # 1 and a lot of pain is # 10, where is your pain at right now?” She just looks at me and is ribbing her right arm. “Maybe a # 2 now.” I wait a minute and put out my right and she put her left and in mine. I say softly the same short soft prayer.

She just looks at me and she is ribbing her right arm. I wait a minute. “My pain is gone but that **can’t** be. I have never known about God **healing** anyone today.” I wait a minute and **don’t** say anything. “Thank you. God Bless you. Thanks for **healing** my arm.”

“**No**. All the thanks go up to God. Thank God the **Holy Spirit** and our great Jesus for your **healing** – **not** me.” Her phone rings. I wave bye and go on over to KEM Elect.

Wednesday – In Ashley. We take two kitties to the kitty doctor and go to lunch and our lunch is also for Mary’s birthday. It is at the end of our lunch. The waitress makes a face of she is in pain as she comes around the next table to see if we want any more coffee or anything. I stand up. “Okay. Where is your pain and is it a low pain as # 1 or a lot of pain up as a # 10?” “My back is a strong # 4 and my headache is a strong # 7.”

“May I say a soft short prayer for that pain to go away?” “Pray.” I put out my hand and she put her free hand , she has a coffee pot in her other hand, in mine. I said my sort 20 - second prayer and then I asked her, “Please tell me what is going on?”

She put the coffee pot down on the next table and she is moving around and is checking her back. “My pain is gone.” She stands there and I sense she is **not** done telling me. A minute later she says, “My back pain and my headache is gone. It must be the two Tylenol I took 30 - minutes ago.” “Yeah, it must be. God bless you more this week.” We left.

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MSTP > 39 Adult Why Go To Church

WHY GO TO CHURCH?

A **Church** goer wrote a letter to the editor of the old newspaper and complained that it made **no** sense to go to **Church** every Sunday. ‘ I’ve gone for 30 - years now,” he wrote, “and in that time I have heard something like 3,380 sermons. But for the life of me I **can’t** remember a single one of them. So, I think I’m wasting my time and the pastors are wasting theirs by giving sermons at all.”

This started a real controversy in the “Letters to the Editor” column, much to the delight of the editor. It went on for weeks until some old new wrote this clincher:

“I’ve been married for 40 years now. In that time my wife has cooked some 52,000 meals. But for the life of me, I **cannot** recall the entire menu for a single one of those meals. But I do know this: They all nourished me and gave me the strength I needed to do my work. If my wife had **not** given me those meals, I would be physically **dead** today. Likewise, if I had **not** gone to **Church** for nourishment, I would be **spiritually dead** today!”

When you are DOWN to nothing. God is UP to something! Faith sees the invisible, believes the incredible and receives the impossible! Thank God for our physical and spiritual nourishment!

Author Unknown

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Join up with a volunteer non - profit program.

Volunteering is a great way to meet new people, get some exercise, and involve yourself in a **positive** project that can lift your **spirit**. It also comes without a cost (**or very little**) to you and can provide a lot of entertainment and a fulfilling day when you're in the right mindset.

I've come to spend more and more of my time **volunteering**, serving on various committees and people helping groups in the community. I am on a few local area towns and Church committees. It is hands - down the best thing I have ever done.

Be a volunteer with your local **Lions Club** or other local Non - Profit Org. and you will feel much better about yourself. Be only a volunteer – for a time - if later you wish, you may later to join this local **Lions Club** it is later and it is up to you.

You'll be meeting other people who share your interests, which gives you an easy opener when striking up a conversation. Meet many new people and also maybe meet the next Him or the next Her for YOUR life. This Web Site is sponsored by a **Lions Club**.

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Note: Yes. For both single people and for people dating and married people have reviewed (**Well Pre – viewed**) this “Web Site” and its parts so far. As a summary of the parts and up-coming part drafts; most people are telling us that this information is also needed and wanted for them, yes, those married people too and many people found this as new information as they **didn't** even know about this stuff.

Subscription: Then one may have a Subscription as over age 18 Adult (**including the open part**) or the open or short PDF Web Site part for only a small fee of \$3 for each month. If you like these ideas and tips – please tell a few others.

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Why Go To Church - Want To Know **13 Reasons?** By: David Hopkins

Why Go To Church

Have you ever wondered why I go to Church? Or if you **can't** think of any real profound reasons to go to Church, try these thirteen beneficial reasons out for size.

It's **not** necessary to go to Church in order to get saved and therefore go to heaven but going to Church still has very important benefits that can help improve your life and keep it in order.

Below are **13 reasons plus** why we should attend Church services on a regular basis.

1. Because it is an act of obedience to God and it honors the Lord's Day. **Remember** the Sabbath day, to keep it **Holy (Exodus 20:8)**
2. Because we need to belong to a community of faith that includes our brothers and sisters in Christ who are trying to live out the gospel just like we are.

3. Because we will benefit from being taught and led in worship by others, rather than always depending on ourselves to read and study the bible.
4. Because we need regular reminders of our standing in Christ, help in acknowledging and confessing our **sins**, and the teaching about God's truth.
5. Because we need help in praying, tithing and fasting.
6. Because we need help to face the issues of life and faith as presented through the teachings of the Bible.
7. Because we need to hear how believers in the past struggled, grew and lived out their faith from different perspectives.
8. Because we need to belong to a community of faith that includes our brothers and sisters in Christ who are trying to live out the gospel just like we are.
9. Because we will benefit from being taught and led in worship by others, rather than always depending on ourselves to read and study the bible.
10. Because we need regular reminders of our standing in Christ, help in acknowledging and confessing our **sins**, and the teaching about God's **truth**.
11. Because we need help in praying, tithing and fasting.
12. Because we need help to face the issues of life and faith as presented through the teachings of the Bible.
13. Because we need to hear how believers in the past struggled, grew and lived out their faith from different perspectives.
14. Because we need to hear about the experiences of other contemporary believers.
15. Because we need to hear reminders of God's love.
16. Because we need an alternative to the constant messages of a culture that ignores God.
17. Because we need to experience artistic and creative expressions of the faith, such as music, praying, fasting and tithing.
18. Because believers need help to reflect on the past week and see it as a small part of the journey of life.

19. Because we need a conscious break from work, family problems, and self-interests in order to concentrate on the Lord.

In brief summary, the strategies and schemes of the **devil** are well thought out and proven to work better than the marketing strategies of rich corporations like Microsoft.

Therefore, we need other people we can count on to help us make it through tough times when they arise.

Our chances of finding people we can count on in Church are far better than finding someone we can count on anywhere else in the world.

Plus, going up against these strategies without proper guidance will lead to unnecessary mistakes being made on our part.

In conclusion, going to Church while also doing our own personal bible study at home on a regular basis helps us to get confirmation of God's message and what HE wants us to do with our lives.

Therefore, we need other people we can count on to help us make it through tough times when they arise.

Why I Still Go to Church => 5 reasons I still attend, and what I believe in, Church. It's easy to come up with reasons to **not** go to Church.

There are so many. Sleep, football, birthday parties, errands. Theological differences, hypocritical Church leaders, spiritual doubts. You want an excuse **not** to go? It **shouldn't** be hard to find one.

A recent post titled [“Why Nobody Wants to Go to Church Anymore”](#) lists just some of the reasons Americans **don't** go to Church anymore, many of which are relevant and personally relatable given that I have gone through lengthy periods of withdrawal from religious community.

And yet I still go to Church. And, perhaps more importantly, I still **want** to go to Church.

Like many others, I have been skeptical and uncertain about the role of religion and the Church in my own life and in our society. I have **doubted** my faith. I have fallen away from the Church. I have been disenchanted with all religion, and I have experienced firsthand betrayal at the hands of “religious” folk.

And yet I still go to Church, I still want to go to Church, and I still **believe in** the Church.

The reasons **not** to go pale in comparison to the reasons why I — a **doubting**, skeptical, pragmatic, optimistic believer — still want to go to Church and why I still believe in the Church, despite the abundance of evidence telling me all the reasons I **shouldn't** go. Here are five of the reasons I still go:

As humans, we thrive on connection and shared experiences. We learn in schools, we work in offices, we live in neighborhoods and we socialize with friends.

Certainly, we can — and should — have **spiritual** experiences outside of the Church environment and we can participate in any number of individual **spiritual** practices, but there is a kind of **spiritual** connection that comes only from a shared **spiritual** practice.

Spiritual connection **cannot** be fully honored in solitude; a shared **spiritual** experience is essential. And many times, a shared spiritual experience is created by going to Church (though it can also be created anytime a group of people comes together in faith, including house Churches, small groups, covenant circles and Bible study groups).

Just like cheering for your favorite sports team in a stadium packed with 80,000 other fans is vastly different than watching the game on television in your living room, **spiritual** connection is vastly different when experienced with other members of a **spiritual** community. In the same way that listening to a favorite band play live in concert enhances the musical experience, so too does religious community enhance the **spiritual** experience.

In Church, standing shoulder to shoulder with other human beings in reverence and awe as we hold hands and sing and pray, as we lock eyes and shake hands, sharing in all of these **spiritual** practices together, enhances our **spiritual** connection in a way that individual **spiritual** practices alone could **not** do.

Church provides a safe and mature environment for **spiritual** and religious education.

As children, we were continually learning. Like little sponges, we absorbed information from any and all sources — parents, teachers, friends, peers, strangers, books and television, just to name a few. Yet, as adults, we allow our “life” education — including our faith development and **spiritual** awareness — to fade.

Shared **spiritual** practices enhance **spiritual** connection.

We socialize with those who share the same opinions as us and are often unwilling to consider the viewpoints of others. We turn a blind eye or make assumptions about faiths and cultures different than our own. And we neglect to discover — and nurture — our own personal and authentic faith. We avoid religious conversations with friends and family because of the discomfort that it might cause, we swallow religious doctrine that is fed to us or we shun religion altogether.

Certainly, there are Churches that force feed their congregants **fear** - based dogma, which is one of the many reasons that Americans are leaving the Church. But there are many Churches that stimulate and encourage faith development and religious education that extend beyond one's own faith to include the faiths of others.

Not only is my awareness about my own faith bolstered by my experiences at Church, but so is my awareness and understanding of a number of other faiths and belief systems.

Without the safety and security that a mature Church community provides, many Americans (**including, paradoxically, those who favor religious tolerance**) remain in the dark about other faiths, cultures and beliefs. Church can provide a safe and responsible way to deepen one's own faith development, as well as facilitate an awareness and respect for other faiths.

Church reinforces social and civic accountability

Church provides a **spiritual** framework for my kids.

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99 Reasons You Should go to Church This Weekend.

I grew up attending Church. Many of my earliest memories are times spent at the Church building, with Church people, or in Church services. So, when I meet people who **aren't** regular attenders it's a surprise to find that sometimes they **don't** really know why you might be a part of it.

I got to thinking about this.

Why do we go to Church? What benefit is there in attending Church regularly... for me, for you, for others?

One thing leads to another, and I realized the reasons are endless. I started to list them and soon discovered that the exercise was a huge blessing.

So, why go to Church? I've listed **99 reasons** below.

Some of these reasons are serious and thought provoking, others are just fun... they're **not** in any particular order and perhaps a portion of them **won't** apply to you. Either way though, I hope you too will be encouraged by my sharing of this list.

More than that – I pray it inspires you to **not** only attend Church this weekend, but to serve and contribute. And let's all remember to invite others who may **not** know the incredible blessing that being a part of a local Church can be.

Why go to Church? Here's my list of **99 reasons** you should go to Church this weekend:

The shared **spiritual** connection created in religious community makes it nearly impossible to ignore our shared human connection. By attending a Church that supports causes that are in line with my values, social and civic accountability are bolstered.

It is certainly possible to educate children about religion, faith and **spirituality** outside the Church environment, but children learn much more by what we do than what we say. By attending Church together as a family, my husband and I are showing our children that **spiritual** community and faith are important values to our family. We are demonstrating that faith development is a lifelong journey.

Could give out five to Church folks each week.

1. The Bible indicates it's what we should do. (**Hebrews 10:25**)
2. You will have the opportunity to worship God.
3. You will likely have some of life big **questions** answered.
4. The preaching of the Bible will help set direction for your life.
5. You will probably make some new good friends.
6. You'll probably see some old friends.
7. Being there is a sign of your discipleship.
8. Being there will encourage your pastors and leaders.
9. You'll be encouraged in your walk with God.
10. You'll likely encourage other people in their walk with God.
11. If you're single, you may meet someone. (**Looking for a good mate? Look for a GREAT life mate?**)
12. It will help you define what you believe.
13. It will help you understand the Bible.
14. If you have kids, it will teach them to value God and His Church.

15. People who attend Church usually live longer (**I didn't make this one up... google it!**)
16. It will give you an outlet for service and ministry.
17. It can help you develop personal leadership.
18. You'll sing inspirational songs that will carry you during the week.
19. It will encourage you that God is good (**if it doesn't, it should**).
20. It will help you to look outside yourself.
21. It will provide an opportunity to give financially to those in need.
22. You'll receive love from other people.
23. You'll be able to show love toward others.
24. You'll hear about the great things God is doing in HIS Church locally and throughout the earth (**or world**).
25. You'll be prayed for.
26. You will be able to pray for others.
27. You're likely to hear and be encouraged by answered prayers.
28. You will be able to give praise reports and share stories of God working in your life.
29. You will be able to worship God with other likeminded people.
30. It's an opportunity to introduce a friend who **doesn't** know Christ.
31. You've probably got nothing better to do. (**Watching TV, or sleeping-in don't count as better!**)
32. Your family need you to go.
33. It really honors God.
34. Because gathering is part of what it means to be a Christian.
35. Because it's good to have your views and opinions challenged.

36. Because we all need regular reminders of our position in Christ.
37. It will help you acknowledge and confess your **sins**.
38. It helps you to be in the world, but **not** of it.
39. It will help you end one week, and starts the next, with the right focus.
40. It's a break from work.
41. It will help you re - order your priorities.
42. It's where your real friends are.
43. It will help you put your life story, into the grand narrative of scripture.
44. It will remind you that you have nothing to **fear**.
45. It helps take your focus off yourself and over onto God.
46. It helps bring perspective and feeds the soul.
47. Because gathering strengthens your faith.
48. The discipline of going will help you be disciplined across all areas of life.
49. It will allow for support in times of need.
50. It promotes stability in your life.
51. It helps to promote a happy marriage.
52. It gives you something great to do with your kids.
53. It will help you to improve your **self-esteem**.
54. It will help your interpersonal skills.
55. It will help increase your ability to cope with the trials of life.
56. It will help you to be a happy person.
57. It will positively influence future generations.

58. It will provide you with an opportunity to share in communion.
59. It will allow you to take an active role in missions work.
60. It will help you be a better member of your local community.
61. It will help develop your children's **self - confidence**.
62. Your children will learn the Bible Stories.
63. It may keep you out of trouble.
64. It will help give you a sense of purpose.
65. It will shape your vision of the future.
66. It will give you eternal hope.
67. It will help you to know what you believe.
68. It will help you to know what you stand for.
69. It will encourage creativity.
70. It will allow you to be disciplined, mentored and pastored.
71. Because you'll learn about Jesus and have the opportunity to get to know HIM.
72. Because you want to go.
73. It's a pleasant experience.
74. It will give you the opportunity to express yourself in song.
75. It beats staying at home and being alone.
76. You get to put your Sunday best on... (or your skinny jeans on depending on the Church).
77. You'll find acceptance.
78. You'll be loved.
79. You can love others there.

80. Real forgiveness is found there.

81. The gathering of God's people will help draw you closer to God.

82. You'll meet likeminded people.

83. Jesus and the **Holy Spirit** will be there.

84. It will remind you that you're **not** alone.

85. It will help the process of sanctification.

87. You're likely to learn something about God, the Bible, yourself, and others.

88. Growth of the fruit of the **Spirit** will likely happen.

89. It will bring with it tangible and intangible blessing.

90. It's a declaration that you're a Christian.

91. It will give you something interesting to talk about on Monday at work.

92. Because being planted will help your life to flourish.

93. It reflects a life lived beyond yourself.

94. It will bring joy to your life.

95. A miracle you need may come to pass.

96. You've been promising someone that you'd go and it's time to make good on your word.

97. Because it's the right thing to do.

98. Because faith without works is **dead**.

99. It will literally change your life for eternity!

Why go to Church this weekend? You'd be crazy **not** to go, especially with all these reasons to be there!!

While we're talking about reason for going to Church, have you ever thought about how you should behave when you get there? [Click below here for why you should be enthusiastic in Church.](#)

So, why do you go to Church? Let me know in the comment section below. Over to you... Rich

Why I Go To Church Even When I **Don't** Feel Like It

What leaving and returning taught me about Church.

Read more at: <http://www.relevantmagazine.com/god/church/why-i-go-church-even-when-i-dont-feel-it#9i4zgzUq1sudgPDD.99>

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Fifteen Things God WON'T Ask: - (Author Unknown)

1. God **won't** ask what kind of car you drove => but will ask how many people you drove who **didn't** have transportation.
2. God **won't** ask the square footage of your house => but will ask how many people you welcomed into your home
3. God **won't** ask about the fancy clothes you had in your closet => but will ask how many of those clothes helped the needy.
4. God **won't** ask about your social status => but will ask what kind of class you displayed.
5. God **won't** ask how many material possessions you had => but will ask if they dictated your life.
6. God **won't** ask what your highest salary was => but will ask if you compromised your character to obtain that salary.
7. God **won't** ask how much overtime you worked => but will ask if you worked overtime for your family and loved ones.
8. God **won't** ask how many promotions you **received** => but will ask how you promoted others.
9. God **won't** ask what your job title was => but will ask if you performed your job to the best of your ability.

10. God **won't** ask what you did to help yourself => but will ask what you did to help others.
11. God **won't** ask how many friends you **had** => but will ask how many people to whom you were a **true** friend.
12. God **won't** ask what you did to protect your rights => but will ask what you did to protect the rights of others.
13. God **won't** ask you if you loved your Grandma and Grandpa => but will ask you if you stayed with them a week each spring and each fall – if you had a real relationship with them.
14. God **won't** ask in what neighborhood you lived => but will ask how you treated your neighbors.
15. God **won't** ask about the color of your skin => but will ask about the content of your character.
16. God **won't** ask how many times your said deeds matched your words => but will ask how many times it **didn't**.

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I have the same memories as many evangelicals who grew up in Church at the same time I did: felt-board Bible stories, Sunday school donuts, praise chorus lyrics on overhead projectors.

Even before I was old enough to do much besides doodle during sermons, Church was a fixture in my life. I was sometimes bored and sometimes enjoyed myself but going to Church **wasn't** a choice I had — it was just what everyone did.

As I got a bit older, I realized that **not** everyone went to Church, but I gathered that being someone who did was a moral imperative. It meant I was taking my faith seriously, being a good person and making God happy (**or maybe I was avoiding God's anger**).

By the time I was old enough to join the youth group, other factors reinforced my involvement: Church was where my friends were, where the cute boys were and where much of my social life took place.

Heading off to college meant that my parents **no** longer took me to Church, and my social life was **no** longer headquartered there, but I still saw my attendance as a basic

requirement of following Jesus. Where else could I grow in my faith and find my **spiritual** community?

Over the next few years, however, something strange happened. I followed Jesus right out of Church and into the streets, communing with homeless people over slices of pizza and hearing sermons in the words of the people who lived in the shelter on skid row where I served breakfast on Sunday mornings. Jesus showed up in all sorts of unlikely, unofficial places.

I realized that Church was **not** a place to go because everyone had their act together. It was more like a refuge where all sorts of people could gather to remind each other of the story we are all in.

I continued to journey alongside other Christians, but I **no** longer understood the importance of attending Church. It occurred to me that perhaps what was more important than how often I showed up for a Sunday service was how often I showed up for people who were in need: quietly listening, crying with them, sharing my food and time and space and joining my voice with theirs to demand justice.

The more I learned about poverty and systemic injustice, the more frustrated I became with Churches whose weekly programming is disconnected from the world beyond their sanctuaries.

I was tired of prayer without action; simplistic **spiritual** formulas without any mention of the Gospel Jesus preached: good news for the poor, freedom for the captives, sight for the blind. I lost hope that most of the Church would ever get its act together enough to closely resemble Jesus.

But then another strange thing happened. I kept following Jesus, and eventually, HE led me right back into Church. I was surprised. There were plenty of people there working toward justice, but I realized that Church was **not** a place to go because everyone had their act together and was doing things right.

It was more like a refuge where all sorts of people could gather to remind each other of the story we were all really in — the one about how God loves us and is renewing our world and our souls in spite of all the damage that's been done. It was more like a school for conversion where we were all stumbling through basic lessons on how to really love.

We sang about this love and this mission to be part of it; we sang about our brokenness and our hope. We looked each other in the eye. We confessed our **sins**.

We shared bread and grape - juice and remembered that we are all tied together in this dysfunctional family that God has cobbled together.

I've slowly learned that going to Church can be about something other than moral requirement, **fear** of punishment or even social connection.

It **wasn't** perfect — sometimes I felt frustrated, bored or hurt — but it was good, and God was in it. Yes, Church people could be apathetic, judgmental and selfish, but so could I. And just like everyone else, I needed to be welcomed and loved anyway.

Then one day, an older Church lady put my husband and me in charge of finding people to serve communion each week.

We were still “the new couple,” so I'm pretty sure she was just trying to rope us into consistent, punctual attendance — and her plan has absolutely worked.

Now that we've shouldered even just this tiny bit of responsibility, we recognize how many people have to show up consistently to create the prayerful, welcoming, worshipful space we experience each week. If everyone involved in leading music, running sound, teaching kids' classes, and preaching sermons only showed up on the days when they **didn't** feel stressed, busy, tired, bored, **sad**, frustrated, or enticed outside by beach weather, we **wouldn't** have much of a Church at all.

Read more at: <http://www.relevantmagazine.com/god/church/why-i-go-church-even-when-i-dont-feel-it#9i4zgzUq1sudgPDd.99>

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Why Go to Church

Summary: We are to encourage one another to stir up one another for love and good deeds.

Why Go To Church ([Hebrews 10:24, 25](#))

Throughout this western world Church attendance continues to decline.

Illustration: In 1999, 39% of people regularly profess to attend Church (**34% of men and 44% of women**). In Germany less than 5% regularly attend Church and in Britain less than 15% make a habit of going to Church.

Having been involved with helping to start more than 500 Churches in Nigeria, I can attest to the fact that in Nigeria Church attendance continues to grow every year - why is there such a difference?

Perhaps, it has to do with the simple fact that in Nigeria people appreciate the value of the following scriptural injunctions for "Do **not** forsake the assembling together with one

another but encourage one another and all the more as you see the end drawing near."
([Hebrews 10:24, 25](#))

The following are more Biblical advantages for being involved in helping your Church grow in quantity and quality.

The early Christian Church grew because the believers met in their homes regularly for teaching, prayer and socially encouraging fellowship times. ([Acts 2:41 - 47](#))

A. The first century Christians enjoyed the blessings of the Lord daily adding to their numbers - as those who were saved. The Lord gives blessings without adding any sorrows. Let us share these blessings with others who are hungry for real solutions for their problems.

B. The first century believers devoted themselves to studying the teachings of Jesus. Are we doing this today?

C. The early Christians often shared the Lord's Supper together as a way of cementing their vertical ([between individuals and God](#)) and horizontal relationships ([between individual to another](#)) together. To share a meal with someone and see how much you can minister to them according to their felt, perceived and social needs.

D. The early believers were filled with awe and wonder in their joint worship of the Lord. Let us worship and rejoice in our awesome God who reigns in power and love. Let us never lose the wonder of HIS grace and the majestic splendor that is amazingly wonderful.

E. The early Christians were together and shared things in common for one another's benefits.

Theirs was a socially inter-dependent fellowship in a holistic lifestyle. Let us recognize that the hand **cannot** say to the eye, I have **no** need of you. ([I Corinthians 12:10 - 15](#))

F. The first Christian fellowships revolved around prayer, witnessing and praise. Let us worship the Lord but also let our joy spill over to share with those around us.

G. The early believers continually gave thanks in fellowships that encouraged one another during times of great persecution from the local and regional governments. Thankful people are fun to be around because they are connected closely to the source of every good thing.

H. The first believers enjoyed favor with all the people because of their corporate witness that came from a [Holy Spirit](#) inspire dunity that showed Christian love.

Jesus knows how to help us grow in wisdom and stature and in favor with God and men. (Luke 2:52)

2. Public worship has a greater witness to the non-Christian world, which longs for a similar sense of belonging, acceptance and tolerance for one another's frailties.

Read more at: <http://www.christianpost.com/news/why-going-to-church-is-important-part-1-106017/#bsXwDp6C3KcSXI1e.99>

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Some people claim to be Christians but **don't** attend Church. They say, "Well, I **haven't** found a Church I like yet, and I work, and Sunday is my only day off!" But if you really love God, you will love HIS people and long to be with them.

The Bible indeed commands us to go to Church, and - even more - to be a functioning part of it. **Hebrews 10:24 – 25** says, "And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, **not** forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching" (NKJV).

I like the way the New Living Translation puts it: "Think of ways to encourage one another to outbursts of love and good deeds. And let us **not** neglect our meeting together, as some people do, but encourage and warn each other, especially now that the day of his coming back again is drawing near." The Bible does **not** say: **Don't** forsake the assembling of yourselves together unless Sunday is your only day off, or unless you want to run in a triathlon, or unless it's a great beach day, in which case you are excused, because you just **don't** need fellowship as much as other Christians do.

Yes, if you love God, you will love HIS people and long to be with them. If you **don't** really love God, you **won't** love HIS people. Some will say "I'm so over the Church; people are critical and judgmental. It's so full of hypocrites!" My response to that is: There is always room for one more! Understand, I am **not** justifying hypocrisy of any kind, but honestly, we have all been hypocritical at times. But that is **not** a reason to **not** attend Church. The Church has its flaws because people are in it. However, Jesus both started and loves the Church. HE **died** for it.

Being in fellowship is a proof that you are indeed a child of God. It says in **1 John 3:14**, "We know that we have passed from **death** to life, because we love each other. Anyone who does **not** love remains in **death**" (NIV). **Psalm 133:1** says, "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!" (NKJV). **Not** going to Church is a proof that something is wrong with you **spiritually**. We read in **1 John 2:19**, "These people left our Churches because they never really belonged with us; otherwise they would have stayed with us. When they left us, it proved that they do **not** belong with us" (NLT).

Studies show that if you **don't** go to Church for a month, the odds are almost 2 to 1 that you **won't** go for more than a year. Being a vital and active part of the Church is something we pass on to our kids.

A study once disclosed that: If both Mom and Dad, both attend Church regularly, 72% of their children remain faithful in attendance; if only Dad attends regularly, 55% remain faithful; if only Mom attends regularly, 15% remain faithful; and if neither attend regularly, only 6% remain faithful.

What legacy will you leave your kids? Are you committed to demonstrating to them that going to Church is important?

Read more at: <http://www.christianpost.com/news/why-going-to-church-is-important-part-1-106017/#euJHKS8qS0tE8IL.99>

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Why Go to Church?

Dr. Craig L. Blomberg serves as Distinguished Professor of New Testament at Denver Seminary.

Dr. Blomberg completed his PhD in New Testament, specializing in the parables and the writings of Luke - Acts, at Aberdeen University in Scotland. He received an MA from Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, and a BA from Augustana College. Before joining the faculty of Denver Seminary, he taught at Palm Beach Atlantic College and was a research fellow in Cambridge, England with Tyndale House.

In addition to writing numerous articles in professional journals, multi-author works and dictionaries or encyclopedias, he has authored or edited 20 books, including *The Historical Reliability of the Gospels*, *Interpreting the Parables*, commentaries on Matthew, 1 Corinthians and James, *Jesus and the Gospels: An Introduction and Survey*, *From Pentecost to Patmos: An Introduction to Acts through Revelation*, *Neither Poverty nor Riches: A Biblical Theology of Possessions*; *Making Sense of the New Testament: Three Crucial Questions*; *Preaching the Parables*; *Contagious Holiness: Jesus' Meals with Sinners*; and *Handbook of New Testament Exegesis*.

“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” ([Hebrews 10:24 - 25; TNIV](#))

In our consumer culture, I **shouldn't** be surprised that people treat Church like a product. But I confess I continue to be surprised how long time, faithful Churchgoers can suddenly “kick the habit” with seemingly little regret!

Whether it's a recent, young Denver Seminary graduate who was training to be a Church leader or a middle - aged individual who just got tired of putting up with someone or something undesirable in their local congregation, people are abandoning regular Church attendance in record numbers.

Hebrews 10, however, takes such a departure very seriously indeed.

In the context of growing persecution of Christians in Rome in the early-to-mid-60s, one could almost understand why Jewish believers might want to play down their distinctives as followers of Yeshua and retreat to a form of worship indistinguishable from orthodox Judaism. They would thus retain their unique privilege as a religiolocita, and **not** be forced to offer a pinch of incense in honor of Caesar as "Lord and God" as everyone else had to do. Once Nero unleashed his official, state-sponsored persecution against Christians in 64, they would be immune from imprisonment and martyrdom. Today, one can empathize with believers from North Korea and China to Iran and Afghanistan to Morocco and the Maldives, who might similarly hide their Christian identities and **not** gather regularly for worship and instruction with other believers, lest they be arrested and / or be **killed**.

Ironically, it is precisely in such contexts where we also hear stories of great faith, great perseverance, and great sacrifice for the sake of Christ and fellow Christians, including for gathering together with them.

It's here in the U.S., in the Western world more generally, where so much less is at stake that we offer up such pathetic reasons (**at least I suspect God considers them pathetic**) for **not** joining together with fellow believers on a regular, weekly basis. And almost all of the excuses are anthropocentric rather than Christocentric. That's a fancy way of saying we've in essence reworded the well-known praise song to make it say, "It's all about me, Lord," rather than "It's all about you, Jesus!"

We all know the excuses. We **don't** like the style of worship or music. We **don't** like the preaching. We **don't** like the new time for Sunday School. We **don't** like the way the Church spends our money.

More seriously, we **don't** like certain people we have to see when we go. The list seems almost endless. Yet the other irony is that we in the West, especially in the United States, have far more choices of Churches than anybody has ever had anywhere else in the history of the world! Before the advent of modern transportation, the two major criteria for why a given person belonged to Church X (**rather than Church Y**) was because it was (a) the closest Church to where they lived (b) in their denomination.

Before the Protestant Reformation, only (a) applied, except in those comparatively few places where both Roman Catholicism and Eastern Orthodoxy existed side - by - side. One generally learned to work things out with the same group of people over a long period of time.

Today we are victims of our plethora of choices. Now hear me well. I'm grateful for those choices.

There do come times when Churches have substantially changed their beliefs or practices that for a person to be faithful to their own basic convictions they must move to a different congregation. If that happens, then move! But **don't** just **stop** going anywhere.

Hear me, too, please, when I say that "Church" as the New Testament defines it can be a house - Church, it can be independent of all denominational affiliation, and it can take many creative forms and gather at many different times.

I'm **not** saying all believers have to gather on Sunday morning, in a distinctive Church building, with one prescribed liturgy or order of service. **Not** by a long shot.

But consider the implied hubris (a fancy Greek word for "arrogance") implied by the person who claims to be a Christian, claims to be in submission in **Scripture**, and yet also claims that **no** existing expressions of Christianity anywhere close to them are sufficiently God-pleasing for them to favor those gatherings with their presence!

Hebrews supplies the key to how to change one's attitude in such situations. One goes to Church **not** for what one can get but what one can give. Spur one another on toward love and good works and encourage one another. One of the occupational hazards of having studied the Scriptures to the extent that I have and having visited as many diverse expressions of God's family of faith worldwide as I have, is that it's hard for any given worship service to affect me emotionally at the very core of my being with something that fairly jumps out at me and says, "Yes, that's exactly how we should be doing things." I occasionally experience a little something along those lines, but I stress the words "a little."

But it **doesn't** take much at all to get me pumped with the idea of going to see friends and acquaintances, and to meet new people, whom I can encourage and love and teach.

If I keep track of how much attention, gratitude and concern I am showed in return, I usually go away depressed (except when I'm a guest speaker somewhere, because at least some people have been trained to do such things). But if I remind myself that I **shouldn't** be trying to keep track of such things, then I usually feel fulfilled.

But even that is an anthropocentric criterion. I need to keep reminding myself that I go and do what I do simply because that's what God wants and it's what he has made me for.

Dr. Craig L. Blomberg serves as Distinguished Professor of New Testament at Denver Seminary.

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Why do YOU go to Church?

I've asked this **question** at least once in a sermon in every Church I've served. Why do we go to Church? I think it's an incredibly important **question** right now because there are, quite frankly, so many other options on a Sunday morning – far more than when I was a kid and multiples more than when my parents were children.

Consider: you might want instead to sleep in, or catch up on some work, or go shopping, or meet a friend for coffee at Starbucks, or run through some email, or read the paper (**online or the old paper and ink variety**), or go to your kid's soccer match or hockey game, or see what you missed this week on your DVR, or watch a film on demand or.... The list goes on and on.

Which makes me curious. Why do those of us who still go to Church – which remains the one activity done by more people than any other in the U.S. – actually go?

There are a lot of reasons, I realize, perhaps as many as people in attendance.

And while some of those reasons – to make a parent, spouse, or significant other happy, for instance – reflect more external motivations than internal, I think there are still lots of internal reasons folks choose to spend part of their Sunday morning at Church. Some go for community, while others because it's an important part of their identity. Some go to see friends, while others hope for guidance in how they live. And soon.

But while there are lots of good reasons to go to Church, the one that gets me out of bed and to the sanctuary most frequently is a sense of need, even desperation. I realize that might sound odd. But here's the thing: I've come to believe that the good news is just too hard to believe for more than about 7 days in a row.

Think about it. Each and every week, we hear the news that the God who created and still sustains this vast cosmos **not** only knows that you and I exist... but actually gives a damn. More than that, that God cares deeply and passionately about our ups and down, ins and outs, hopes and heartbreaks, successes and failures. And even more than that, that God cares about us enough to send Jesus that we might know and believe just how much God loves us.

Do you see what I mean? That news is so good it almost sounds too good to be **true**. And while it might sound great on Sunday, by Friday – and some weeks, let's face it, by Monday afternoon – it seems very hard to believe.

And so, we come back to Church week in and week out to hear the good news of God's love, forgiveness, and grace, that we might leave encouraged to believe it – and, even harder, to live it – for one more week.

I recently came across a video of Pope Francis asking and answering a similar **question**. Why do **sinners** go to Mass, he asks? The key word in his answer is right in the middle of his question: “**sinners**.” The people who go to Church **don’t** go because they think they’re perfect but because they – we – know ourselves to be in need of Christ’s forgiveness and look forward to being renewed your time in worship.

In just over two - minutes, Pope Francis gets to the heart of the matter – that we go each week to hear of God’s forgiving love and leave trying to live into that forgiveness, love, and a world of new possibility. It’s a great message for Lent and, quite frankly, for just about any time.

According to recent Pew Research data, only 35% of American Christians consider attending religious services as an essential part of their faith. 1 Only 228% listed ‘helping out in your congregation’ as essential.

It appears that the majority of self-proclaimed Christians do **not** know how to answer the **question**, “Why go to Church?”

We can point to several reasons for this: the rise of secularism in society, a celebration of individual autonomy paired with a rejection of institutional faith and authority, and “finding God other places.”

For some Christians, the reason for avoiding Church is **spiritual**, flowing from a lack of understanding the importance of Church for **spiritual** vitality and public witness.

Frequency of Church attendance is also in decline among weekly attenders and people who attend yearly, presumably on Easter Sunday and Christmas.

- 2 Others claim that they **don’t** need religion to be “**spiritual**” or have been so hurt by the Church that they swear it off altogether. 3 The hurt may be real but avoiding Church will only bring them more pain.

Seeing the complacency of many Christians deeply **saddens** me when I think of brothers and sisters overseas who sacrifice much to gather with God’s people. One pastor our organization trains in Central Asia rents a bus for Church services. This **isn’t** to bus in visitors to their Church building — it is their Church building — they circle the city late at night in the bus to avoid being caught by the police.

Unfortunately, for many in more comfortable settings, Church **isn’t** a priority.

Why Go to Church? 50+ Things You Miss Out On By **Not** Attending Church

Sleep, your kid's soccer game, Netflix, football, or the lake house take priority, pushing Church to the margins of life — if **not** out altogether. When we push God's agenda and people out of our lives, we reap the consequences.

If you are already involved in a Church, may the Lord remind you of all of the blessings given to you through HIS people. If you need a Church, scroll down for several online Church directories.

50+ Things You Miss Out On By **Not Attending Church**

You miss out on obedience to the command to **not** give up meeting together 2 ([Hebrews 10:24 - 25](#)).

You miss out on loving God in your obedience, and as a result, experiencing HIM more deeply ([John 14:21](#)).

You miss out on loving Jesus by loving the bride HE laid HIS life down for ([Ephesians 5:25 - 27](#); [Acts 20:28](#)).

You miss out on hearing God's Word faithfully proclaimed, and thus growing in faith ([2 Timothy 4:1 - 2](#); [Romans 10:17](#)).

You miss out on hearing God's Word applied specifically to you, your culture, and community ([1 Corinthians 2:5](#); [2 Timothy 4:1 - 2](#)).

You miss out on learning how to read the Bible better by sitting under gifted teachers and preachers ([1 Timothy 3:2](#); [Titus 1:9](#)).

You miss out on being equipped to discern **dangerous** and **deceitful** doctrines that **negate** or **distort** the gospel ([Ephesians 4:11 - 14](#); [Galatians 1:6 - 9](#)).

You miss out on encouraging others, stirring them toward love and good works, and receiving encouragement from others ([Hebrews 10:25](#)).

You miss out on using your gifts to build up the body of Christ for the glory of God ([1 Peter 4:10 - 11](#); [Ephesians 4:11 - 14](#)).

You miss out on being built up by others faithfully using their gifts ([1 Peter 4:10 - 11](#); [Ephesians 4:11 - 14](#)).

You miss out on sitting under God's appointed leadership over you ([Ephesians 4:11 - 14](#); [Hebrews 13:7](#)).

You miss out on submitting to the leaders God has placed over you, and thus submitting to God ([Hebrews 13:17](#)).

You miss out on being shepherded during the joys and trials of life ([James 5:13 - 14](#); [1 Peter 5:1 - 2](#)).

You miss out on following your pastor's **example** ([1 Timothy 4:12](#); [Hebrews 13:7](#); [Titus 2:7](#)).

You miss out on agreeing to be accountable for your actions through Church discipline, which is an extension of God's discipline ([Matthew 18:15 - 17](#)).

You miss out on performing the ministry of showing up, that is, encouraging others by your presence and commitment ([Hebrews 10:24 - 25](#); [Acts 4:32 - 33](#)).

You miss out on being equipped for the work of ministry by ministers called by God and the fruitfulness that comes from having been better equipped ([Ephesians 4:11 - 14](#)).

You miss out on giving and receiving prayers for **spiritual** growth and personal needs ([James 5:16](#)).

You miss out on receiving the blessing and instruction of corporate prayer ([1 Timothy 2:1 - 2](#); [Acts 6:1 - 6](#)).

You miss out on caring for the poor and needy as the Church. Or, receiving care if you are needy. ([Acts 11:29](#), [2 Corinthians 8:4](#), [1 John 3:17](#).)

You miss out on serving others and taking your eyes off yourself ([Romans 12:9 - 13](#)).

You miss out on being in the center of God's will, which is revealed as we obey and renew our minds in His **truth** ([Proverbs 3:5 - 6](#); [Romans 12:1 - 2](#); [1 Thessalonians 5:15 - 18](#)). You miss out on celebrating the gospel through **baptism** ([Romans 6:4](#)).

You miss out on regular participation in the **Lord's Supper** to join saints throughout history to celebrate the saving work of Christ and anticipate HIS future reign ([1 Corinthians 11:23 - 26](#); [Mark 14:22 - 25](#)).

You miss out on practicing the one another's with brothers and sisters in Christ ([John 13:34 - 35](#); [Ephesians 4:12](#); [Romans 12:10 - 16](#); [Galatians 5:13](#); etc.).

You miss out on corporately singing songs of praise to God ([Colossians 3:16](#)).

You miss out on being a testimony to the gospel's saving and transforming power to the lost world ([John 13:34 - 35](#)).

You miss out on uniting across barriers of race and economic status to stand united in the gospel and make friends you **wouldn't** ordinarily know ([Ephesians 2:11 - 22](#); [Ephesians 4:3](#); [James 2:1](#); [Revelation 5:9](#)).

You miss out on speaking the truth in love to other believers believing and/or practicing unbiblical doctrines ([Ephesians 4:15 - 16](#)).

You miss out on bringing God delight as HIS gathered people ([Zephaniah 3:17](#); [Psalms 149:4](#)).

You miss out on rejoicing at seeing new brothers and sisters brought to faith ([Acts 16:5](#)). You miss out on inviting non-Christian friends and family to Church to hear about Christ ([Matthew 28:18 - 20](#); [Colossians 4:5](#)).

You miss out on welcoming others as Christ has welcomed you ([Romans 15:7](#)).

You miss out on experiencing how God's love is perfected in us through HIS body ([1 John 4:12](#)).

You miss out on allowing God's Word, God's **Spirit**, and God's people to help you grow in Christ-like maturity ([2 Timothy 3:16 - 17](#); [Psalm 19:7](#); [Ephesians 4:11 - 14](#)).

You miss out on experiencing the **Holy Spirit** dwelling in the fellowship of the Church ([2 Corinthians 13:14](#)).

You miss out on receiving continual reminders of your position and identity in Christ ([2 Corinthians 5:17](#); [Titus 3:3 - 7](#)).

You miss out on being influenced by Godly men and Godly women who love Jesus more than the world, 1 and in turn influencing others ([Titus 2:1 - 8](#)).

You miss out on seeing how Jesus, the head of the Church, works through HIS body to accomplish HIS mission in the world ([Ephesians 5:23](#); [Colossians 1:18](#)).

You miss out on making your closest friends those who pursue Christ from pure hearts ([2 Timothy 2:22](#)).

You miss out on being reminded to live a God-centered life focused on HIS plans for YOU, and for the world and your place in them; **not** the other way around ([Ephesians 1:3 - 7](#)).

You miss out on understanding with all of the saints the immeasurable love of Christ ([Ephesians 3:18](#)).

You miss out on the opportunity to give to God back a tithe or offering from what HE has given you (2 Corinthians 9:6 - 8).

You miss out on the opportunity to let the Word of Christ dwell richly within you through songs, and hymns, and spiritual songs (Colossians 3:16).

You miss out on bringing joy to your leaders who will give an account for shepherding you (Hebrews 13:17).

You miss out on sharing in the sufferings of the body of Christ by grieving with those who grieve and bearing one another's burdens (2 Corinthians 1:3 - 5; Romans 12:15; Galatians 6:2).

You miss out on making known God's wisdom to rulers and authorities in the heavenly places through the Church (Ephesians 3:10).

You miss out on potentially being called by God to vocational ministry (1 Timothy 4:14).

You miss out on teaching others, in word and deed, how to follow Christ (Titus 2).

You miss out on visibly demonstrate a growing commitment to Christ and HIS gospel.

You miss out on receiving help fighting sin and help others fighting sin (1 Peter 2:11; James 5:16; Galatians 6:1 - 2).

You miss out on collectively support missions around the world (Philippians 4:16 - 17).

You miss out on seeing how the Church is built and strengthened when each member of the body functions as it should, making the body mature by building it up in love (1 Corinthians 12:12 - 20; Ephesians 4:16).

You miss out on displaying unity in Christ that both glorifies God and accords with a life changed by the gospel (Ephesians 4:3 - 6; John 17:22 - 23).

And there are so many more you could add... this list serves as a starting point. **Bottom line:** As each and every one of us need, we need the Church.

When Jesus appeared to Saul on the road to Damascus, HE **didn't** say, "Why are you persecuting my Church?" HE said, "Why are you persecuting me?" (Acts 9:4, **emphasis mine**). HE so identifies with the Church that an attack on HIS people is an attack on HIM.

Could Jesus be saying to you **not** only, "Why are you avoiding my Church?" but also, "Why are you avoiding me?"

My desire is **not** to force legalistic rules on anybody; rather I hope and pray the Lord will awaken those missing out on Church to long for a richer relationship with HIM as experienced through a vibrant connection with HIS body.

Where to go from here?

1. Trust in Jesus Christ. Jesus **died** on the cross to reconcile rebels to God the Father and make a **Holy** people for Himself. Believe in HIM and in HIS plan for you, which includes the Church.

2. Study Scripture for a biblical view of the Church. I recommend starting in Ephesians. Ephesians does an excellent job unfolding God’s glorious purposes for the Church in Christ and brings sense to why God would command for us to **not** give up meeting together (**Hebrews 10:24 - 25**).

3. Read a book that will stir your heart to love the Church. I recommend the following: Why We Love the Church by Kevin DeYoung and Ted Kluck

What is a Healthy Church Member? Thabiti Anywailbe “How to Walk into Church” by Tony Payne

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“**Stop** Dating the Church” by Joshua Harris

4. If you **don’t** currently attend a healthy, Bible-preaching Church, find one. You may consider searching one of the following Church directories: 9 Marks, The Gospel Coalition, Sermon Audio, The Gospel Coalition’s Spanish-language directory or IgleRed (**Latin America**). Or if moving somewhere new, ask your pastor for a recommendation.

5. Get involved. Commit yourself to a Bible-believing congregation, join a Bible study, or even have a more mature saint disciple you — I dare you. Perhaps this is just what you need to get past doubts or weaknesses that plague you in your faith.

6. Pray for the Lord to lead you in how to best participate in your local congregation and bless others with your gifts.

1 “Religion in Everyday Life” from Pew Research.

2 “Church Attendance is Declining” from FamilyFacts.org.

3 And there are Churches that you should swear off, mainly Churches that reject biblical authority and thereby undermine the gospel.

Special thanks to Brandon Myers. A faithful friend, pastor, and ‘freditor’ ([friend + editor](#)) who made this article much stronger. Follow Brandon on Twitter.

Uncle Screwtape’s Advanced Strategies against Gospel Growth 5 Lessons I’ve Learned about Fasting

Tim Keller’s [9 Questions](#) for Sleepy and Nominal Christians Freedom of Conscience in a Virtueless Society: Os Guinness on the Eric Metaxas Show.

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How to **Stop** a Porn Addiction with Biblical **Truth** and the Power of the **Holy Spirit** Teddy Roosevelt's 10 Reasons for Going to Church.

Because this election cycle needs a reminder of a different time. Faithful Church attendance is an essential part for Christian discipleship and required by God ([Hebrews 10:24–25](#)). Even President Theodore Roosevelt strongly agreed. That's why he wrote an article for the Ladies' Home Journal in 1917 called "Shall We Do Away...

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23 Signs You May Be Captive to Your Christian Sub - Culture and Missing True Christianity.

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This post is the second in a series. You can read the first **16 Signs You May Be A Culturally Captive Christian**. If you read the first post in this series, you have seen several **examples** of how Christians conform to the world and are "captive" to its ideas instead...

In "Culture" Filed Under: Christian Living Tagged With: Church Attendance [...]
Why Go to Church? 50+ Things You Miss Out On By **Not** Attending Church | Kevin Halloran

“According to recent Pew Research data, only 35% of American Christians consider attending religious services as an essential part of their faith. Only 28% listed ‘helping out in your congregation’ as essential. The majority of self-proclaimed Christians do **not** know how to answer the **question**, ‘Why go to Church?’” [...]

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Why Go to Church? 50+ Things You Miss Out On By **Not** Attending Church [...]

Servant of the Word. Husband. Blogger. Corazón Latino. Serving with Leadership Resources training pastors to preach God's Word with God's heart. Soli Deo Gloria

Can you be a Christian and **not** go to Church?

My sister-in-law does **not** attend Church nor have any fellowship apart from me but believes she is a Christian because she prays, reads the bible and believes that Jesus is Lord. But friends say she is **deceived** and **not** a Christian at all, I'm confused can you be a Christian and **not** go to Church?

Anne, I'm **not** surprised that you're confused because it is **true** to say both that you **don't** need to go to Church to be a Christian and that if you **don't** go to Church, you're **not** a Christian. Let me explain.

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If we were to narrow down what it means to be a Christian, the best place to look is at one of the people who Jesus said was a Christian. If you **remember** the thief on the cross next to Jesus ([Luke 23:39 - 43](#)), Jesus promises this man that he will be with him in paradise.

This man never got to go to Church, and yet he is a Christian because he trusts in Jesus. So, in that sense it is **true** to say that you **don't** have to be a Church goer to be a Christian. In fact, as soon as you say you “have to do something” to be a Christian you are in danger of getting the gospel message **wrong**.

However, the Bible has **no** concept of individual **spirituality** - that is Christianity is **not** something personal that has nothing to do with anyone else. That is a very modern way of thinking.

We can see it in the above passage, the way the man expresses his trust in Jesus is that shifts his allegiances to Jesus' kingdom. He sees that Jesus is the true king and joins his kingdom, he joins a group of people - those ruled by Jesus the king.

If you are a Christian, then you are a member of God's Church. The Church is now your family, and they are God's gift to us in living Christian lives. We see this in **Romans 8:28 - 30**. Those who are saved are saved so that Jesus would be the big brother of many brothers. God is in the business of making a family (**have a read of Romans 8**).

This can also be seen in the fact that most of the instructions for Christians are done in the plural, there are very few (**if any**) instructions to individuals. (**The Greek of the NT distinguishes between singular and plural 'you' English doesn't do that anymore**).

The Christian life was never meant to be lived solo, God has gifted each member of his Church to serve one another, and you **can't** do that solo. It is near impossible to live a Christian life alone, it runs counter to everything God has done for us.

However, some people **can't** help but live alone. The thief on the cross could **not** join a Church, he had **no** choice; but where we have a choice, we really should become a part of God's Church.

It's like someone who gets married, but never moves in with their husband. It is **true** that you can be married without living together, and there may be extreme circumstances that you can think of where someone may get married and **not** live together (**if someone is on their death bed or in jail for example**). But a real marriage involves relationship. Becoming a Christian means being a part of God's family.

So, my advice for your sister-in-law is, if she can join a Church near to her, she should do so. If there is nothing holding her back (**and there might be legitimate reasons**) she should go to Church. It's best for her and for the people who are missing out on her gifts that she may bring to that Church. If there is some reason why she **cannot** get to or go to Church, then encourage her to meet regularly with other Christians to read the bible and pray (**after all this is what the essence of Church is**).

Why Go to Church?

William Willimon, chaplain at Duke University, was invited to preach in an inner - city Church. The service, with its long preliminaries, lasted 2 1/2 hours.

When it was finally over, Willimon was exhausted and asked the pastor, “Why do these people stay in Church so long?”

His friend replied, “Unemployment runs nearly 50 percent here. This means that when our people go about during the week, everything they see, everything they hear tells them: ‘You are a **failure**. You are nothing because you do **not** have a good job, you do **not** have a nice car, and you have **no** money.’ So, I must get their eyes focused on Christ. Through the hymns, the prayers, the preaching I say to them, ‘That is a **lie!** You are royalty! You are citizens of the kingdom of God!’ It takes me a long time to get them straight because the **SIN FULL** world perverts them so terribly.”

The world is constantly pressuring Christians to conform to its values. We need to read God’s Word and encourage one another so that we will be able to keep alive a strong sense of who we are in Christ.

Why go to Church? Because God uses the exhortation and love of fellow believers to reassure us that the world’s message is a lie and that God’s good news is **true**.

The world will try to pressure us To fit into its godless mold; That’s why we need encouragement To keep our hearts from growing **cold**. — Sper

Seven days without Church makes one weak.

Do Christians need the Church more than the Church needs Christians?

Absolutely. God established Church. Judeo-Christian beliefs from **Genesis** to **Revelation** see the faithful as God’s people - corporately. Paul said in **1 Corinthians** that we are a Body. A body is designed to have all of it’s parts to function properly.

Each is different, but important. The root word is “corpus” which means Body. We are to engage in corporate worship. So why **don’t** more Christians do that regularly?

A freshman in college sits at the gathering spot on campus with a sign that reads, “Ask me about Church.” She hears people say it is filled with hypocrites and shallow minded-people. She hears others say they can worship Jesus on their own, thank you very much. They read the Bible, they have quiet time with God. They **don’t** need to go anywhere on Sundays. Others are anti-established religion because the Churches have too many rules and only want your money.

She hears all sorts of reasons **not** to go to Church. Her response is a simple shrug and a smile that twinkles in her eyes. “It makes me happy. It brings me peace. It lifts me up. It helps me understand God. I love my Church. All I can say is, come see for yourself.”

“The Church is filled with hypocrites and narrow-minded people.” **True** – but they are the ones who know they need help. I heard it said that the Church is like a **spiritual** hospital. The people inside know they are **sick** and are seeking **healing**. Some **heal** faster than others. Some do **not** do what the Great Physician orders. But all are admitted.

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700 Club Interactive - **November 21, 2019**

Inside Edition’s Megan Alexander shares what it takes to make it while staying true to your beliefs.

Satanist Finds Peace After Life Time of **Fear**

“The people you trust the most who are supposed to take care of you and protect you from harm actually did the harm.” When Patricia was five years old she says she was initiated into a **secret, satanic cult** through a series of **sick** and **abusive rituals**. “I was whisked away by family members to take part in a **ceremony, a ritual**.” She says.

26 min

<https://www1.cbn.com/video/700clubinteractive/2019/11/21/700-club-interactive-november-21-2019?show=700club>

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Why Go to Church?

It may seem hypocritical when we **don’t** “walk like we talk”, but hopefully, some the medicine of the Word is seeping in and beginning to work on our hearts and attitudes. For some it is a shot directly into the veins. For others, it is more like a slow - drip IV.

Many outsiders mistakenly see conviction as a synonym for narrow - mindedness.

My Church has a motto – “Come as you are but leave as God wants you to be”. Christianity accepts all – but the gate to salvation is narrow. Jesus said so. HE also said HE **is** the Way, the **Truth, not** “a way” and “a **truth**”. The **truth** is, people **don’t** want to change. That is being narrow-minded.

I can worship Jesus on my own, thank you very much. I read the Bible, I have quiet time with God. I **don’t** need to go anywhere on Sundays. But Church is more than paying homage to God. If it **wasn’t**, we could just send a check by electronic bank transfer and stay home on Sunday morning in our PJs with our Bibles on our lap.

We need to be with fellow believers. Jesus told the disciples if they gathered in HIS name HE'd be with them. HE sent them out two by two – together – to do HIS work. God knows there is strength in the gathering of HIS people. Worshiping as a group is the standard throughout the Bible. When did we make it a “me” thing?

Last Sunday in his sermon, my youth pastor referred to the Church as Noah's ark. We need to gather in it to be sheltered from life's storms. Believers need to be in relationship with each other to comfort, correct, and carry each other's burdens to the Cross. We should keep each other in check, lift each other up, and provide strength to fight the earthly battles we face in a world that **doesn't** hold to the same values and beliefs we do. **No** soldier goes into battle alone. Even when David defeated Goliath, I bet there were soldiers praying in the background.

Jesus told Peter that HE'd build his Church on HIM – the rock. Peter tells the newly converted, “Save yourselves from this crooked world.” (Acts 2:40.) **Not** alone... the very next verse says, “So those who received his word were baptized, and there were added that day about three thousand.” (v.41) Added to what? The Church. What did they do next?

“They devoted themselves to the apostle's teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.” (v.42) In other words, they stuck together, **remembered** Christ together in a shared meal per HIS command at the Last Supper, and worshiped together. That is Church in it's purest sense.

Satan divides, God **unites**. Jesus will never call you away from the fellowship with believers to spend time with HIM.

If you ever feel like **not** going to Church, other than being very **ill** or injured, you can rest assured that is when you need to be there. Church keeps the Body functioning to ward off the **disease** of **sin**.

There will be a message you need to hear, a prayer that will be answered, or a boost of spiritual fortitude from a hymn to help you in the upcoming week. Or you may be who God uses to bless someone else. When you **don't** go to Church, you may be causing someone to stumble. You have **no** idea who will need your smile, your prayer, or your hug that day. But God does.

They are anti-established religion because the Churches have too many rules. Hey, God has rules.

They are called the Ten Commandment. One of the Commandments is to keep the Sabbath and make it **Holy**. The rest of them deal with how we are to live and worship. The Church is only following God's commands. **True**, some congregations have become a bit Pharisee - like. But humans are works in progress. If the Church you've been attending have rules which seem too strict, seek God's counsel about that.

See if they are man - made or Biblically based. Talk with your pastor. If you are still uncomfortable, **don't stop** going to worship. Find another Church.

Just make sure the Church you choose preaches the Ten Commandments of God, and of Christ Jesus – love God and to love your neighbor.

It should also spur you to change, to become more Christ like. It should be accepting of those who are **sinners**, but encourage them **not to sin** in a loving, life - changing and supportive manner.

Some people grumble that all the Church wants is money. **Not true.** Yes, it is an organization that operates solely on the financial gifts of others. However, it is God who wants your money — and also your time, and the talents HE has bestowed upon you. HE asks for only 10% of each – your money, your talents to spread and support the Body, and your time in serving HIM on earth.

That 10% to does more good when combined with others' 10%. There is power in that. The Church is the best vehicle for channeling your money.

Besides, tithing is solely a discipline to help you realize all belongs to God, **not** you. It is a minimum, but one we all should strive to meet, **not** because God needs it, but because we do. Once you begin to strive to tithe, you will find you have more control over how you spend and save your money, how you spend your time, and how you view your self - worth.

Do Christians need the Church more than the Church needs Christians? You bet. But, so does the rest of the world. Open your hearts, open your doors – and each Sunday, walk inside to be blessed and to be a blessing.

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Why Go To Church? by Joe Greer

I have always been perplexed by those who do **not** see the benefit of attending every assembly of the Church.

It is a time of worship to God, a time for building faith and knowledge in HIS word, and a time to encourage and be encouraged by those of like mind. It is a time for **spiritual** nourishment, getting filled up ... recharged ... refocused, and prepared for challenges that this life brings.

If a local Church has planned and scheduled four hours of assemblies each week and you miss one of those hours ... well, you have missed 25% of the time you could have been with Christians in collective study and worship.

Twenty-five percent is pretty significant, but what if you miss 2 hours ... that is 50%.
Wow ... you have missed out!

Think about the Bible studies you were **not** a part of and the songs and prayers you did **not** get to participate in.

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Amazingly, some choose to only attend one hour a week. You are receiving only 25% of the **spiritual** nourishment that comes by assemblies together. You are missing so much.

Someone sent me the **note** below. I do **not** know who wrote it, but I thought it was really good ...

A 'Church - goer' wrote a letter to the editor of a newspaper and complained that it made **no** sense to go to Church every Sunday. "I've gone for 30 - years now," he wrote, "and in that time I have heard something like 3,000 sermons.

But for the life of me, I **can't** remember a single one of them. So, I think I'm wasting my time and the preachers are wasting theirs by giving sermons at all."

This started a real controversy in the “Letters to the Editor” column, much to the delight of the editor. It went on for weeks until someone wrote this clincher: “I’ve been married for 30 years now. In that time my wife has cooked some 32,000 meals. But, for the life of me, I **cannot** recall the entire menu for a single one of those meals. But I do know this... they all nourished me and gave me the strength I needed to do my work.

If my wife had **not** given me these meals, I would be physically **dead** today. Likewise, if I had **not** gone to Church for nourishment, I would be **spiritually dead** today!”

So ... why go to Church? For one thing, **spiritual** nourishment. We all need it. **Not** one of us is so strong that we do **not** need to be edified or built up in faith. We all need it. It is amazing that those who even admittedly acknowledge weakness in faith are often those who miss the assembly of the Christians on a regular basis. Go figure.

Bible preaching draws us closer to the Savior. “Him we preach, warning every man and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus.” **Colossians 1:28** We need to hear it ... often.

Christ gave gifts to the Church (**i.e. preachers and teachers**) to assure a building up in faith ... an “edifying of the body of Christ.” To miss this teaching is to leave one lacking in “the unity of the faith and the knowledge of the Son of God” and at risk to being “tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine.”

But when the Church grows together in **truth**, it “causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love.” **Ephesians 4:11 - 16**

And, think about the building up that takes place as the whole Church assembles and works together. “And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, **not** forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.” **Hebrews 10:24 - 25**

For us to be made stronger by the prayers of the saints ... for us to be admonished by voices of brethren lifted in spiritual song ... for us to be humbled and grateful for ability to give to the Lord’s work and to be encouraged by Bible preaching ... for us to be reminded of the sacrifice of Jesus our Lord as the saints eat the Lord’s supper ...we have to be at the assembly!

Theme:

Object: Scripture:

Jesus appears to his disciples - Second Sunday of Easter

Top Ten List

On the evening of that first day of the week, when the disciples were together, with the doors locked for **fear** of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you!" **John 20:19 (NIV)**

Don't Miss Church!

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I like **Top Ten** lists. You know, those lists like "The **Top Ten** Songs of the Week" or "The **Top Ten** Movies of the Year." When your parents were choosing a name for you, they may have looked at a list of "The **Top Ten** Names for Boys and Girls." I guess there is a **Top Ten** list for just about everything you can imagine.

I have a **Top Ten** list this morning that you may **not** have heard before. It is the "**Top Ten** Reasons **NOT** to miss Church."

Every Sunday you have to decide whether you are going to get up and go to Church. Well, here is a list of the **Top Ten** Reasons **NOT** to miss Church. Maybe it will help you to decide.

10. Chocolate covered donuts at Sunday School (**Just kidding!**)

9. Making long - lasting friendships

8. Singing praises to God
7. Hearing a good sermon by the pastor
6. Receiving encouragement from others and giving encouragement to others
5. Bible study
4. Praying for one another
3. Growing in our faith
2. Missing Church makes it easier to miss the next week, and then the next. And the number one reason **NOT** to miss Church is...
1. You are sure to miss something special that God has for YOU! What could that something be?

Well, our Bible lesson today might help us to find out.

It was the Sunday after Jesus was crucified and his disciples had gathered together in a locked room. They were together in that locked room because they were **afraid**. They were **afraid** of what Jesus' **enemies** might do to them. The Bible tells us that, even though the doors were locked, Jesus came in and stood there with his disciples. When the disciples saw Jesus, they were very happy.

One of the disciples, whose name was Thomas, was **not** there with the others in that room when Jesus appeared to them. I **don't** know why Thomas **wasn't** there. Perhaps he had gone fishing or maybe he just decided to stay at home that day. When the other disciples saw Thomas, they told him that they had seen Jesus, but he **didn't** believe them. "Unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into his side, I will **not** believe it," Thomas told them.

A week later the disciples were in the house again, and Thomas was with them. The very same thing happened again.

Even though the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among his disciples. HE turned to Thomas and said, "See my hands; put your fingers here. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. **Stop doubting** and believe."

Thomas **didn't** need to touch the wounds where the nails had been or put his hand into his side. He fell on his knees before Jesus and said, "My Lord and my God!"

Before Jesus returned to **heaven** to be with HIS Father, HE told his disciples that when two or three are gathered together in HIS name, HE would be there with them. Each week we come together in the name of Jesus to worship and to praise HIM. So, what really important thing do we miss out on if we **don't** come to Church? We miss out on the same thing that Thomas missed out on — the chance to be with Jesus!

Dear Jesus, we have come into this house and gathered in your name today because we want to be with you. We have come to worship and praise your name. Amen.

Do Christians need To Go To Church?

When a person becomes a Christian, he **doesn't** just join a local Church because it's a good habit for growing in **spiritual** maturity. He joins a local Church because it's the expression of what Christ has made him - a member of the body of Christ.

Being united to Christ means being united to every Christian. But that universal union must be given a living, breathing existence in a local Church.

Sometimes theologians refer to a distinction between the universal Church (**all Christians everywhere throughout history**) and the local Church (**those people who meet down the street from you to hear the Word preached and to practice baptism and the Lord's Supper**). Other than a few references to the universal Church (**such as Matthew 16:18 and the bulk of Ephesians 1**), most references to the Church in the New Testament are to local Churches, as when Paul writes, "To the Church of God in Corinth" or "To the Churches in Galatia."

Now what follows is a little intense, but it's important. The relationship between our membership in the universal Church and our membership in the local Church is a lot like the relationship between the righteousness God gives us through faith and the actual practice of righteousness in our daily lives. When we become Christians by faith, God declares us righteous. Yet we are still called to actively be righteous. A person who happily goes on living in unrighteousness calls into **question** whether he ever possessed Christ's righteousness in the first place (**see Romans 6:1 - 18; Romans 8:5 - 14; James 2:14 - 15**). So, too, it is with those who refuse to commit themselves to a local Church. Committing to a local body is the natural outcome - it confirms what Christ has done.

If you have **no** interest in actually committing yourself to an actual group of gospel - believing, Bible - teaching Christians, you might **question** whether you belong to the body of Christ at all.

52 Practical / Scientific Reasons to go to Church... - Besides **the obvious ones**.

Reason **No. 1** => Reduced **Blood** Pressure In 1989 the Journal of Religion and Health published a study on the effects of Church attendance on **blood** pressure.

Researcher D. Larson and his colleagues found that smokers who did **not** attend Church were seven times more likely to have abnormally high **blood** pressure.

Smokers who did attend Church had lower **blood** pressure, similar to nonsmokers who did **not** attend Church. Larson concluded, "If you are going to smoke, make sure you go to Church. "Larson D.W., H.G. Koenig, B.H. Kaplan, R.S. Greenberg, E. Loge, and H.A. Tyroler, "The Impact of Religion on Men's **Blood** Pressure," *Journal of Religion and Health* 28 (4), (1989): 265 - 278.

Reason **No. 2** => Answers to Prayers - People go to Church to pray and worship God, but is there any evidence that prayer works?

A number of experiments have been conducted on hospital patients, showing substantial evidence for the positive effects of prayer. One such study was conducted by R. Byrd at San Francisco General Hospital. He studied 339 coronary patients over a ten - month period. The double-blind study divided the patients into two groups.

The First Group was prayed for by Church members of various denominations (**Judeo-Christian**).

The people assigned to prayer were given the first names of the patients and asked to pray for them regularly throughout the ten - month period. The control group was well matched to the test group as to seriousness of **illness**, age of patient, etc.

According to Byrd, the prayer group had "less congestive heart failure, required less diuretic and antibiotic therapy, had fewer episodes of pneumonia, had fewer cardiac arrests, and were less frequently ventilated." The patients, doctors, nurses and hospital staff had **no** knowledge of the purpose of the study. Subsequent studies have confirmed this result. Byrd, R.C., "**Positive** Therapeutic Effects of Intercessory Prayer in a Coronary Care Unit Population," *Southern Medical Journal* 81 (1988): 826 - 829.

Reason **No.3** => Happier Marriages Can going to Church improve your marriage? There is considerable evidence for this. Take for **example**, one study published in the *Review of Religious Research* in 1990. The study was conducted by M.G. Dudley and F.A. Kolinski.

They tested 228 married Bible Christian couples for private religious practice (**personal and family prayer, Bible reading**), intrinsic religiosity (**how the person feels about religion**), and religious practice (**going to Church, witnessing, financial support**). After controlling for a number of variants, the best predictor of happy marriage was found to be consistent religious practice -- including attending Church and personal and family devotion. This study is one of many that corroborate these findings across many faiths. Dudley, M.G., and F.A. Kosinski, "Religiosity and Marital Satisfaction: A Research **Note**," *Review of Religious Research* 32 (1990): 78 - 86.

Reason No. 4 => Better Behaved Teenagers in A major study in 1998 reviewed religion's role in reducing high - risk behavior among high school students.

The study was conducted by J.M. Wallace and T.A. Forman at the University of Michigan. A random group of 5,000 students -- a very large sample -- from 135 American high schools was selected for the study. Arrange of high-risk behaviors was studied, including interpersonal violence, driving under the influence of alcohol, carrying a weapon to school, cigarette and marijuana smoking, binge drinking, and seat belt use. They also studied lifestyle behaviors such as diet, exercise and sleep patterns. The researchers found that Church attendance was associated with fewer deliberate, potentially injurious behaviors, less substance abuse, and better lifestyle choices. Those who indicated religion was important to them were far less likely to have taken a gun to school. Wallace, J.M., and T.A. Forman, "Religion's Role in Promoting Health and Reducing the Risk Among American Youth," *Health Education and Behavior* 25 (1998): 721-741.

Reason No. 5 => Better Personal Health Good researchers are hesitant to draw conclusions without substantial data to back them up. One method of testing the strength of a theory is to look at many studies on one subject to see if the trends are significant and "robust." Church attendance has been shown in many studies to improve health. In 1987, researchers J.S. Levin and H.Y. Vanderpool at the University of Texas examined the validity and outcome of more than twenty-seven studies on the impact of religion on health.

They concluded that twenty of the twenty - seven studies indicated a **positive** correlation between Church attendance and health, even when factors were controlled. They **noted** that those who attended Church often were healthier than those who went infrequently. Levin, J.S., and H.Y. Yanderpool, "Is Frequent Religious Attendance Really Conducive to Better Health? Toward an Epidemiology of Religion," *Social Science Medicine* 24 (7), (1987): 589 - 600.

Reason No.6 => A Longer Life Is Billy Joel right? Is it **true that only the good **die** young? **Not** according to one study reported in the American Journal of Epidemiology. (The scientific and medical study of the causes and transmission of disease within a population.) The study tracked social group activities and mortality in a study of 4,175 persons over the age of thirty - eight in one U.S. county beginning in 1965.T.E. Seeman and his colleagues followed up on the group in 1982, seventeen years after the initiation of the study, noting those who had passed away between thirty - eight and forty - nine years of age. The researchers concluded that **not** being a member of a Church was a strong predictor or premature **death**, even after controlling for age, **sex**, race, baseline health, smoking, physical activity, weight, depression and perceived health status. It also predicted earlier mortality for persons over sixty as founding similar studies for that age group. Seeman, T. E., G. A. Kaplan, L. Knudsen, R. Cohen, and J. Guralnik, "Social Network Ties and Mortality Among the Elderly in the Alameda County Study," *American Journal of Epidemiology* 126 (1987): 714-723.Schoenbach, V. J., B. H. Kaplan, L. Fredman,**

and D. G. Kleinbaum, "Social Ties and Mortality in Evans County, Georgia," *American Journal of Epidemiology* 123 (1986): 577 - 591.

Reason **No. 7** => Less **Suicide** Among Family Members Could going to Church reduce the incidence of **suicide** in families?

A long - term study at Wayne State University in Detroit, Michigan by Steven Stack showed that **suicide** is reduced among families that attend Church. **Not** going to Church was the most significant factor in predicting **suicide** in families, more so than unemployment or other socioeconomic factors. Stack, S., "The Effect of the Decline in Institutionalized Religion on **Suicide**, 1954 - 1978," *Journal for Scientific Study of Religion* 22 (1983): 239 - 252.

Reason **No. 8** => Less Alcohol Abuse Among College Students Alcohol abuse can be a problem for college students. Going to Church does seem to have an impact on their alcohol use and abuse. A study conducted by H. Wechsler and M. McFadden in New England and published in the *Journal of Studies on Alcohol* is one of many studies showing the beneficial effect of religious practices with regard to alcohol use. 7,170 students at thirty - four colleges were surveyed. Attendance at Church was found to be inversely proportionate to alcohol consumption. The study suggested that students who attend Church are less likely to drink heavily.

The effect of Church attendance on alcohol use has been demonstrated in men and women of many age groups.

Wechsler H., and M. McFadden, "Drinking Among College Students in New England: Extent, Social Correlates, and Consequences of Alcohol Use," *Journal of Studies on Alcohol* 40, (1979): 969 - 996.

Reason **No. 9** => Improved Self - Image Can going to Church improve your self - esteem? In 1996, M.C. Commerford and M. Reznikoff studied residents of four 200-bed nursing homes in New York City. Among their findings was that public religious participation had a more **positive** influence on how people felt about themselves in their later years than "intrinsic religiosity" -- that is, believing oneself to be religious but **not** participating in religious activities."

Commerford, M.C., and M. Reznikoff, "Relationship of Religion and Perceived Social Support to Self - Esteem and Depression in Nursing Home Residents," *Journal of Psychology* 130 (1996): 35 - 50.

Reason **No. 10** => Boosted Immune Systems As communicable **diseases** such as **tuberculosis** make a comeback, one might presume that going to public facility like a Church could increase the chances of catching the **disease**. According to a study by G.W. Comstock, H. Abbey and F.E. Lundin in 1970, however, the incidence of **TB** in the 1960s

was higher among those who did **not** attend Church. The study, based on a survey (**an unofficial census of newly reported cases of TB between 1960 and 1964**) of Washington county, Maryland showed that those who attended Church at least weekly had the lowest incidence of **tuberculosis**, fifty-seven cases per 100,000, compared to eighty-four cases per 100,000 for those attending Church monthly. Those attending Church less than twice per year had a rate of 138 cases per 100,000. Thus, the more frequent the attendance, the more pronounced the effect.

The study confirmed results of an earlier study that showed **positive TB** skin tests were more frequent among children whose parents attended Church less frequently. Comstock, G.W., H. Abbey, and F.E. Lundin. "The Non-official Census as a Basic Tool for Epidemiologic Observations in Washington County, Maryland," in *The Community as an Epidemiologic Laboratory: Casebook of Community Studies*.

Baltimore: John Hopkins Press. 1970. p. 73 - 97.

Reason No. 11 => Improved Personal Satisfaction and Happiness Is it going to Church that makes life better, or would membership in any supportive organization have the same positive effect? S. J. Cutler compared personal satisfaction and happiness of people in sixteen types of voluntary organizations, including Churches. The study, involving more than 830 persons, was published in the *Gerontologist* in 1976.

Of the various types of memberships examined, only those with Church affiliation were significant predictors of satisfaction and happiness. Cutler, S. J., "Member in Different Types of Voluntary Associations and Psychological Well - Being," *The Gerontologist* 16 (1976): 355 - 339.

Reason No. 12 => Reduced Stress Going to Church could be a factor in reducing your level of stress. Several large studies show that people of religious commitment deal with stress better than those without religious commitment. In fact, the greater the commitment, the better people were able to handle difficult trials and problems. For **example**, a study published in *Social Science Medicine* in 1991 suggested that among infrequent Church attendees, "new stressful life events and health problems have a **negative** impact on mental health that is buffered among frequent Church attendees.

"Williams, R.W., D.B. Larson, R.E. Bucker, R.C. Hackman, and C.M. Pale, "Religion and Psychological Distress in a Community Sample," *Social Science Medicine* 32 (1991): 1257 - 1262.

Reason No. 13 => Decreased Juvenile Delinquency Parents who get their children ready for Church each week know that at times it can be a struggle. Studies show the effort may be worth it.

The Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency published a study by R. Stack and D.P. Doyle in 1982. Using a nationwide sample of 1,799 boys below the age of eighteen, they found that the more religious the boys were, the less likely they were to be delinquent. Religious commitment was measured by the boys' own reports of the importance of religion to them and by their frequency of Church attendance. The effect was notably stronger in communities where religious commitment was more prevalent; suggesting that where there is a critical mass of Church attendance in a community, the likelihood of juvenile delinquency is reduced. Stark, R., L. Kent, and D.P. Doyle, "Religion and Delinquency: The Ecology of a 'Lost' Relationship," Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency 19 (1982): 4 - 24.

Reason No. 14 => Higher Self - Esteem Among Teens There is evidence to show that teens that have grown up attending Church tend to have a better **self - image** than those without religious commitment. The Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion published a study by C.B. Smith, A. J. Weigert, and D. L. Thomas in 1979 on this subject.

The analysis of nearly 2,000 Catholic "middle class" adolescents from five cultures in Europe and North America showed strong evidence for a "**positive** relationship between adolescent **self - esteem** and total religiosity." The study measured religious beliefs and practices, including Church attendance. Smith, C.B., A.J. Weigert, and D.L. Thomas, "Self-Esteem and Religiosity: An Analysis of Catholic Adolescents from Five Cultures," Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion 18 (1979): 51 - 60.

Reason No. 15 => Stronger Marriages - We already mentioned that going to Church can help your marriage. Does frequency of attendance matter?

Yes, apparently it does. Some studies indicate that the more frequent the Church attendance the better the marriage.

According to research by W. Shrum published in the Review of Religious Research in 1980, the frequency of Church attendance has a significant impact on **divorce** rates among couples in the United States. The study of 7,029 adults showed that among those who attend Church less than once per year 34 percent had been **divorced** or separated. Among those attending Church several times per year, 27 percent were **divorced** -- a small improvement. The most significant impact was for those attending monthly or more often, of which only 18 percent had been **divorced** or separated.

The study controlled for age, education, age at marriage, and family income. Shrum, W., "Religion and Marital Instability: Change in the 1970's?" Review of Religious Research 21(1980): 135 - 147.

Reason No. 16 => Greater Resistance to Cancer Studies indicate that going to Church has a **positive** impact on health. Some researchers have used modern research techniques to attempt to discover how this is so.

A study presented to the American Psychological Association in 1998 showed some interesting relationships between Church attendance and immune system functioning.

The researchers looked at the religious practices of 112 women with breast **cancer**. The average age of the women was fifty - three years, and those in the study group had metastatic breast **cancer** on average for two years.

The researchers found that those who were highly religious or attended Church often had stronger immune systems, including greater number of T - helper cells, lymphocytes, and other beneficial **disease** - fighting cells. They concluded that "**spirituality** is **positively** associated with immune status."

Reason **No. 17** => Ability to Cope with Disaster - After a natural disaster, medical emergency, or other personal crisis, many people report that their faith in God helped to carry them through. Is there any scientific evidence to support this? There is, according to an extensive review of research on sociological support groups published in Psychosomatic Medicine in 1996. The review showed that having a religious "support group," or a relationship with clergy, fellow congregation members, or God, could have a significant impact on reducing **negative** stress responses to environmental or personal disasters, such as a life - threatening **illness** or natural disaster. The study, conducted by T.E. Seeman and B.S. McEwen, showed that having a strong religious support structure had a positive influence on neuroendocrine regulation in persons experiencing high stress situations. Seeman, T.E., and B.S. McEwen, "Impact of Social Environment Characteristics on Neuroendocrine Regulation," Psychosomatic Medicine 58 (1996): 459 - 471.

Reason **No. 18** => Decreased Underage Drinking - Alcohol consumption, especially heavy drinking among teenagers, has been associated with many other high - risk behaviors and contributes significantly to the high **death** rate among teens each year. How do you prevent teens from drinking?

Parents who take their children to Church may have hit on a solution. A study by R.P. Schlegel and M. D. Sanborn of 842 male and female teenagers shows an interesting relationship between religious affiliation and alcohol consumption.

The study published in the Journal of Studies on Alcohol showed that Protestant and Catholic teens that have a strong religious affiliation are less likely to be heavy drinkers.

The study found that boys who were religious but **no** longer attend Church had higher rates of heavy drinking. Schlegel, R.P., and M.D. Sanborn, "Religious Affiliation and Adolescent Drinking," Journal of Studies on Alcohol 40 (1979): 693-703.

Reason **No. 19** => More Happiness and Excitement in Old Age - Want to have excitement in your old age?

A 1980 study by L.Y. Steinitz, published in the *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, showed that Church attendance is related to happiness, self-rated health, satisfaction with circumstances (**city, family, health**), and even excitement in the life among older persons. Steinitz surveyed 1,493 people over the age of sixty-five and determined Church attendance was the most important religious factor in predicting happiness.

Reason No. 20 => Healthier Communities - Do communities that have more active Churchgoers have healthier citizens than less religious communities?

There is evidence that they do. For **example**, a study by J.W. Dwyer, L. L. Clarke and M. K. Miller in 1990 measured the effect of community religious affiliation in 3,063 U.S. counties on **cancer** mortality rates. Communities with high populations of "conservative Protestants among others had the lowest mortality rates." Even those who are less religious, but live in active religious communities, may experience health benefits.

Some researchers believe this may result from "diminished exposure to or increased social approval of behaviors related to **cancer** mortality."

It is interesting to **note** that the results were valid even after controlling for fifteen of the major known causes of **cancer**. Dwyer, J. W., L. L. Clarke, and M. K. Miller, "The Effect of Religious Concentration and Affiliation on County **Cancer** Mortality Rates," *Journal of Health and Social Behavior* 31 (1990): 185-202.

Reason No. 21 => Long - Term Benefits - Frequent attendance at Church seems to have **positive, long - term effects on many people.** A longitudinal study lasting more than twenty-eight years published in the *American Journal of Public Health* in 1997 followed 5,286 residents of a U.S. county. The researchers found that frequent Church attendees were less likely to smoke. Among those who did smoke, they more likely quit smoking. Frequent Church attendees also tended to drink less, have more social contacts, stay married, and live longer than infrequent attendees. Frequent Churchgoers were also more likely to exercise and lose weight. Strawbridge, W.J., R.D. Cohen, S.J. Shema, and G.A. Kaplan, "Frequent Attendance at Religious Services and Mortality Over 28 Years," *American Journal of Public Health* 87 (1997): 957-961.

Reason No. 22 => Rising Out of **Poverty - Among the most persistent of problems is poverty in the inner cities of America.**

Consider the data on a problem that politicians, human rights activists and social workers have wrestled with for decades. The National Longitudinal Survey of Youth (NLSY) tracked the development of 12,686 American youths beginning in 1979. Children whose families attended Church weekly in both 1979 and 1982 grew up to have an average family income of \$37,000 in 1993.

For those whose families never attended Church in 1979 or 1982, however, their adult average family income in 1993 was \$24,361 (a difference of \$12,639). The impact of going to Church was significant for those who grew up in intact families as well as for those who grew up in broken families.

Reason **No. 23** => Improved **Sex** Life - Going to Church obviously has a **positive** impact on many aspects of life, from boosting your immune spouse to improving your social life. But can it really improve your **sex** life? **Aren't** religious women "prudish," as some stereotypes suggest? A study entitled "**Sex** in America", published in 1995, showed very high **sexual** satisfaction among "conservative" religious women.

The study was carried out at the University of Chicago and the State University of New York at Stonybrook. The study reconfirmed another study in 1997 by C. Travis and S. Sadd, entitled The Redbook Report on Female **Sexuality**, which concluded that very religious women achieve greater satisfaction in **sexual** intercourse with their husbands than do moderately religious or non-religious women. Michael, R. Y., J. H. Gagnon, E. O. Laumann, and G. Kolata. Chapter 6 in **Sex** in America: A Definitive Survey. Boston: Little Brown. 1995. Travis, C., and S. Sadd. The Redbook Report on Female **Sexuality**. New York: Delacorte Press. 1977.

Reason **No. 24** => Influence on Future Generations - In spite of an apparent decrease in Church attendance, particularly among young people, there is evidence to show a stability of Church attendance in families across generations. A study by Arland Thornton and Donald Camburn of the Institute for Social Research at the University of Michigan concluded:

"These data indicate strong inter-generational transmission of religious involvement. Attendance at religious services is also very stable within generations across time." This could indicate that our individual dedication to going to Church regularly may have an impact on our posterity. The upshot of this, for those of us who would want the benefits of going to Church for our children and grandchildren, is that we must lead by **example** if we expect future generations to do the same.

Reason **No. 25** => Better Parenting Practices There is evidence to show that parents who attend Church may have better parenting practices than those who do **not**. For **example**, J. M. Strayhorn, C. S. Weidman, and D. Larson conducted a study in 1990 of 201 primarily low-income parents of children in the Head Start program. Parents were measured on a variety of behaviors related to interacting with their children.

The results showed that parents who rated high on public and private "religiosity" (**Church attendance and related activities**) exhibited more positive parenting skills than non-religious parents.

Strayhorn, J. M., C. S. Weidmen, and D. Larson, "A Measure of Religiousness and Its Relation to Parent and Child Mental Health Variables," *Journal of Community Psychology* 18 (1990): 34 - 35.

Reason **No. 26** => Food, Folks and Fun - There appear to be many studies that would suggest that going to Church every week, over the long haul, can contribute greatly to your social life, as well as to your health. For **example**, a 29 - year-long longitudinal study, published in the *Annals of Behavioral Medicine* in 2001, followed subjects from 1965 to 1994, measuring their health behaviors, social relationships, marital stability and mental health. The results showed that Church attendance **not** only increases survival, but also improves mental health and social relationships. Weekly attendees showed a stronger correlation to these and other healthy behaviors than those who attended sporadically or not at all. Strawbridge, W. J., S. J. Shema, R. D. Cohen, G. A. Kaplan, "Religious Attendance Increases Survival by Improving and Maintaining Good Health Behaviors, Mental Health, and Social Relationships," *Annals of Behavioral Medicine* 23 (1), (2001): 68 - 74.

Reason **No. 27** => Safer Communities - It seems that more and more evening news broadcasts focus on a terrible murder or other crime committed in our neighborhoods and communities. Do we need to start fearing our own neighbors now?

Not if we all go to Church. Statistically speaking, people who go to Church do **not** commit murder as often as those who **don't** attend Church. Thus, if the nice guy next door is a Churchgoing person, the chances are reduced that one day you will be seeing him on the six o'clock news being led away in handcuffs. A study by D. Lester published in *Psychological Reports* in 1988 is a good case in point. The study showed that the percentage of people attending Church in a community was inversely related to homicide. This study concluded, as have others, that actually attending Church is a more important factor in reducing homicide rates than mere religious affiliation or belief.

Reason **No. 28** => Reduced Welfare Dependency - It is **not** surprising to some that welfare dependency is lower among Churchgoers. Determining why this is so is a more complex issue.

R. Jarrell has conducted studies on inner city "at-risk" students (**primarily black and Hispanic**) who show academic promise. His studies may have uncovered an important clue. He noted a relationship between Church attendance and optimistic attitudes. Those who attend Church frequently were more likely to see a brighter future and have more serious goals than non - Church attendees.

They had better relationships with their parents, felt more in control of their lives, and viewed the world as less hostile than those who did **not** attend Church. This could help explain why Church going young people tend to be more successful in their careers and less dependent on welfare. Jarrell, R., Department of Education, Arizona State University West, personal communication, October 1995.

Reason **No. 29** => Fewer Drug Dealers – Is there a drug dealer in your neighborhood?

Perhaps that person's parents **neglected** to take him to Church. It is more than a speculation, however. A number of studies show that crime, including drug dealing, is associated with infrequent Church attendance. For **example**, A. Singh found in 1979 that young religious adults in Canada were less likely to sell narcotics, gamble or destroy property.

A number of studies confirm that children whose parents take them to Church tend to avoid criminal behavior and are more likely to be involved in positive activities in the community. Singh, A., "Note: Religious Involvement and Anti-Social Behavior," *Perceptual and Motor Skills* 48 (1979):1157 - 1158.

Reason **No. 30** => Critical Direction for Teens - A lot of delinquent and criminal behavior can be correlated to two interesting factors in the life of the young delinquent: **not** going to Church at all or going to Church until about the age of ten and then quitting. The data holds **true** for alcoholics and drug addicts as well. For **example**, one study by N. Parson and J. Mikawa published in the *Journal of Psychology* in 1990 showed that after controlling for family, economic and religious backgrounds, the majority of African-American men in **prison** either **never** attended Church or **stopped** going by age ten. Teenage years are a critical time in the life of a person, and parents who continue to shepherd their children to Church each week are more likely to reap the rewards of socially adjusted children.

Reason **No. 31** => Faster **Healing** - In previous e-mailings we have already discussed the impact of going to Church on the body's immune system. Going to Church does appear to defend us from **diseases** and help us recover more quickly. What about other types of **healing**, such as the **healing** of broken bones? It seems there is evidence for this too.

A study of elderly women in 1990, published in the *American Journal of Psychiatry*, showed that those of religious commitment (**including Church attendance**) recovered more quickly from broken hips. The religious women spent less time in the hospital, could walk farther at the time of their release, and suffered less **depression** than those who professed **no** religious commitment. Pressman, P. J., S. Lyons, D. B. Larson, and J. J. Strain, "Religious Belief Depression, and Ambulation Status in Elderly Women with Broken Hips," *American Journal of Psychiatry* 147 (6), (1990): 758 - 760.

Reason **No. 32** => Less **Premarital Sex** Among Youth - Going to Church seems to have many **positive** effects on teen behavior.

Not least among those effects is the propensity for teens to avoid **premarital sexual** behavior. **Premarital sex** can have numerous repercussions for teens, including health risks and, of course, her pregnancy.

Religious activity can help prevent teens from engaging in **premarital sexual** behavior, as demonstrated by J. T. Woodroof in a study of 477 freshmen students at religious colleges, published in the *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 1985.

Woodroof found that teens who attend Church frequently are half as likely to engage in **premarital sex** as those who attend less than weekly. Again, the more frequent the Church attendance, the less likely the behavior. Woodroof, J. T., "Premarital **Sexual** Behavior and Religious Adolescents," *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 24 (1985): 343 - 366.

Reason **No. 33** => Fathers Spend More Time with Children - Another interesting finding about Church going families is that fathers are encouraged, through their Church associations, to spend more time with their children. More interesting still is that they actually do. An article published by the Hartford Institute for Religion Research, based on studies by J. Bartowski, B. Wilcox and C. Ellison, noted that conservative Christians are more like to put family concerns ahead of career considerations, **not** only in theory but indeed. The researchers found that these fathers were more involved with their children, both at home and within organized Church and **non**-Church activities, such as Scouts, youth groups, and father - child events.

Reason **No. 34** => More Effective Child Discipline - Everyone knows that conservative religious families are more stern and strict about family rules, right?

Well, partly right. A study by J. Bartowski, B. Wilcox and C. Ellison found that in conservative religious families, parents are more likely to use spanking to discipline children. They also found, however, that these parents are less likely to (**just**) **yell** at their kids or mete out arbitrary discipline. These parents tend to rely on parenting manuals consistent with their religious beliefs and are encouraged by religious leaders and Church support groups to set clear expectations for their children's behavior and use corporal punishment only in well - defined circumstances of **outright rebellion**. They also tend to show more leniency in mitigating circumstances. Children disciplined in this manner do **not** appear to exhibit the **negative** characteristics of children from abusive or dysfunctional families, as has been shown by C. G. Ellison in his 1996 study of 13,017 adults' in 1996. Bartowski, J. P., W. B. Wilcox., and C. G. Ellison, "Parenting and Evangelical Families," Hartford Institute for Religion Research (2001). Ellison, C. G., "Conservative Protestantism and the Parental Use of Corporal Punishment," *Social Forces* 75 (1996): 1003 - 1028.

Reason **No. 35** => Religion and Body Health - It would be tempting, having read so much about religious people being healthy and living longer than the population at large, to begin to see Churchgoers as being buff and slim. Unfortunately, that's **not** quite right. Some research suggests that Church goers tend to be heavier than the average for the population. For **example**, a large survey of 3,497 adults, conducted by K. F. Ferraro in 1998 and published in the Review of Religious Research, showed a connection between religious behavior and a tendency to be overweight. Yet we know that obesity is a strong predictor of **poor** health and early **death**.

How can these well - documented yet opposing conclusions be reconciled?

As was the case with smokers who attend Church (**shown to be healthier than non-smokers who do not attend Church**), it appears that the overall benefits of going to Church mitigate, to some degree, the **negative** effects of being overweight. Lest we think that going to Church makes us quasi - invincible, it is worth pointing out that the best results for health and happiness come when religious practice is combined with sensible health practices, as shown in a study conducted by J. E. Enstrom.

Reason **No. 36** => Healthier Behaviors for Teens - Each year many thousands of teenagers are **killed** in car accidents. Seat belt use, or the lack of it, is often a factor. In a 1991 survey conducted by W. A. Oleckno and M. J. Blacconiere, published in Psychological Reports, these researchers set out to measure wellness and health-related behaviors in young people. **Not** only did they find that religious behavior predicted fewer **illnesses** and less smoking, drinking and drug abuse, but also that religious young people were more likely to use a seat belt, dramatically increasing their chances for survival in a serious automobile accident. The finding might be considered insignificant, compared to the more dramatic findings of so many other studies, unless the child who survives the crash is your own. Oleckno, W. A., and M. J. Blacconiere, "Relationship of Religiosity to Wellness and Other Health-Related Behaviors and Outcomes," Psychological Reports 68 (1991): 819 - 826.

Reason **No. 37** => Caring for the Nation's Poor - As anyone familiar with government deficit spending knows, social programs are expensive and can be a nightmare to administer. The cost would be even higher, were it **not** for significant involvement by Churches in providing social assistance to the needy. A study by D. Roozen and C. Dudley known as the "Faith Communities Today" (**FACT**) showed that America's Churchgoing families are bearing a significant amount of the social burden, with more than eighty percent of the U.S. congregations providing some form of assistance. The range of services includes financial assistance, shelters, soup kitchens, food pantries and clothing for the poor. Churches also provide elderly housing, child day care, tutoring and substance abuse counseling, along with a whole range of support groups and counseling for emotional illness and other social problems. Inner city areas and minority groups are greatly served by religious organizations across a wide variety of denominations. Roozen, D., C. Dudley, "Faith Communities Today (**FACT**)" Hartford Institute for Religion Research (2001).

Reason No. 38 => More Affectionate Parents - How does religious activity impact the relationship between parents and children? Some research indicates the stereotype of stern, conservative Christian parents is usually debunked by the reality of more affectionate and loving parents.

A review of research by J. Bartowski, B. Wilcox and C. Ellison, published by the Hartford Institute for Religion Research, shows that conservative Christian parents tend to hug more often and give more **positive** reinforcement than other parents. They found that this, and other **positive** parenting, seemed to cancel out the **negative** effects on children associated with corporal punishment administered by these parents.

Reason No. 39 => More Good Samaritans - How would you like to live in a community where neighbors were helpful, would bring a meal to a **sick person, and would **stop** to help a stranded motorist?**

If that's the neighborhood you would like to live in, perhaps you should live in a neighborhood of Church going people.

A study on a survey by L. D. Nelson and R. R. Dynes, published in the Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion, showed that religious devotion predicted seventy - five percent of ordinary, day - to - day helping behavior, and that Church attendance consistently indicated an increased likelihood to provide emergency assistance. It may be that the parable of the Good Samaritan has had an impact on those who have been present for the sermon. Nelson, L. D., and R. R. Dynes, "The Impact of Devotionalism and Attendance on Ordinary and Emergency Helping Behavior," Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion 15 (1976): 47 - 59.

Reason No. 40 => Less Alcohol Abuse Among Men - One of the great problems of modern society is the misuse of alcohol. Arguably the most abused drug, alcohol's toll on human health and on human life ranks high. Its toll on family happiness, however, is off the charts. Alcohol abuse is related to spouse and child abuse and child neglect and can be a significant predictor of **broken marriages. Religious attendance, or rather the lack of it, is a strong predictor of alcohol abuse among men, according to a number of studies, including that of a large random sample of 2,746 men by D. Calahan, I. H. Cisin, and H. M. Crossley. The study was published in American Drinking Practices. In this and in follow - up studies, Calahan and his associates determined that Churchgoing men were far less likely to abuse alcohol. Calahan, D., I. H. Cisin, and H. M. Crossley. American Drinking Practices. New York: United Printing Services. 1969. Cahalan, D., and R. Room, "Problem Drinking Among American Men Age 21-59," American Journal of Public Health 62 (1972): 1473 - 1482.**

Reason No. 41 => Fewer Children Impacted by **Divorce - In a previous reason we e-mailed we discussed that going to Church has a **positive** effect on marriage and significantly reduces **divorce** rates.**

A few decades ago it was common for married couples to avoid **divorce** "for the sake of the children." Current **divorce** rates in the United States seem to indicate this is **not** as common a practice. Is there really any impact of **divorce** on children in the long run? One major study showed that **divorce** has serious long-term adverse effects on children. The study was done in Great Britain in 1995 by P. L. Chase-Lansdale, A. J. Cherlin and K. E. Kiernan. They followed 17,414 babies born in 1958 until they were twenty - three years old. The results showed that children whose parents were **divorced** when the children were between the ages of seven and sixteen showed a 36 percent greater likelihood of **psychological** problems by the time they reached the age of twenty - three than the control group. Children whose parents **divorced** before they reached the age of seven showed a whopping 58 percent greater likelihood of such problems.

Reason **No. 42** => Easier School Adjustment and Less Peer Pressure - What impact does family Church attendance have on how young people adjust at school?

A study by E. R. Oetting and F. Beauvais published in the Journal of Counseling Psychology in 1987 showed that among eleventh and twelfth graders, identifying with religious beliefs was **positively** related to strong family relationships and the ability to adjust well in school. The study also showed that these qualities are negatively associated with peer pressure related to drug abuse. Oetting, E. R., and F. Beauvais, "Peer Cluster Theory, Socialization Characteristics, and Adolescent Drug Use: A Path Analysis," Journal of Counseling Psychology 34 (1987): 205 - 213.

Reason **No. 43** => Better Maternal Influence - We have **noted** that fathers who attend Church often have a significant impact on their children, and that absent fathers (**even emotionally absent fathers**) can be a predictor of juvenile delinquency in children. What about mothers? A study by V. A. Foshee and B. R. Hollinger published in the Journal of Early Adolescence in 1996, made some interesting observations. They looked at the effects of maternal influence on 1,553 teenagers (**ages twelve to fourteen**). They found that children of religious mothers were less likely to use alcohol. Perhaps more interesting were the results of comparing the children of mothers who did **not** attend Church, but who felt religion was important, to the children of mothers who did attend Church.

The study revealed that, for the most part, only mothers who actually made the weekly trip to Church had a significant effect on their children's alcohol use.

Reason **No. 44** => Blessings for those Who Pray - Each week millions of people go to Church, in part to be reminded to pray. We have noted that many studies show that prayer helps people heal, even when they **don't** know they are being prayed for. S. Alar also found this to be true in a study that was published in Alternative Therapies in Health and Medicine in 1997. He looked at the power of intercessory prayer on **anxiety**, **depression** and **self - esteem** in 406 adults who he divided into a subject (**prayed-for**) group and a control (**not prayed-for**) group. Ninety other adults were assigned to pray for the subjects, with very positive results for the prayed-for group.

Alar found something else, though, that had **not** been detected in similar studies. The ninety adults who prayed for the subject group also improved in health! Alar, S., "An Experimental Study of the Effects of Distant, Intercessory Prayer on Self-Esteem, Anxiety, and Depression," *Alternative Therapies in Health and Medicine* 3 (6), (1997): 38-53.

Reason **No. 45** => Survival of Cardiac Surgery - Many factors are involved in surviving heart surgery, including seriousness of condition, the physical strength, age of the patient, AND going to Church. A 1995 study of 232 people over the age of 55 by T. E. Oman, D. H. Freeman and E. D. Manheimer showed that those who took **no** comfort or strength in their religion were three times as likely to **die** within six months of surgery as those who did find comfort and strength in their religion. More striking were the results of those who **not** only found comfort and strength in their religion but were also very active in participation. They were dramatically less likely to **die** in the six months following surgery, suffering a mortality rate of two and a half percent, compared to a 21 percent mortality rate for their non - religious counterparts.

Oxman, T. E., D. H. Freeman, and E. D. Manheimer, "Lack of Social Participation or Religious Strength and Comfort as Risk Factors for **Death** After Cardiac Surgery in the Elderly," *Psychosomatic Medicine* 57(1995): 5 - 15.

Reason **No. 46** => Reduced Delinquency - The impact of going to Church for teenage males has been demonstrated to be very **positive**. We have already reviewed striking evidence that boys who quit going to Church by age ten are far more likely to become involved in delinquent behavior or be incarcerated for criminal activity. There may be more to the story, however. C. W. Peek, E. W. Curry and H. P. Chalfant studied 817 high school students. The results were published in the *Social Science Quarterly* in 1985.

They found that as religious activity decreases, serious delinquent behavior, aggression, theft and vandalism all increased. Apparently, even for those boys who do **not** entirely quit going to Church, the frequency of their Church activity has a direct impact on their behavior. What is more, the **positive** effect of going to Church may be enhanced significantly if both parents of the child belong to the same Church and both attend regularly, as attested to in a very large study of 21,720 junior and senior high school students by A. L. Rhodes and A. J. Reiss.

Reason **No. 47** => A Sense of Purpose - Is there a purpose to our existence?

Some people have observed how curious it is that millions of us go about our daily lives, year after year, without knowing why.

A number of studies have been conducted to determine whether people have a sense of purpose. G. Richards did a survey of 345 members of a non- denominational prayer group published in the *Journal of Psychology and Theology* in 1991. He found, as other researchers have, that people who pray find a greater sense of purpose in life.

Other studies have confirmed this finding, and one large study conducted by C. G. Ellison, D. A. Gay and T. A. Glass linked this sense of purpose with greater life satisfaction. Richards, D.G., "The Phenomenology and Psychological Correlates of Verbal Prayer," *Journal of Psychology and Theology* 19 (1991): 354-363. Ellison, C. G., D. A. Gay, and T. A. Glass, "Does Religious Commitment Contribute to Individual Life Satisfaction?" *Social Forces* 68 (1989): 100 - 123.

Reason **No. 48** => Fewer School **Shootings** - As a stunned nation contemplated the seemingly senseless act of **murder** at Columbine and similar event sat other schools across the country, psychologist J. Garbarino was carefully examining the behavior of these and other troubled young people. In his book, "Lost Boys", he observed a distinct lack of moral development as one of the common denominators for child criminal behavior. Delinquent children do **not** adapt well in school, have low self-esteem (**making them ultra-sensitive to criticism**), are physically or emotionally distanced from their parents, and feel unsafe in their communities. All of these factors, along with numerous other variables in juvenile criminal behavior, have been shown to be influenced by Church attendance and religious observance. Garbarino, J. "Lost Boys: Why Our Sons Turn Violent and How We Can Save Them." New York: New York Free Press. 1999.

Reason **No. 49** => Friendlier People - Are religious people friendly?

Certain stereo types of religious people suggest they are of a stern and judgmental nature. Some research, however, shows that religious people may be fun to hang out with.

For **example**, the 1992 National Survey of Black Americans, conducted by C. G. Ellison and published in the journal *Social Forces*, indicates that among a national sample of 2,107 black adults, those who held strong personal beliefs about religion measured higher on attributes of personal friendliness and empathy. There searchers controlled for physical characteristics, age, gender, education, income and **self - esteem**. They also found that those who relied on religion for moral guidance were generally more open and friendly and less suspicious during interviews than those for whom religion was **not** important.

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Matthew 13:12 - 13 => "For to him who has - will more be given," HE told them, "and he will have great plenty; but from him who has **not**, even the little he has will be taken away. That is why I use these illustrations, so people will hear and see but **not** understand.

Matthew 25:29 => For the man (**or woman**) who uses well what he (**she**) is given - shall be given more, and he (**or she**) shall have abundance. But from the man (**or woman**) who is unfaithful, even what little responsibility he (**or she**) has shall be taken from him.

Note: For those who use wisely and invest well, have more. And will be given even more to MY Children.

[Mark 12:43 - 44](#) => HE called HIS disciples to HIM and remarked, “That poor widow has given more than all those rich men put together! For they gave a little of their extra fat, while she gave up her last penny.”

[Luke 21:4](#) => For they have given a little of what they **didn't** need, but she, poor as she is, has given everything she has.”

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/>

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Reason **No. 50** => Fewer **Criminals** - We have referenced a number of studies showing how young people who do **not** attend Church are more prone to delinquent and **criminal** behavior. What about Church attendance when they are adults?

A study of 550 men in a metropolitan area in the Midwestern United States by T. D. Evans, E. T. Cullen, R. G. Dunaway and V.S. Burton, published in the journal *Criminology*, is typical. The men were white, having an average age of 41 and an average income of \$30,000 per year. They were measured on a variety of religious behaviors and whether they had committed one or more of 43 criminal activities in the past year.

They found religious activity was significantly and inversely related to criminal activity. Evans, T. D., F. T. Cullen, R. G. Dunaway, and V. S. Burton, "Religion and Crime Re-examined: The Impact of Religion, Secular Controls, and Social Ecology on Adult Criminality," *Criminology* 33 (1995): 195-217. Fernquist, R. M., "A Research Note on the Association Between Religion and Delinquency," *Deviant Behavior* 16 (1995): 169 - 175.

Reason **No. 51** => Greater Longevity - As has been demonstrated by numerous studies, going to Church impacts our life in many positive ways. For **example**, we socialize more, have more friends, have more concern for others, and do more volunteer work -- all of which have been shown to contribute to health and happiness. **Couldn't** we just skip going to Church and engage in these other health - promoting behaviors to achieve the same results?

R. G. Rogers conducted a study of a 1984 national health survey, with a follow - up in 1991. Rogers' study is interesting because he controlled for many of the variables associated with promotion of good health, including family issues, health variables, demographics, social support and volunteerism. He even controlled for social activities such as attending movies, concerts and the theater.

His calculations still showed the stronger impact of attending Church on health, over and above mere socializing. These findings support earlier findings by J. N. Edwards and D. L. Klemmack, who showed that in a random sample of 507 adults over the age of 45, participation in voluntary organizations other than Churches was **not** related to life satisfaction.

Reason **No. 52** => The Big Picture: How Religion Fares in Scientific Studies - Individual studies and experiments indicate that going to Church and other religious activities clearly have a **positive** impact on individuals, families and communities. But how does religion fare in the big picture? Does every study on religion turn up **positive** results?

The answer is **no**. The overall picture, however, is very **positive**. For **example**, one study by E. C. Craigie, D. B. Larson and I. Y. Liu published in the Journal of Family Practice in 1990 looked at 52 clinical studies on religion and found that 25 were associated with **positive** implications, 30 were neutral, and 9 had **negative** implications.

These clinical studies examined a broad range of 64 "religious" variables ranging from traditional prayer and Church attendance to simple meditation. Broader interpretations of what constitutes religious activities tended to dilute the results. When the focus of the studies analyzed was narrowed specifically to religious worship, relationship with God, and related social support, the researchers noted that 24 of 27 cases were associated with **positive** outcomes. Once again, going to Church shows itself to be a significant factor.

Conclusion => Is going to Church is good for you?

Is religion a fading phenomenon in America?

Is it a relic of the past with **no** future?

A TV-land view of America might lead us to conclude that religion has **died** out. It is **true** that Church membership has dropped from a high of 75 percent in 1947 to a low of 65 percent in 1988 and 1990? If this were an election, however, 65 percent would be considered a fairly substantial majority. It must also **not** be overlooked that there are still half a million Churches, temples, and mosques in the United States. Belief in God, contrary to what many think, has remained quite stable. The authors of one study, entitled "Religion: The Forgotten Factor in Cutting Youth Crime and Saving At-Risk Urban Youth," wrote: "Belief in God remains the norm in America, with levels of belief ranging between 94 percent and 99 percent over the past 5 decades." Individually, the studies published in this book are interesting, but certainly they do **not** constitute proof of anything. Collectively, however these and dozens of other similar studies constitute a significant body of evidence that going to Church is good – is good for you, good for your health, good for your marriage, good for your children, good for your community, and good for your country. And the more you attend the better the results seem to be. What's more, the good effects may last for generations.

Many from time to time have wondered, "What can I do, as one person, to make this world a better place?" Perhaps we have found one answer:

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Go to Church!

Aw, Mom, Do I Have To Go To Church? - by Pastor Art Kohl

Introduction: Less children today are attending Sunday School and Church regularly in America than ever in our history as a nation, in respect to population, of course.

Many parents **don't** believe that regular Church attendance is necessary for their children anymore. This is tragic! Moms and Dads, do we make our children brush their teeth? Do we make them wash? Do we make them eat? Sleep? Do we make them go to school, etc.? WELL, YES, OF COURSE! Why? Because, it's important!

Let me ask you this, "Is Church important for a child?" Yes or **No**?

Before you say **no**, may I remind you that 95% of confined **criminals** in our jails have received **no** REGULAR religious training during their childhood?

Now you may answer the **question**.

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Why Kids **Don't** Want To Go To Church

Having a Church which puts much emphasis on children ministries, as a Pastor, I've observed 3 major reasons why children **don't** want to attend Church. With the reasons, I'll try to present some solutions.

1. Entertainment - The Church **cannot** compete with the entertainment world today. Kids are being brought up today by TV, movies, VCRs, computers, sports, etc. Hollywood has millions of dollars to produce fast - paced entertainment. As a result, being entertained has become a life-style. Our children are lacking the character and discipline today to sit still, listen and learn, whether it be in the schoolroom or Church. If they are **not** entertained, they are bored.

The tragic result is this: If a child has the option to **quit** something he is bored with, he will always quit. Why? He does **not** have the discipline to stick it out. His character has been trained to only do things that are entertaining. What will happen to that child when he becomes bored with high school? Or his job? Or their marriage, etc.? He'll **quit**!

Parents should teach their children that life **isn't** all entertainment. TV has brought about the slow **death** of the mind. It has **dulled** our senses and **robbed** us of the ability to think. It's easier to allow someone else to do our thinking for us. Restrain it! Also, parents should make their children go to Church. Ah, you say, "I'm **not** going to force my children to go to Church like I was." Did you really turn out so **bad**?

Are your morals, standards and convictions higher than your children?

Are your parent's higher than yours?

Are our grandparent's morals higher than ours?

Do you **remember** how moral your great - grandparents were?

Where were these morals taught?

Where did this country receive this heritage?

FROM THE CHURCH! AND! FROM THE BIBLE!

If you **don't** make your children go to Church, what will their children be like?

MORALS ARE PRESERVED BY PEOPLE PROPERLY TAUGHT!

2. **Peer Pressure** - "I'll let my children decide for themselves what they believe," declare many parents. Friends, there is **no** such thing! **ALL** of us are the product of the influences of people around us.

I believe Abe Lincoln once said, "You'll be the same person you are a year from now except for the people you meet and the books you read." Of course, today is different because we have more than books influencing us through the eye - gate.

It **doesn't** take much peer pressure before children bow to it. Nobody wants to be different. Even adults are controlled by peer pressure to some extent.

We call it "keeping up with the Joneses" or "being sociable" or "the good old American way." **No** one wants to be an oddball.

Children are controlled by children. Look at the way they want to dress or the way they eat, or the music they listen to, or the shows they watch. Parents, did you teach them to like these things? **No**. Who did? **THEIR PEERS**.

Because most children do **not** attend Church, the pressure is put on children to believe that it is "normal" as practice by their peers. **No** one, **not** even a child, wants to be abnormal.

Children need to be taught that peer pressure is **not** a good basis to make decisions on. If this is the foundation of their decision making, they will follow the crowd into **premarital** or **illicit sex, drugs, drunkenness, etc**. **Don't** allow what other children do to be the guide for what you allow your children to do! Especially concerning Church attendance.

3. Hypocrisy - Nothing has harmed the message or the power of the Church as hypocrisy has. I'm talking about people who go to Church for 1 hour a week and act "religious" and then live like the **devil** the rest of the week. **CHILDREN CAN SEE RIGHT THROUGH HYPOCRITES**, so can everyone else.

There is nothing that has turned children away from the Church more than hypocrisy! Friends, it is the power of our **example** that gives power to what we are trying to teach. "Do as I say, **not** as I do" **NEVER WORKS!** Kids **hate** that! Many parents I've heard say, "Well, my children **don't** want to go to Church anymore." And I'll say, "I bet if you started coming, they would keep coming."

Usually the only teenagers we can keep coming to our Church are the ones whose parents come all the time themselves and are honestly trying to live by God's Word. Parents, let's start being **GOOD examples** again for our children's sake!

II. Biblical Responsibilities of Parents

"Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will **not** depart from it." **Proverbs 22:6** " And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and thou liest down, and when thou wisest up." **Deuteronomy 6:6 – 7**

"**Not** forsaking the assembling of our selves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching." **Hebrews 10:25**. Enough said.

III. So What Is The Church Anyways?

I Timothy 3:16 says that the Church is the "pillar and ground of the **truth**." The **truth** is the Word of God and what it says.

Get yourself **AND YOUR CHILDREN** into a Bible - believing, preaching **AND PRACTICING CHURCH**, where truth is taught without apology or compromise.

Moms and Dads, you have a knowledge of God. Your children have less. Will the next generation have any?

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Why go to **Church?** Author Unknown

If you're **spiritually** alive, you're going to love this! If you're **spiritually dead**, you **won't** want to read it.

If you're **spiritually** curious, there is still hope!

A Church goer wrote a letter to the editor of a newspaper and complained that it made **no** sense to go to Church every Sunday. "I've gone for 30 - years now," he wrote, "and in that time I have heard something like 3,000 - sermons. But for the life of me, I **can't** remember a single one of them. So, I think I'm wasting my time and the pastors are wasting theirs by giving sermons at all."

This started a real controversy in the "Letters to the Editor" column, much to the delight of the editor. It went on for weeks until someone wrote this clincher: "I've been married for 30 years now. In that time my wife has cooked some 32,000 meals. But, for the life of me, I **cannot** recall the entire menu for a single one of those meals. But I do know this... They all nourished me and gave me the strength I needed to do my work.

If my wife had **not** given me these meals, I would be physically **dead** today. Likewise, if I had **not** gone to Church for nourishment, I would be **spiritually dead** today!"

When you are **DOWN** to nothing, God is **UP** to something!

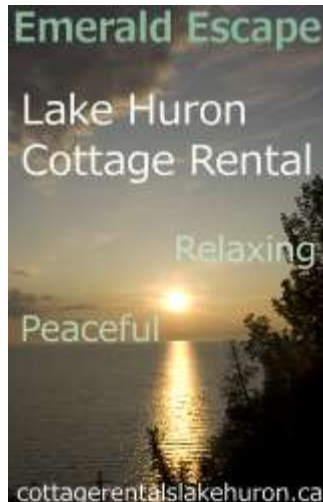
Faith sees the invisible, believes the incredible and receives the impossible!

Thank God for your physical AND our **spiritual** nourishment!

When **satan** is knocking at your door, simply say, "Jesus, could you get that for me?" --

I think everyone should read this! **Don't** you? If so, please share it with others.

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But humans are always a works in progress.

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If you like these ideas and tips – please tell a few others.

Join up with a volunteer non - profit program.

Volunteering is a great way to meet new people, get some exercise, and involve yourself in a **positive** project that can lift your **spirit**. It also comes without a cost (**or a very little cost**) to you and can provide a lot of entertainment and a fulfilling day when you're in the right mindset.

I've come to spend more and more of my time volunteering, serving on various committees and people helping groups in the community. I am on a few local area towns and Church committees. It is hands - down the best thing I have ever done.

Be a volunteer with your local **Lions Club** or other Non - Profit Org. and you will feel much better about yourself. Be only a volunteer – for a time - if later you wish, you may later to join this local **Lions Club** it is later and it is up to you. You'll be meeting other people who share your interests, which gives you an easy opener when striking up a conversation. Meet many new people and also maybe meet the next Him or the next Her for YOUR life. This Web Site is sponsored by a **Lions Club**.

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Note: Yes. Both single people as well as people dating and many of those married people have review (**Well Pre – viewed**) this “Web Site” and its **PDF** parts so far.

As a summary of the PDF parts and up-coming part still in drafts; most people are telling us that this information is also needed and wanted for them, yes, even those married people too and many people found this as new information as they **didn't** even know about a lot of this stuff.

Subscription: Then one may have a Subscription as over age 18 Adult (**including the open part**) or the open or short PDF on the Web Site part or for only a small fee of \$1 for each month. If you like these ideas and tips – down load or copy and please tell a few others.

Marriage Second Time Plus . **Org = > A new** Web Site:

A new Web Site: <http://marriagesecondtimeplus.org/>

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If YOU like or YOU got some help from this MSTP PDF or YOU know of someone this part will help from this part above. Down Load or Copy it and send it to someone.

If YOU have any other information on this subject above send the **MSTP PART** Doc to:

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KKKK. More is planned to be added in here.

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If you have any comments please E-Mail us: info@marriagesecondtimeplus.org/

Also Visit: Tri-CountyRegion.US

Visit a new Web Site: <http://marriagesecondtimeplus.org/>

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[Matthew 13:12 - 13](#) => “For to him who has will more be given,” HE told them, “and he will have great plenty; but from him who has **not**, even the little he has will be taken away. That is why I use these illustrations, so people will hear and see but **not** understand.

[Matthew 25:29](#) => For the man (or woman) who uses well what he (or she) is given - shall be given more, and he (or she) shall have abundance. But from the man (or woman) who is unfaithful, even what little responsibility he (or she) has shall be taken from him.

Note: For those who use wisely and invest well, have more. And will be given even more to MY Children.

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Here is the link to the books (stories PDF) you can use.

The store files with the books (PDF) and checkout.

<https://tri-countyregionbooks.com/>

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The End of MSTP # 39 - For Right now!