

**MSTP > # 5 WHY GO TO CHURCH Still WORKING DRAFT**

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

A new **Blog:** <http://marriagesecondtimeplus.org/>

OCT. 2021

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Keep **notes** and at where you **stopped** at in this PDF. So, you can return to the same place.

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**WHY I GO TO CHURCH?**

First reason is you will be getting to know different people, from different walks of life, widens the roster of people you can call on should you find yourself looking for work, or needing advice, or are beset with a familial crisis.

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.’ Well. 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 any 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 man 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 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 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 Her for YOUR life. This Web Blog is sponsored by a **Lions Club**.

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**Note:** Yes. Both single people, people dating, and married people have reviewed (**Well Pre – viewed**) this new “Web Site” and its parts so far. As a summary of the parts and upcoming 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:** One may have a Subscription as over age 18 Adult (**including the open part**) or the open Blog part for only a small fee of \$3 for each month. If you like these ideas and tips – 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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## 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 plus 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 every day.
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 every day.
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 Church 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.
- 20. In brief summary, the strategies and schemes of the **devil (satan)** 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 I believe in, Church. It's easy to come up with reasons to **not** go to Church.

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

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### Why Go To Church

#### Why Attending Church is so Important

A few weeks ago, an online post from a major ministry struck a nerve when it stated the necessity of Church attendance for your growth as a believer in Christ.

It's surprising to me how many Christians struggle with the idea of Church attendance. We are at a crossroads in our nation on the importance of going to Church.

According to research, Church attendance has remained virtually the same percent of our national population for the past 70 years, however, this still means there are a huge number of American Christians who are **not** active in a local Church – is in the tens of millions.

Of course, this **isn't** a new problem. Since the beginning of Christianity, the early leaders had to challenge this mindset, saying "Do **not** give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encourage one another -- and all the more as you see the Day approaching." ([Hebrews 10:25](#))

A popular Christian social media catch - phrase is, "You **don't** go to Church, you are the Church." While I get the sentiment in some ways, this is an unhealthy view, pitting "being the Church" and "going to Church" against each other. If we are **truly** "the Church," then we will surely get together with other believers regularly. We **cannot** "be" the Church, if we **don't** "go" to Church. **Not** fully anyways.

The "Church" never connotes a single, individual, lone ranger Christian just going about his Christian duties, and never gathering together to worship with other believers. The "Church" by it's very nature means multiple believers, who "where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I among them." ([Matthew 18:20](#))

This is both the Biblical and historical pattern set forth for us by the first followers of Jesus. They would get together weekly to worship God together, and at times even daily. They would also share community together in each other's homes. Paul and the other Apostle's letters were actually sent to these Church communities that gathered in various cities to be read aloud together. Church means getting together with other believers to worship Jesus Christ, and hear the Scriptures together, and encourage one another in the faith.

Craig Groeschel shared recently, "There is something better. To worship God together and be committed to worship HIM together, to hear HIS Word together. Do **not** reduce Church to listening to a podcast. It's so much more than that. It's community. It's worshipping with other, praying for others, hurting with other, serving others, being involved in the lives of others."

And here's the reality of the Biblical call to gather with other believers. There are many options for going to Church for each of us. You can look for a Church that is right for you. I'm **not** telling you to go to a certain style, type, or denomination of Church - I'm simply challenging you to gather with other believers regularly to worship and hear the Scriptures.

## THE BIBLICAL PATTERN FOR CHURCH IS THIS:

- Every Christian should gather together to hear the Scriptures and worship Jesus together with other believers weekly (see [Acts 20:7](#); [1 Corinthians 16:2](#); [Acts 2:42](#); [Colossians 3:16](#); [1 Corinthians 16:19](#); [Colossians 4:15](#); [Romans 16:5](#); [Acts 20:20](#); [James 2:2](#); [Psalm 84:4](#); [Psalm 37:17](#); [Psalm 92:13](#))
- It is also good to meet for smaller groups of Christian community in each other's homes regularly (see [Acts 2:46](#))
- It's good to have leaders overseeing the work and needs of each local Church - this is the Biblical pattern - **not** all of us are called to Church leadership, and so we should submit to, and serve whoever God has called to lead at the place we find ourselves (see [Acts 14:23](#); [Titus 1:5](#); [Hebrews 13:7, 17](#); [1 Timothy 5:17](#); [1 Thessalonians 5:12-13](#); [Philippians 1:1b](#); [Ephesians 4:11-12](#); [1 Corinthians 12:28](#); [1 Peter 5:1-2](#); [Acts 20:17](#);) )
- If there are believers who are unable for physical reasons to attend a Church weekly, they should find a Church or believers who will gather together with them regularly for worship in their own home. (see [James 5:14](#); [James 1:27](#))

Here are 4 powerful reasons why you should attend Church weekly, and why Church attendance can change your life:

### 1. GOD SAID SO

God tells us in HIS Word to "**not** give up meeting together." ([Hebrews 10:25](#))

The Bible even goes so far as to call the Church the "Bride of Christ." If you love Jesus, you will love the things that HE loves, and there is **no** one a good man loves more than HIS bride. The Church is this important to God, so it should be ever-important to us.

God **didn't** call us to gather and worship to burden us, but to bless us. Church attendance can become one of the greatest blessings in you and your family's life!

## 2. WORSHIPPING JESUS TOGETHER IS POWERFUL

Jesus lives inside of us by HIS **Spirit** when we believe in HIM - this is a profoundly incredible **truth!**

But there is also something biblically powerful about gathering together with other believers to worship. Jesus said, "Where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I among them." ([Matthew 18:20](#)) So HE is **not** only lives in us by HIS **Spirit**, but HE is in the "midst" of us when we gather to worship HIM.

## 3. WE NEED CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

All of us long for community and connection with others. God has given us this gift in gathering together for Church, and in smaller groups in each other's homes. It fulfills something inside of us to do life with others, encourage each other and be authentically involved in each other's lives.

Christian TV, podcasts, books and conferences are wonderful additions to our **spiritual** lives, but nothing can take the place of consistent Christian community through the local Church.

## 4. WE GROW MORE TOGETHER THAN ALONE

It can be messy when we step into each other's lives. We are all human, and **no** one is perfect. So, it requires effort and intentionality and grace from God to do life together, even as believers.

Gathering regularly with other believers becomes a refining process whereby we help each other, pray for each other and encourage each other to want to follow Christ more wholeheartedly. It is a truly beautiful thing.

**Don't** let excuses stand in the way of what you know God is calling you to do. God will strengthen you and empower you to do what HE has called you to do. I am praying for you -- if you have encountered past wounds from leaders or from Church members -- that God will bring **healing** and grace to you, as you seek to follow HIM, and love HIS Church.

<https://www.thinke.org/blog/attending-church-important>

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## 5 - More Reasons To Go To Church In Person: Sight, Sound, Touch, Smell, Taste

When all our senses are involved we learn more, engage more, enjoy more, contribute more and remember more.



If we want to get every thing we can from our Church experience, we need to start by showing up in person.

That may seem obvious to most Churchgoers, but there is a large and growing number of people who think that watching a service online is all the Church they need.

And **no**, this is **not** always because of laziness or lack of **spiritual** passion.

In a growing number of cases, it's because they've been hurt deeply, sometimes repeatedly by Church people. Or they've grown tired of a Church experience that **doesn't** seem to grow deeper with them.

But they still have a passion to follow Jesus. So, they stay at home and watch online or listen to podcasts.

### So Many Good Reasons To Show Up

If what I've described sounds like your experience in any way, let me encourage you that, despite the downsides you've experienced, there are so many good reasons to go through the time and hassle of leaving your house and attending a Church in person every week.

Yes, we are the Church, whether we show up on Sunday or **not**, but [the experience of going to Church matters](#). By every indication, going helps the being.

**First**, because the Bible is clear that we need to.

**Second**, because it strengthens our faith to physically gather with other believers.

**Third**, because everyone takes time from their schedules for the things that matter to us. And the more often we take that time, the more important they become.

**Fourth**, because we can actually contribute when we're in the room.

Now, here's another reason. Actually, five more reasons. Unlike online Church, which only engages two of our senses (**sight and sound**) physically leaving home and showing up to be with other believers engages all five of our senses.

When all our senses are involved we learn more, engage more, enjoy more, contribute more and **remember** more.

I'm **not** against online Church. Our Church live streams and podcasts our services. And when I **can't** physically be at a weekend Church service, I watch online. So online Church is real Church – it's just **not** enough Church.

If we want to get everything we can from the Church experience, we need to start by showing up. While there are aspects of our **spiritual** lives that can and should be done in solitude, lack of face-to-face, person-to-person connection with other believers will limit our **spiritual** growth.

### The Limits Of Technology

In recent years, there's been a pullback in our understanding of how far technology can take us. Even proficiency experts like Michael Hyatt are backing off from an all - digital experience for everyday tasks.

As Erin Wildermuth wrote for Hyatt's blog in [The Science of Putting Pen to Paper](#), "when we engage across multiple sensations we are better able to tie things together, recall them later and, in short, learn."

<https://www.christianitytoday.com/karl-vaters/2018/april/5-more-reasons-to-go-to-church.html>

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### Why Christians **Don't** Go to Church (and Why They Must)

The **Story**: A new survey finds the reason people avoid going to Church is more often for practical or personal reasons, rather than lack of belief.

The **Background**: A new [Pew Research Center survey](#) asked Americans why they do or do **not** regularly go to Church, synagogue, mosque or another house of worship. The overwhelming reason why people attend such services is to feel closer to God. But their reasons for staying away are more complicated.

Less than one-third (**28 percent**) say they **don't** go because they are unbelievers. Among self-identified Christians, the predominant reason that non-Churchgoers offer for **not** attending worship services is that they practice their faith in other ways. Almost half of evangelicals in this category (**46 percent**) say this is a very important reason for **not** going to church more often. The next most common reason evangelicals give for **not** attending services is that they **haven't** found a church or house of worship they like (**33 percent**).

One-in-five evangelicals says they dislike the sermons, and a little more than one-in-ten (**11 percent**) says they do **not** feel welcome at religious services. About one in four (**26 percent**) cites logistical reasons for **not** going to religious services, such as **not** having the time or being in poor health.

As Pew **notes**, more than half of those who do **not** attend church or another house of worship for reasons other than non-belief are women, and they tend to be older, less highly educated, and less Democratic compared with those who do **not** go because of a lack of

faith. Meanwhile, those who refrain from attending religious services because they are non-believers are more highly educated and largely male, young, and Democratic.

What It Means: Ask most churchgoers why think people in their community **don't** join them in the pews and they're likely to say it's because most people **aren't** believers. Yet ask those same church attenders how many people in America claim to be Christian and they'll probably give close to the correct answer (i.e., [75 percent](#)).

Perhaps I'm misjudging their responses, but it's what I would have answered. As a pastor in a young church plant I tend to think of the "unchurched" as non-believers rather than as merely non-attenders. Despite being hyper-aware of the problem of nominal Christianity in America, I rarely make the connection that my own neighbors are the problem.

And the reason for my cognitive dissonance is likely because I **don't** want to call them out on it. I truly believe in the paradox of Church attendance: While you **don't** have to go to Church to be a Christian, if you never go to Church you probably **aren't** a Christian. But I have a hard time speaking that **truth** to my neighbor.

I wish I had the courage to say, as [Ricky Jones says](#), "I want you to understand that being a part of the universal Church without submitting to a local Church is **not** possible, biblical, or healthy."

**First**, it's simply **not** possible. To imply you can be part of the greater community without first being part of the smaller is **not** logical.

You **cannot** be part of Rotary International without also being part of a local chapter. You **cannot** be part of the universal human family without first being part of a small immediate family.

**Second**, it's **not** biblical. Every letter in the New Testament assumes Christians are members of local Churches. The letters themselves are addressed to local Churches. They teach us how to get along with other members, how to encourage the weak within the Church, how to conduct ourselves at Church, and what to do with unrepentant **sinners** in the Church. They command us to submit to our elders and encourage us to go to our elders to and for pray. All these things are impossible if you **aren't** a member of a local Church. (See [1 and 2 Corinthians](#), [James](#), [Ephesians](#), [1 and 2 Timothy](#), and [1 Peter for references](#).)

Asking where the Bible commands you to be a Church member is like asking where the USGA rulebook for golf insists you be a human. The whole book is addressed to the Church.

This latest Pew survey is a reminder that if I love my neighbor — especially my nominal Christian neighbor.

I will tell them, as my colleague [Jeff Robinson says](#), that “when we say Church membership / attendance is optional, we are also tacitly rejecting the very people Christ ‘bought with his own **blood**’ ([Acts 20:28](#)).” I need to find the courage to tell them that Christianity is **not** a choose - your-own path religion, and that the people we are to associate with have already been chosen for us.

<https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/americans-christians-dont-go-church-must/>

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

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

[extra@marriagesecondtimeplus.org](mailto:extra@marriagesecondtimeplus.org)

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According to recent Pew Research data, only 35% of American Christians consider attending religious services as an essential part of their faith. 1 Only 28% 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?”

Why the Complacency?

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.

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.<sup>3</sup> The hurt may be real but avoiding Church will only bring 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 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. 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 by **Not** Attending Church**

1. You miss out on obedience to the command to **not** give up meeting together ([Hebrews 10:24 - 25](#)).
2. You miss out on loving God in your obedience, and as a result, experiencing him more deeply ([John 14:21](#)). Jesus by loving the bride HE laid HIS life down for ([Ephesians 5:25 - 27](#); [Acts 20:28](#)).
4. You miss out on hearing God's Word faithfully proclaimed, and thus growing in faith ([2 Timothy 4:1 - 2](#); [Romans 10:17](#)).
5. 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](#)).

6. 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](#)).
  
7. 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](#)).
  
8. You miss out on encouraging others, stirring them toward love and good works, and receiving encouragement from others ([Hebrews 10:25](#)).
  
9. 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](#)).
  
10. You miss out on being built up by others faithfully using their gifts ([1 Peter 4:10 - 11](#); [Ephesians 4:11 - 14](#)).
  
11. You miss out on sitting under God's appointed leadership over you ([Ephesians 4:11 - 14](#); [Hebrews 13:7](#)).
  
12. You miss out on submitting to the leaders God has placed over you, and thus submitting to God ([Hebrews 13:17](#)).
  
13. You miss out on being shepherded during the joys and trials of life ([James 5:13 - 14](#); [1 Peter 5:1 - 2](#)).
  
14. You miss out on following your pastor's example ([1 Timothy 4:12](#); [Hebrews 13:7](#); [Titus 2:7](#)).

15. 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](#)).
16. 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](#)).
17. 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](#)).
18. You miss out on giving and receiving prayers for **spiritual** growth and personal needs ([James 5:16](#)).
19. You miss out on receiving the blessing and instruction of corporate prayer ([1 Timothy 2:1 - 2](#); [Acts 6:1 – 6](#)).
20. 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](#).)
21. You miss out on serving others and taking your eyes off yourself ([Romans 12:9 – 13](#)).
22. 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](#)).
23. You miss out on celebrating the gospel through baptism ([Romans 6:4](#)).

24. 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](#)).
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.).
26. You miss out on corporately [singing songs of praise to God](#) ([Colossians 3:16](#)).
27. You miss out on being a testimony to the gospel's saving and transforming power to the lost world ([John 13:34 - 35](#)).
28. 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](#)).
29. You miss out on speaking the **truth** in love to other believers believing and / or practicing unbiblical doctrines ([Ephesians 4:15 - 16](#)).
30. You miss out on bringing God delight as HIS gathered people ([Zephaniah 3:17](#); [Psalms 149:4](#)).
31. You miss out on rejoicing at seeing new brothers and sisters brought to faith ([Acts 16:5](#)).
32. You miss out on inviting non-Christian friends and family to Church to hear about Christ ([Matthew 28:18-20](#); [Colossians 4:5](#)).



33. You miss out on welcoming others as Christ has welcomed you ([Romans 15:7](#)).
  
34. You miss out on experiencing how God's love is perfected in us through HIS body ([1 John 4:12](#)).
  
35. 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](#)).
  
36. You miss out on experiencing [the Holy Spirit dwelling in the fellowship of the Church](#) ([2 Corinthians 13:14](#)).
  
37. You miss out on receiving continual reminders of your position and identity in Christ ([2 Corinthians 5:17](#); [Titus 3:3 - 7](#)).
  
38. You miss out on being influenced by Godly men and Godlywomen who love Jesus more than the world, and in turn influencing others ([Titus 2:1 - 8](#)).
  
39. 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](#)).
  
40. You miss out on making your closest friends those who pursue Christ from pure hearts ([2 Timothy 2:22](#)).
  
41. You miss out on being reminded to live a God-centered life focused on HIS plans for the world and your place in them; **not** the other way around ([Ephesians 1:3 - 7](#)).

42. You miss out on understanding with all of the saints the immeasurable love of Christ ([Ephesians 3:18](#)).
43. You miss out on the opportunity to give to God a tithe or offering from what HE has given you ([2 Corinthians 9:6 - 8](#)).
44. 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](#)).
45. You miss out on bringing joy to your leaders who will give an account for shepherding you ([Hebrews 13:17](#)).
46. 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](#)).
47. You miss out on making known God's wisdom to rulers and authorities in the **heavenly** places through the Church ([Ephesians 3:10](#)).
48. You miss out on potentially being called by God to vocational ministry ([1 Timothy 4:14](#)).
49. You miss out on teaching others, in word and deed, how to follow Christ ([Titus 2](#)).
50. You miss out on visibly demonstrate a growing commitment to Christ and HIS gospel.

51. You miss out on receiving help fighting **sin** and help others fighting **sin** ([1 Peter 2:11](#); [James 5:16](#); [Galatians 6:1 - 2](#)).
  
52. You miss out on collectively support missions around the world ([Philippians 4:16 - 17](#)).
  
53. 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](#)).
  
54. 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](#)).
  
55. And there are so many more you could add... this list serves as a starting point.

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### **Bottom Line: 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
- [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. Ask the Lord to lead you in how to best participate in your local congregation and bless others with your gifts.

<https://unlockingthebible.org/2016/09/why-go-to-church-50-things-you-miss-by-not-attending-church/>

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

Also: may like to visit: [www.Tri-CountyRegion.US](http://www.Tri-CountyRegion.US)

Also: may like to review books and stories: <https://tri-countyregionbooks.com/>

May E-Mail: [LehrLionsClub@bektel.com](mailto:LehrLionsClub@bektel.com)

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**Why You Should Go to Church (Even If You're Not Sure of Your Beliefs)**

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When it comes to religious institutions, Americans exhibit some contradiction between their beliefs and their actions.

On the one hand, the vast majority feel that Churches and other houses of worship are powerful forces for societal good: [according to the Pew Research Center](#), almost nine in ten Americans say that religious institutions “bring people together and strengthen community bonds” and “play an important role in helping the poor and needy,” while three - quarters believe they “protect and strengthen morality in society.”

Americans’ bullishness on the positive impact of religious institutions, however, **doesn’t** fully extend to their active participation in them: only half attend religious services on a monthly basis, and even fewer attend weekly.

This number is naturally lowest among those without a particular religious affiliation — a cohort that has been growing in size over the past decade. “Nones,” as they are called, now represent 23% of the population ([including over a third of Millennials](#)), about a quarter of which consists of agnostics and atheists, with the rest being those who are simply

religiously unaffiliated. Only 4% of these “Nones” attend any religious services weekly, with 24% attending monthly, and almost three - fourths attending seldom to never.

But even among those who are affiliated with a religion, regular attendance at their faith’s services is rarer than one might think. Only 46% of the religiously affiliated attend services every week, with another 35% saying they go 1-2 times a month, and 18% reporting they go seldom to never. Among Millennials, the number is much lower; only about 27% attend services weekly.

When all groups are combined, only 36% of Americans attend religious services on a weekly basis ([and as we’ve discussed previously, significantly less of this percentage is made up of men](#)). That represents a small but significant 3% drop in attendance over the last decade.

Recent decline aside, service attendance has been low for much longer than that. Gallup [surveys](#), which peg the percentage of people who currently go to Church or synagogue weekly or almost weekly at 38%, show that even 25 years ago, that number was still only 44%. And if you read books from the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, and even farther back, the authors remark on how few people were going to Church even then.

Church has been a hard sell for a long time.

But there’s still a really good case to be made for going. And **not** just for the devout or orthodox, either.

**Note:** In the rest of this article, we will use “Church” when referring to religious services, as Christianity - based religious institutions are what almost  $\frac{3}{4}$  of Americans would participate in, if they participated. But the principles outlined apply to attendance at all houses of worship, including mosques, synagogues, etc.

Why **Don’t** People Go to Church?

[We’ve explained why men don’t go to church as often as women](#), but why **doesn’t** the majority of either **sex** go?

A decline in belief seems like the most obvious answer, and while it does explain part of the reason people **aren’t** attending religious services, it **doesn’t** explain everything.

The overall rate of Church attendance in the U.S. **hasn’t** declined recently because the ranks of the religiously affiliated are going to Church less; belief and practice among this group has actually pretty much held steady over the last decade, and in some areas ([though not Church attendance](#)), increased. Rather, it’s gone down because the population’s proportion of Nones — who attend Church very rarely — has increased.

Yet, contrary to popular assumption (**and their negative sounding moniker**), Nones **don't** eschew all connection to the transcendent and many still evince theistic leanings: 61% believe in God, 40% say they regularly experience feelings of **spiritual** peace and well-being, over a third say religion is either very or somewhat important to them, and 20% pray daily. So, the religiously unaffiliated **aren't** wholly nonbelieving; rather, this is a cohort who is likely to describe themselves as “spiritual rather than religious” — and to associate Church attendance solely with the latter label.

Thus, while a weakening in belief amongst Nones has indeed played a role in decreasing Church attendance, so has a general disassociation between belief and the necessity of making some of the outward manifestations traditionally associated with it — like going to Church. Even if those in this group experience religious impulses, they **don't** feel the need to structure them within the confines of an organized religion.

Weakening of belief is even less of a factor among those who are religiously affiliated but have been going to Church less often than in the past. Rather than citing **doubt** or theological questions, this cohort, who make up 22% of the religiously affiliated, **point to more practical reasons** for why they've been skipping out on services more often lately: a good Church **isn't** close by, they're too busy or admittedly “too lazy,” or there are simply other things they'd rather do instead.

For both groups, then, the common driver behind a lack of Church attendance is a rising sense of its optionality. Those who are religiously inclined, feel like Church attendance can readily be dropped for the sake of convenience, or substituted, without loss, for a more pleasurable activity. Theistic Nones feel like **spirituality** and Church - going are **not** inseparably connected and that the former can be cultivated without the latter. And nonbelieving Nones think Church **isn't** something that is at all relevant to them.

Whereas going to Church once constituted a central cultural, social, and civic institution, it's now something to take or leave, depending on one's beliefs, personality, and schedule. A non-essential for living the good life.

There's certainly **no** putting this cultural cat back in the bag.

But I'd still like to make a controversial, countercultural, admittedly quixotic case that, optional though it may be, regular Church attendance functions as one of the best keys for anyone wishing to create a flourishing life — **not** just the religiously inclined, but even agnostics and atheists as well.

I'd like to make a non-religious case for religiously attending religious services.



## The Benefits of Regular Church Attendance

For those who are already religiously affiliated, the purpose of Church services is obvious: to worship God. Yet for more than half of this nominally faithful demographic, this *raison d'être* is seemingly insufficient to compel their butts into pews each Sunday. Thus, for them, the “secular” benefits of Church attendance outlined below will hopefully add another layer of motivation for going.

For the “**spiritual** but **not** religious” crowd, I invite you to consider these benefits in light of the possibility that spirituality may in fact thrive most when given a little structure — a prism for focusing one’s feelings, intentions, and thoughts in a more consistent and fruitful direction.

And for the agnostics and atheists, who will surely be the hardest to convince(!), I propose looking at Church like something of an anthropologist — seeing it as a common organizing principle of society, weighing whether it might **not** just be the best possible vehicle for meeting universal human needs, and contemplating the idea that one can admit to having those needs, and rationally accede to fulfilling them through this particular channel, without wholly assenting to their theological foundations.

For all these groups stand to benefit from the myriad social, psychological, physical, mental, and **spiritual** benefits Church attendance has to offer.

### Greater Social Support

Anyone who’s graduated from college and headed out into the real world can tell you one thing: making friends in adulthood is dang hard.

It’s quite a bit easier though, if you go to Church.

Experts say that two of the [three keys to fostering friend ships are](#) “repeated and unplanned interactions” and “a setting that encourages vulnerability.”

Church amply provides both.

You see the same people every weekend, without having to plan to see them (**and trying to sync your crazy schedules to make a meet-up happen**). “Repeated and unplanned interactions” obviously happen in the context of things like work and the gym too, but Church has the added benefit that its participants **don’t** just feel moved to get to know people if the mood strikes, but, consider themselves duty bound to foster a tight community;

They see fellowshiping as part and parcel of the whole purpose of Church. Principles of love, forgiveness, self-sacrifice, charity, confession, and unity underpin congregants’

efforts to get to know each other, and even if they **don't** always succeed in being animated by these lofty impulses, such virtues still function as touchstones and ideals that inform their relationships. In other words, Church provides a “setting that encourages vulnerability” in a way few others can match.

Church **isn't** just a good place to make some buddies either, but to simply extend and deepen your bench of social connections as well.

As [The New York Times reports](#), “A study conducted in North Carolina found that frequent Churchgoers had larger social networks, with more contact with, more affection for, and more kinds of social support from those people than their unchurched counterparts.”

Getting to know different people, from different walks of life, widens the roster of people you can call on should you find yourself looking for work, or needing advice, or beset with a familial crisis.

In a time of greater isolation and shrinking social circles, when people lack face – to – face contact and have few they can turn to when in trouble, Churches provide a last bastion for intimate, close - knit community.

#### A Chance to **Remember**/Reorient/Reflect/Re-center

There are a lot of things that sound great in the abstract — things I think will work in theory, but **don't** pan out in practice.

I want to believe that I can still be just as productive if I **don't** plan my week. But I'm **not**.

I want to believe I can get just as strong without counting my macros. But when I **don't** watch what I eat, I just get fat.

And I want to believe I can be **spiritual** without being religious, without going to Church – because how seemingly great would it be to have a robust **spiritual** life without having to take on any of the time - requiring responsibilities and inconvenient disciplines required by attaching your beliefs to an institution?

But alas, through experiment and experience, I've found that I simply **can't** maintain my **spiritual** life on as high a plane without giving it some structure.

We all feel like we hypothetically should be able to keep our moral compasses pointed north, our minds on deep matters, our hearts looking for ways to help others in the absence of external check - ins and prompts.

**But day – to - day life has a terrible way of intervening with our best intentions: we sacrifice ethics on the altar of convenience; we pay attention to what’s urgent instead of contemplating the infinite; we turn increasingly inward, and end up thinking far more about ourselves, than others.**

**The reality is that we’re forgetful creatures who need regular tune - ups to keep our course. Without such, earthly, immediate concerns crowd out everything higher, something even [research](#) bears out: folks who are **not** religiously affiliated are less likely than those who are to think about the meaning and purpose of life.**

**Weekly Church attendance invites us to reflect on our gratitude for the good things in our lives, reinforces our moral values, fosters reverence and humility, and re-focuses us on our larger purpose. It’s a chance to re-center and re-orient our lives.**

**There is, after all, only so far you can get off track in seven days.**

### **Builds Discipline**

**The structure provided by weekly Church attendance constitutes a [spiritual](#) discipline, and services typically offer encouragement towards the tackling of others: prayer, alms-giving, meditation, scripture study, fasting, etc.**

**Aspects of the service itself also develop inner discipline: you’re often encountering one of the few things in modern life **not** tailored to your personal demands, and your restless monkey mind must weather pockets of boredom without checking your phone. It’s a chance to recalibrate your attention span. It’s a chance to engage with the thing we try to avoid in all other areas of our life: friction.**

**The discipline you build at Church will further extend into your pursuits outside of it; research shows that when you increase willpower in one area of your life, you can employ its newfound strength in others.**

**This increase in grit may be one reason why doubling the rate of religious attendance raises household income by 9.1 percent, a finding that holds even when other variables are controlled for.**

### **The Rhythms of Ritual and Routine**

**In our corporatized, homogeneous, very flat-feeling postmodern world, one of the most underappreciated benefits of Church attendance is the capacity of this ritual to add a little texture to our lives.**

To step through the threshold of many Churches is to feel one has left the “profane” world in which one almost entirely lives, moves, and has their being, and entered into a bit of sacred time and space. It can be a pocket of existence that feels refreshingly different from ordinary life; stained glass windows replace fuzzy cubicle board; candlelight displaces the glow of screens; ancient words supplant current headlines. The liturgy lends regenerating seasonality to a world that otherwise runs relentlessly, linearly along like the ticker at the bottom of a 24 / 7 news channel — constantly novel, yet stultifying uniform.

Even in attending Churches that strenuously work to make their edifices **not** feel any different than what you would encounter at the mall or movie theater.

There’s still something to be said for the simple satisfaction of having a weekly routine. Though it can sometimes feel annoying to get the kids ready and out the door for a service, such a family tradition creates the ebbs and flows that ultimately function as a hedge against anomie.

### Stronger Marriage

According to a study on the effect of religious service attendance on relationship quality, couples who attend Church together are more likely to be happy, than couples who **don’t**. This holds true even when controlling for differences in race, age, education, marital status, region, and other factors.

The study’s author, W. Bradford Wilcox, further importantly notes “that some of the benefits of religious participation appear to be temporal, **not spiritual**, and hold even for Churchgoers who may be uncertain about their own devotion.”

Why does Church attendance enhance a relationship? Going to Church reinforces a couple’s shared values, lends the relationship a higher purpose, and establishes a tradition in which the pair spend time together – all things that build a solid marital friendship and contribute to a healthy relationship bank account.

Church also facilitates the making of shared friends. As Wilcox reports, “men and women who have more than half of their friends at the same religious congregation are about 11 percentage points more likely to report they are very happy in their relationships than those who do **not**.” Why? “Enjoying shared friendships in a religious congregation may boost relationship quality by giving such couples a sense of belonging and community, as well as other models of successful relationships.”

Church further enhances happy marriages by encouraging couples to pray together. Those that do “are 17 percentage points more likely to say they are very happy together,” likely because joint prayer “fosters a heightened sense of emotional intimacy, communication and reflection about relationship priorities and concerns, and a sense of

divine involvement in one's relationship." It seems the old aphorism may have had it right all along: couples who pray together, stay together.

Interestingly enough, it should be noted that couples where the man attends Church, but his wife does **not**, are also happier than both couples where neither partner attends, and where just the woman attends. Why? When a woman attends solo, she may feel resentful that her partner is absent, and disappointed that her husband **doesn't** measure up to the models of manhood she sees at Church. However, when just the man attends, he's less likely to care that his wife is MIA, and the services leave him more motivated to reengage and invest in his family.

This dynamic also holds for parents' ability to pass on their faith tradition to their children. When a father attends Church alone while his kids are growing up, they're **not** only more likely to become Churchgoers themselves in adulthood than if just mom attends, but even when mom and dad go together!

#### Develops Successful, Well-Rounded Kids

Even if instilling your faith into your children **isn't** a big concern for you, you should know that numerous [studies](#) show that Church attendance offers them a whole lot of other benefits and has a profoundly **positive** impact on their life.

Kids who regularly attend Church have higher GPAs, complete more years of schooling, do better in college, are less likely to use drugs or alcohol, commit a crime, or get in trouble at school, and go on to have lower rates of **divorce** in adulthood.

This **isn't** simply a case of correlation, where smart, well-disciplined, privileged kids are more likely to attend Church in the first place and thus skew the results. The effect of Church attendance can be seen when tracked solely within low-income communities and becomes more **positive** the more the poverty level rises.

The effect **isn't** largely a function of specific doctrine being taught in Churches, either. It's seen across faiths, suggesting that the causal factor is really to be found in the overarching routines and habits Church attendance helps cultivate. As mentioned above, going to Church builds discipline, and this is **no** less true for kids than adults.

Children need to get dressed up and out the door, sit reverently during the service, and endure a little boredom. Church teachings typically reinforce moral principles, and often encourage kids to work hard, stay out of trouble, cultivate healthy habits, look to the future optimistically, and think about the kind of people they want to be when they grow up. Children are commonly asked to make commitments that help develop self-control and the capacity for delayed gratification.

This capacity for commitment and discipline seemingly transfers over to “secular” areas of children’s lives, strengthening their other habits, and solidifying a foundation that helps launch them toward good character and success.

Access to positive role models likely also plays a role in why Church attendance helps shape well-rounded kids. As we’ve discussed previously, [children ideally need three “families” in their lives to grow up well](#). Their immediate family has a huge impact, but kids also benefit enormously from being surrounded by other adult role models – **mentors** who can contribute advice and be an **example** in a way that’s different from a child’s own parents, and thus uniquely nourishing.

### The Rare Chance for Communal Singing

<https://www.artofmanliness.com/articles/go-church-even-youre-not-sure-beliefs/>

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Singing together used to be fairly common; people would gather around the piano in a parlor and belt out some tunes simply as a way to pass the time.

Today, if you’re **not** a regular Churchgoer, you probably rarely, if ever, sing along with other people.

Which is a shame. Communal singing is truly one of life’s great pleasures. It’s a chance for a singular kind of emotive, spirit-elevating expression that finds outlet nowhere else. And the vibrations you send out, reverberate back, producing an effect that brings harmony to your health. Singing with others [releases pleasure-producing endorphins](#) as well oxytocin, which lower stress and [ward off anxiety](#) and depression.

Singing with others also bonds you together with others in a unique way — quite literally as it turns out; [studies](#) show that the heartbeats of those signing together sync up with the music and with each other.

The oxytocin released further increases these feelings of connection and trust, which is why group signing has been shown to lessen feelings of loneliness.

Breaches Your Echo Chamber and Connects You With People From Different Walks of Life.

There's been a lot of talk these days about how people are cordoning themselves off into more and more self-selecting groups. The people they rub shoulders with all share the same race, age, socio-economic status, and beliefs. Whites hang out with whites, the college educated with the college educated, 20-somethings with 20-somethings, Democrats with Democrats — and vice versa down the line. The news that folks get is based on who they follow on social media (**generally those with whom they already agree**) and what shows up in their feeds, which is based on what they've "liked" in the past, and so skews to stories that affirm their preexisting ideology. There's a legitimate **fear** that we're all retreating into increasingly isolated echo chambers that are squeezing our minds into narrower and narrower chutes.

It might seem that Churches would actually exacerbate this trend, rather than mitigate it. After all, Martin Luther King Jr. once called 11:00 am on Sunday morning "the most segregated hour in this nation," and close to 90% of Churches in America today remain pretty homogenous in the racial make-up of their membership. Many congregations select for income too; there are Churches almost entirely attended by the middle and upper classes, and those almost entirely composed of those from the lower classes.

But even among racially homogeneous Churches, the typical breakdown between the majority and minority segments of their membership is 80/20 — which, though it may **not** be super diverse, constitutes a greater mix than what's found in many other realms in people's lives (**what's the majority/minority breakdown of your suburban CrossFit box?**). And racial diversity **isn't** the only kind. Plenty of Churches still attract folks from a wide range of places and stages in life: **blue** and white collar workers, folks of all ages, people on both sides of the political aisle. It's a mix that, again, is often greater than what a lot of people otherwise experience at work or at the gym or even within their entire neighborhood.

I honestly encounter a greater diversity of people and opinions at my Church than in any other area of my life; its members are a motley crew — folks of different ages, socio-economic backgrounds, political beliefs, and disabilities — who **truly** help keep me from getting lost inside the echo chamber of my social media feeds and self-selected peer groups. It forces me to interact with folks I **wouldn't** normally encounter or choose to hang out with.

It pushes me to be patient with the old lady who makes rambling, 10-minute comments in Sunday school, be friendly with the autistic kid who wants me to be part of his imaginary rock band and listen to the woes of the guy who lives on a different side of town.

Church provides me a chance I otherwise **wouldn't** get to exercise my capacity for empathy and understanding.

## Contributes to Greater Free-Thinking and Your Diversity of Ideas

This may seem like another contradiction: **don't** Churches present a one-sided version of the **truth**, and typically discourage dissent from it?

But let's go back to that echo chamber effect again: if you're almost exclusively interacting with people who believe the same things you do, you'er thinking will end up far more limited than "free."

Religion is another voice in the marketplace of ideas and if you're **truly** dedicated to hearing and understanding all of them, then it's one you should at least occasionally engage with. You **can't truly** decide what you believe until you've examined all the possibilities.

That's the philosophy embraced by a segment of atheist and agnostic scientists who work at top universities in the country and were surveyed by the sociologist Elaine Howard Ecklund. Ecklund found that 17% of these nonbelieving researchers still went to Church more than once a year. Why? Partly for solidarity with an attending spouse and partly out of the desire for community, but also because, rather than seeing attendance as contrary to their scientific identity, they saw going as part of it. As Ecklund explained in [an interview with ABC News](#), "They want to teach their children to be free thinkers, to give them religious choices, and so they take their children to religious organizations just to give them exposure to religion."

These nonbelieving scientists **didn't** want to indoctrinate their kids with atheism any more than with religion; in allowing them to be exposed to all possible sources of knowledge, they let their kids make up their own minds and ensured their choice would be an informed one.

Sound thinking for kids, as well as adults.

### Lessens Bitter Partisanship

The rise of secularism was supposed to pacify the culture wars. Instead, they've simply grown more rancorous.

As Peter Beinart [incisively observes in The Atlantic Monthly](#), as the influence of traditional religion has waned, people have been transferring what is arguably an innate "religious" impulse — a penchant for higher purpose, strenuous ideals, and rigidly drawing lines between good and **evil** — towards the arena of politics. Issues of race, nation, and social justice are today being forwarded with the kind of single - minded, absolutist zeal once reserved for the principles of faith.

A trend that has deepened bitter partisanship and made increasingly impossible the kind of consensus building and compromise necessary for a democracy to function.



This effect is seen **not** only amongst the wholly secular, but those who are nominally religious, but **don't** regularly attend Church.

Perhaps this is because, as discussed above, Church keeps people in touch with folks from different walks of life and promotes a message of universal brotherhood that mitigates the acrimony that arises between different segments of society.

For all groups, the decline in Church attendance has eroded a shared language of love, charity, mercy, and forgiveness that formerly built bridges between those on opposite sides of the aisle. The civil rights movement, for **example**, grew out of black Churches, and the fact that leaders like MLK employed the shared language of Christianity to promote the cause of black Americans, helped its message to breach the walls of whites. In contrast, the polarizing rhetoric of today's identity politics — whether on the right or the left — appeals to little common ground, and alienates and divides, rather than unites.

Without the common touchstone of Church attendance, Americans have lost part of their shared language, and seem destined to continue to talk past each other.

#### Ample Opportunities (**and More Motivation**) for Service

The idea that you'll do service whether you're going to Church or **not** is another one of those things that sound great in the abstract, but rarely work out in reality. For certain, there are non-Church attending folks who are self - motivated and find ways to tirelessly serve in their communities.

But a lot of folks, perhaps most, find they **don't** follow through on their intention to get involved with charitable giving and organizations unless they're encouraged to do so at Church. Reams of research bear this fact out. Pew has found that “the 40% of Americans who describe themselves as ‘active’ in religious organizations... are more likely than other Americans to be involved in all types of volunteer and community groups, from sports leagues to arts groups, hobby clubs and alumni associations.” A comprehensive [study](#) by Harvard University professor Robert Putnam similarly found that those who attend religious services are more likely than their non-religious peers to volunteer **not** only within their Church, but to help their community's poor and elderly, mentor youth, work in schools, serve in hospitals, and even give **blood**.

While the religious might see this as a reason to crow about the fruits of their faith, Putnam and his co-author, David E. Campbell, found that this greater motivation to serve was **not** a result of doctrines preached from the pulpit. As Campbell [reports](#), “we could find **no** evidence linking people's theological beliefs and their rate of giving — which also helps to explain why the ‘religion effect’ varies little across different religions.”

Instead, Campbell reports, the link between Church attendance and higher levels of service turns out to be a function of “the social networks formed within religious congregations.

The more friends someone has within a religious congregation, the more likely that person is to give time, money, or both, to charitable causes.” As Putnam puts it, “Faith is less important than communities of faith.”

It makes sense. Not only is it easier to figure out what to do and how to get started with service when presented specific options for doing so at Church, it’s also harder to say **no** when it’s a friend who asks you to get involved and is counting on your participation in a project. Plus, it’s just more enjoyable to serve alongside people you like. This social expectation towards engagement extends to service beyond a Church’s walls; seeing one’s buddies out serving in the larger community nudges you to join in.

Campbell poses the same question you may be asking: Could a secular organization “replicate the sort of tight, interlocking friendship networks found within religious organizations,” and thus have “the same effect on charitable giving.... Or does the boost to charity found within religious congregations require religion?” “The jury,” he says, “is still out.”

### Greater Mental and Physical Health

People who regularly attend Church have lower **blood** pressure and higher immune systems, are less likely to abuse alcohol and drugs, show lower rates of **depression** and **suicide**, and are more likely to live longer than non - Churchgoers. The more they attend, the greater this life-extending impact becomes, and the effect is found even when other variables are controlled for.

Researchers say it likely **isn’t** just one factor about going to Church that creates these benefits to mind and body, but a combination of many of the things listed here, and the way they impact so many different areas of a person’s life. Positive peer pressure from fellow congregants, as well as Church - sponsored addiction programs, may help people quit smoking or drinking. The kind of robust social support Church provides has repeatedly been proven to bolster physical and mental health. The discipline learned at Church can carry over into things like diet and exercise. Messages of hope and a sense of purpose may lift participants’ spirits.

And of course, there’s all that singing.

## Answers to Queries and Objections

If you've made it this far, you might be taking some umbrage to one or more of the above points and have some (possibly irate) questions/objections to pose. Allow me to preemptively respond to them.

Are these benefits the result of correlation rather than causation?

That's a good question. When the benefits of X thing are laid out like this, one should definitely apply healthy skepticism to the claims, and inquire as to whether the effect of X is due to causation or correlation.

In this case, the question on the table is: does Church attendance make you healthier / happier, or are healthier/happier people simply more likely to attend Church?

Know that the MIT economist Jonathan Grube studied the data, and found that Church attendance does indeed causally produce many of the above benefits.

Further, many of the studies cited did control for other variables that would have potentially skewed the results. Where such is the case, it was explicitly mentioned above.

With a few other of the studies cited, untangling causation and correlation is indeed difficult.

Even in these cases, however, I think it's worth pondering why it is that the healthier / happier crowd is more likely to go to Church, and whether it might not be wise to follow where they're headed.

The remaining observations are obviously simply anecdotal. Their resonance and mileage with you may vary.

But couldn't I get the same benefits by participating in another kind of social/cultural/civic organization?

Hypothetically speaking? Certainly. Realistically though, getting the benefits of Church in the absence of Church would be difficult to accomplish for a few reasons.

**First**, even if you wanted to join one, there just aren't that many non-religious community organizations to be a part of these days. Sixty years ago, you had things the Freemasons and the Rotary club to participate in, but most civic or largely secular institutions have shriveled in membership or gone extinct (given the connection between Church attendance and community engagement, we may surmise that they likely evaporated because Church attendance has gone down, and that ironically enough, secular organizations depend on faith-based ones to thrive.)

**Second**, even where alternate communities do exist, like, say, a close - knit gym or a nonprofit, such groups **don't** offer as many of the above benefits as Churches. At the gym you'll get some social support, better health, and a chance to build your discipline, but it probably **doesn't** attract a great diversity of people, prompt you to ask big questions about the meaning of life or move you to do community service. A nonprofit is going to get you engaged in the community and put you in touch with folks from different walks of life, but it may **not** create as much social support for you, nor provide too many opportunities to break out in song.

You could then cobble together a bunch of different interests — belonging to a gym, participating in a community choir, volunteering at a homeless shelter. A viable option. But again, realistically, most people **won't** make good on all these intentions; having even one interest outside work/family seems too burdensome and stressful for a lot of folks.

Church thus offers the advantage of conveniently compiling the most benefits under one roof.

This may be why the study that found that Church attendance decreases your risk of dying, also found that “The effect of religious attendance was stronger than that of any other form of participation in a social group like a book club or a volunteer organization.”

Finally, when it comes to many of the alternatives to Church, while they're good as they go, they **don't** succeed in getting you outside of your own head — something most of us are in desperate need of these days. In fact, they throw us back on ourselves. The gym is all about you — your body, your gains. Work is about you and your career and your financial success.

How often do you engage in something that's centered around a purpose bigger than yourself? How often do you engage in [the world beyond your head](#)? If you **don't** ever lose your life, will you ever be able to fully find it?

Why go to Church when I have a more uplifting experience in nature?

Many people say they have more **spiritual** moments in the outdoors than they do at Church — and I count myself among them! The woods and the mountains have been the backdrop for many of my most transcendent experiences.

Yet I **don't** think hiking can fully substitute for Churchgoing. It may lift certain parts of my soul, but it lets others lie fallow. Being out in nature is relatively easy because it **doesn't** care if I'm there or **not** and **doesn't** want anything from me. The mountains **don't** confront me with different opinions. The trees **don't** ask me to tend to their needs. The rocks **don't** ask for sympathy and a helping hand. It's easy to become very Zen and insightful, and yet devolve into a stubborn misandrist ([as someone like Thoreau arguably was](#)), if plants are your only companions.

To be fully human, to develop one's empathies, one's compassion, the words **aren't** enough. We need to meet the brokenness of flesh and **blood** humanity eyeball to eyeball, and learn the love, patience, and unselfishness that comes with trying to help piece it back together.

Rather than being mutually exclusive, doing service (**the opportunities for which, again, come most readily through Church**) and experiencing nature can enjoy a symbiotic relationship.

When Jesus grew tired of the crowds who beseeched HIM for **healing**, HE retreated into the solitude of the wilderness, only to return refreshed and ready to resume his ministry.

Rather than choosing one or the other, do both.

Are you saying you **can't** raise good, moral kids without going to Church?

Of course **not**. But Church can serve as an enhancement of your own parenting efforts, and most parents are happy with any help they can get.

Why would I want to attend something that reinforces values that I **don't** agree with (**and don't want taught to my children**)?

Obviously, you **wouldn't**. But if you **haven't** been to Church in a long time, or ever, you might be surprised by the content of the sermons offered from the pulpit these days (**and the fact that pulpits are rarely even used anymore**). While there are some Churches that do still preach **hell fire** and **damnation**, concentrate on specific theological issues, and advocate for more "conservative" takes on the scriptures, there are also a ton that offer messages that actually **don't** even talk that much about God, or "culture war" issues, and essentially offer general self-help principles supported with a few Bible verses (**even these you can choose to receive as "literature" rather than "scripture"**).

You'll hear uplifting messages on being a good neighbor, moderating your use of technology, being less selfish, improving your marriage — sound, practical advice for better living.

While this trend is anathema to the orthodox, who feel it represents the watering down of Christianity, it's a boon to the growing number of folks who **aren't** sure about their beliefs and are looking for a Church that teaches good principles unattached to a very specific theological position.

If that's you, look for a large "megachurch" where this kind of "preaching" (**they wouldn't want you to call it that — even Church "services" are often called "experiences"**) is common. Life Church is a good one, with campuses around the country.

More liberal denominations ([see below](#)) also frequently offer very inclusive sermons that focus on the social justice implications of Jesus' ministry or expound on general wisdom from around the world, and even from other faith traditions.

Keep in mind that whatever Church you choose, you're never going to agree 100% with what the minister ([or your fellow congregants](#)) have to say. I'm largely aligned with the faith of my own Church, and yet I'm still almost guaranteed to hear at least one thing every Sunday from which I dissent. This **isn't** necessarily a **bad** thing.

We're trained these days to swipe ([literally or metaphorically](#)) away from anything that **doesn't** wholly line up with our personal beliefs and opinions, and to become infuriated when anything deviates even a hair from what we think is right.

**Not** only is this approach to the world incredibly infantile, it's entirely fruitless. **No** media outlet, and especially **no** Church, is ever going to exactly parrot back our personal worldview. And if it did, and we were never challenged, we'd all end up as absolute pinheads.

If the Church you're attending is consistently preaching a message that is diametrically opposed to your core values, by all means you should leave, and find another community.

But if there are simply tidbits here and there that you're **not** wholly on board with, just ignore them, and concentrate on the good you are getting; **don't** throw out the baby with the bathwater. Even the stuff you hear that you **don't** believe will often spark productive contemplation that helps you figure out what you do.

Even when you have kids, it's simply a matter of talking to them on the car ride home: "You know when the minister said X? Well, we **don't** believe that." Kids are more savvy than you think. They're **not** just going to automatically adopt some position they heard at Church. The instruction they get in your home will be far more impactful. As will the message that you **don't** have to wholly write - off everyone with whom you disagree.

Ultimately, we could all use weekly reminders on the sound principles of good living, and **no** one can receive such without the ability to pick out what's useful, while discarding the rest.

Would an atheist really be welcome at Church?

At every Church? **No**. At the great majority? Definitely. Looking at reddit threads where atheists have asked the members of r/Christianity ([see here](#), [here](#), and [here](#)) whether they'd be welcome at Church, the response is almost universally **positive**. Folks point out that while in some Churches you **won't** be able to take part in some of the sacraments reserved for full members, or be invited to teach Sunday school, you will be able to participate in just about everything else.

They offer the obvious heads up that some congregants will likely try to convert you but say that if you civilly let them know you're **not** interested, and in turn respect the beliefs of others and **don't** act contentious or combative, most Churches would be totally cool with having you in their ranks. A third of atheists say they attend Church every once in a while anyway, so there may very well already be another nonbeliever in the pews.

Atheists should check out more liberal denominations like Unitarian Universalists, Episcopalians, and the United Church of Christ which celebrate their diverse, pluralistic memberships, and extend a welcome to one and all.

Even if you're the only atheist there, there's bound to be plenty of other unorthodox folks sitting in the pews next to you. At the Unitarian Church here in Tulsa (**which keep in mind is right in the Bible Belt**), they even offer a "Humanist Hour" — a service for folks who may **not** believe in anything divine, but enjoy music, fellowship, and the expounding of universally sound wisdom.

If you choose to attend a megachurch, your lack of theism **won't** be an issue there either, for the simple fact that the Church is so large, that they **won't** know you from Adam, much less what your exact level of belief is. You'll have the freedom to come and go without anyone bothering you, and to engage to whatever degree you're comfortable with. I have a family member who's somewhere between agnostic and atheist but goes to a mega Church each week with his believing wife and kids. He says he actually enjoys it — there's free childcare, free snacks, good music, and a practical, uplifting message — and it's helped bring his family together.

Look around and try out some different options. You're bound to find one where you feel right at home.

Is Church really going to be more beneficial for me than doing something else?

I think it will. But you'll have to find out for yourself. View it as an experiment. Try out some different Churches — each will have more or less of the benefits outlined above, depending on its size and type. Once you find one that seems like a good fit, go every week for a few months and see what happens.

Keep in mind that the benefits of Church attendance accrue in the long - term, rather than being front - loaded and immediate. In that way, it's a lot like another discipline: working out. You **don't** always want to go to the gym. You **don't** always enjoy the workout. But over time, you notice that you're getting stronger.

Similarly, **don't** gauge the effect of your Church experiment by your fluctuating mood from week to week, but the effects, you observe overall, over time.

You have little to lose. Even if you decide Church **isn't** for you, you'll have had an interesting cultural experience that'll have given you insight into the fabric of modern life, and probably gotten you thinking a lot about your own.

<https://www.artofmanliness.com/articles/go-church-even-youre-not-sure-beliefs/>

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

1. God **won't** ask as to 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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## Is It Really Important That I Go to Church?

### Involvement with Other Believers

One of the most important **spiritual** disciplines you can develop is faithful involvement with other believers. I am always amazed when a Christian tells me, “Oh, I **don’t** go to Church very often. I’d rather stay at home and listen to Christian television or radio programs or listen to Bible-teaching tapes.”

Others reluctantly admit to me, “We only go to Church when we can work it into our family schedule” or “I go to Church as often as I can,” which usually means **not** very often.

I certainly am all in favor of Christian television, radio, and tape ministries, but I also know they are no substitute for your regular attendance and faithful involvement in the worship services, ministry outreaches, and educational programs of your Church. The writer to the Hebrews said:

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](#)

What does it mean to “stir up love and good works”? Why do such things need to be stirred up?

Why is it necessary that other Christians be involved in that process? What role does the Church play, according to these verses?

### The Body of Christ

**No** Christian has ever been called to “go it alone” in his or her faith. We need one another. The Church was designed from the beginning to function as the living body of Christ on the earth after the Lord’s resurrection and ascension. The apostle Paul wrote:

For as we have many members in one body, but all the members do **not** have the same function, so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another.

Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, let us prophesy in proportion to our faith; or ministry, let us use it in our

ministering; he who teaches, in teaching; he who exhorts, in exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness. —

[Romans 12:4 - 8](#)

Part of the reason that we need to be in regular fellowship with other believers is so that we might receive the benefit of their **spiritual** gifts and, in turn, give our **spiritual** gifts to the body of Christ. We individually are made stronger as we both receive and give. Simultaneously, the Church to which we belong is made stronger and more effective as a whole.

Why does Paul use the analogy of the human body to describe the Church? How does this illustrate the importance of regular Church involvement?

What is the purpose of **spiritual** gifts, according to the passage above? Where are they to be used?

#### Our Ministry to Other Believers

Jesus made it very clear that our foremost ministry to other believers is to love them. HE said to HIS disciples shortly before HIS crucifixion:

This is MY commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. — [John 15:12](#)

The apostle Paul echoed this command:

Be imitators of God as dear children. And walk in love, as Christ also has loved us and given HIMself for us. — [Ephesians 5:1 – 2](#)

The New Testament writers identified several specific ways in which we are called to show love to one another within the body of Christ. Paul wrote to the Colossians:

Let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which also you were called in one body; and be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through IM. — [Colossians 3:15 – 17](#)

As members of the Body of Christ, we are to

- pray for one another ([James 5:16](#)).
- speak well of one another ([James 4:11](#)).
- speak **truthful** and admonishing words to one another ([Romans 15:14](#)).

- be hospitable and giving to one another ([1 Peter 4:9–10](#)).
- comfort one another ([1 Thessalonians 5:11](#)).
- pursue the common good ([1 Thessalonians 5:15](#)).
- encourage and build up one another ([1 Corinthians 14:26](#)).
- bless one another ([1 Peter 3:8–9](#)).

List the functions of the Church, in your own words, from each passage below.

- [Romans 15:14](#)
- [1 Corinthians 14:26](#)
- [1 Thessalonians 5:11, 15](#)
- [James 4:11](#)
- [James 5:16](#)
- [1 Peter 4:9 – 10](#)

- [Mark 6:13](#)

### Our Service to Others Outside the Church

Along with others in the body of Christ, we are to be involved in active ministry to those who do **not** know the Lord. Jesus sent out HIS disciples two by two. HE gave them power and authority over all **demons** and power to cure **diseases**. HE told them to preach the kingdom of God and **heal** the **sick** ([Luke 9:1 – 2](#)).

On another occasion Jesus sent out seventy of HIS disciples, again two by two, and HE said to them, the harvest **truly** is great, but the laborers are few; therefore, pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into HIS harvest ... **Heal** the **sick** there, and say to them, ‘The kingdom of God has come near to you’. — [Luke 10:2](#), [Luke 10:9](#)

If we desire to be followers of Jesus today, we must acknowledge that HE is sending us out as well. HE is saying the same things to us:

We are to **heal** the **sick** and proclaim the kingdom of God.

Taking On the Ministry of Christ.

Jesus used the words of Isaiah to describe HIS ministry on earth:

The **Spirit** of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me to preach good tidings to the poor; HE has sent me to **heal** the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn, to console those who mourn in Zion, to give them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the **spirit** of heaviness; that they may be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that He may be glorified. — [Isaiah 61:1 – 3](#)

What roles of the Church does Jesus describe in these verses?

Which of those roles are you involved with? Which of those ministries have you been a recipient of?

Jesus also taught HIS disciples:

Then the King will say to those on HIS right hand, “Come, you blessed of MY Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: for I was hungry and you gave ME food; I was thirsty and you gave ME drink; I was a stranger and you took ME in; I was naked and you clothed ME; I was sick and you visited ME; I was in prison and you came to ME.” Then the righteous will answer HIM, saying, “Lord, when did we see YOU hungry and feed YOU, or thirsty and give YOU drink? When did we see YOU a stranger and take YOU in, or naked and clothe YOU? Or when did we see YOU **sick**, or in prison, and come to YOU?”

And the King will answer and say to them, “Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these MY brethren, you did it to ME.” — [Matthew 25:34 - 40](#)

What roles of the Church does Jesus describe in this parable?

Why does Jesus say that we are ministering to HIM when we minister to other people?

What does this imply concerning your involvement in a local Church?

We are never called to “go it alone” in our faith, and we are never called to “go it alone” in ministry to others. Jesus sent out HIS disciples two by two.

He said,

“If two of you agree on earth concerning anything that they ask, it will be done for them by MY Father in heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in MY name, I am there in the midst of them.” — [Matthew 18:19 - 20](#)

Paul encouraged the Philippians,

Stand fast in one [spirit](#), with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel. — [Philippians 1:27](#)

Excerpted with permission from Practicing Basic [Spiritual](#) Disciplines by Charles Stanley, copyright Thomas Nelson.

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### Your Turn

Are you involved in your local Church?

If **not**, why **not**?

Where do you serve back to your community?

Today, let’s be exhorted and challenged to get involved with other believers and to serve those within and without the Church. Imagine what good things could happen! Come join the conversation on our [blog](#). We want to hear from you about digging into community in the Church. ~ Devotionals Daily

<https://www.faithgateway.com/important-go-to-church/#.XK9pfi-ZOi4>

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Q - Pastor Doug Batchelor

Q. If a person accepts Jesus, do they need to attend Church to be saved?

A. First, it's important to **note** that there will be many people in **heaven** who were **not** affiliated with any particular Church or denomination — or for some reason could **not** attend Church regularly. But one of the foremost principles of Christianity is that we are saved into the body of Christ, which is another name for the Church ([Ephesians 1:22, 23](#)). In [Acts 2](#), the Bible says, “The Lord added to the Church daily such as should be saved.” When you are baptized, you become part of Christ’s body and enter into the Church ([1 Corinthians 12:20](#)).

Perhaps we should also ask this **question** in another way: Why would a person say he or she loves God but **doesn't** wish to fellowship with HIS people?

One of the reasons God wants us in Church is because it has people with similar beliefs. It helps bolster our faith and makes us accountable to one another. Even in Churches where there are some difficult people, it is the best environment to increase our capacity to learn to love one another.

A person saying, “I believe in God and want to be baptized, but I **don't** want to go to Church,” sounds to me like a man saying to his bride, “I love you; I want to marry you — but I **don't** want to live with you.” It's saying you want the benefits of marriage but **not** the relationship that goes with it. Part of the Christian experience is having a relationship with a fellowship of believers.

When someone lives as a hermit from society, he or she tends to become eccentric. Isolating oneself from others begins to affect the mind; the brain atrophies. You become socially inept. ([Take it from a recovering hermit.](#)) In the same way, it's important for Christians to be social with fellow believers in corporate worship and gatherings to avoid becoming spiritually eccentric and inept.

Church is part of God's gift, so Christians should do their very best to find a biblical Church in which they can grow into mature members of God's family. See also [1 Corinthians 12:12 – 14](#).

In [John 13:35](#) Jesus says, "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another."

HE knew that the love and unity of the Church could be a powerful part of our witness to the world in the last days. Conversely, the **devil** surely realizes that the world would disbelieve by our division. **He** has been working toward that goal since the beginning.

Think of the **devil** as a wolf stalking a lamb. **He** knows that as long as the lamb is with the flock or close to the shepherd, the lamb is safe. But if the wolf can chase and scatter the flock from the shepherd and from one another, **he** can easily bring down a lamb that has strayed. The **devil** wants to separate from the flock the lambs (**baby Christians who are more vulnerable**) so he can destroy them.

As it says in [Hebrews 10:25](#), we need to be firmly committed to corporate worship and assembly-especially "so much more, as ye see the day approaching." Do you see the day of the Lord approaching?

<https://www.amazingfacts.org/news-and-features/news/item/id/10925/t/do-we-really-need-to-go-to-church->

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### Do Christians Need to go to Church?

Please watch: "The ONE Thing Every Christian Should Be Doing But Most Are **NOT!**"

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=slK6HI8tUTY> **8 min**

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### Why do People Need to Go to Church?



Have you gotten strayed away from going to Church on a consistent basis? Or you're going but you're **not** involved? Today I want to talk about why you need to get back in Church. **INTRODUCTION:** Hey everyone my name is Allen Parr and thank you for visiting my channel. We release new videos every single Tuesday and today we are talking about why it's important to go to Church. I'm **not** sure what your reason is for **not** going consistently but I want to give you 5 - reasons why you should go to Church.

1. Christ a. Jesus went to the place of worship every Saturday consistently. So, if we want to be like Jesus we should attend regularly. b. Also, the Bible refers to the Church as the bride of Christ ([Eph. 5:24](#); [Rev. 19:7 - 9](#)) which means it's the most important thing to HIM. So, when we neglect or disregard the Church as **not** being important, what we are saying is "Jesus I love me some you, but I **don't** love your wife."

2. To Contribute a. One of the biggest problems is that people see Church primarily for what they can get out of it instead of what they can contribute to it. b. I've got news for you. The Church needs you. You have experiences, gifts, talents and a testimony that someone in the Church is **not** benefitting from what you have to give because you are not involved. c. Might I remind you also that the Bible is very clear that one day we will have to give an account to God for how we used the gifts HE's given us.

3. Children a. Even if you **don't** believe in regular attendance, do it for your children. Church is a great place for them to learn about moral, ethical behavior and to receive a solid foundation that the Bible says that when they get older there is a high likelihood that they **won't** depart from it. b. It can also be a place for them to discover their gifts and talents and learn about the value of community at a young age.

Also, statistics show that couples who attend Church together are 35% less likely to **divorce** than couples who **don't**.

4. Community a. Care – When you are going through your most difficult seasons of life the Church is designed to be a place where you can be surrounded by people who genuinely care about you, will pray for you and hold you up at times when you **can't** stand by yourself. Also, within community is... b. Counsel – The Church is a great place to go if you're going through a difficult time in your life and you need counsel or maybe you have a big decision to make and you need someone to help you process it. c. But also within this community are opportunities for you to grow **spiritually** through Bible studies, conferences, or the Sunday morning experience.

5. The fifth and final reason is somewhat of a selfish one but that is... 5. Connections a. Wherever you want to be in life you will **not** get there alone. And so... b. The Church is a great place to make personal and professional connections that may help you get your family and/or your business where you want them to be. **ENCOURAGEMENT:**

So, I'm **not** sure what your reason is for why you **don't** go to Church but I want to encourage you first of all to forgive those who may have hurt you in Church and then to find a Church that is committed to teaching the word of God and one that you can experience the blessing of **true**, genuine, authentic community

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GQhzWW-dauY> 4.45 min

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### Why Should Christians Attend Church? => [By Dale A. Robbins](#)

For believers, there is **no** substitute for attending Church. Besides something that pleases God, it is necessary for a believer's **spiritual** well - being. For shut-ins or invalids who **aren't** able to go to Church, the ministries on radio or TV might be the only kind of fellowship or **spiritual** nourishment that they get. God certainly understands the circumstances of these people and recognizes the sincerity of their hearts. However, it is a different matter for those who could attend Church but are too lazy or put other things such as entertainment and amusements before God, or who harbor bitterness or indifference toward other believers.

It is important to attend Church for the following reasons:

#### (1) It is an Expression of our Love for God

Going to Church is a visible, tangible expression of our love and worship toward God. It is where we can gather with other believers to publicly bear witness of our faith and trust in God, something that is required of all Christians (**Matt. 10:32 - 33**) -- and it is where we can bring HIM offerings of praise, thanks, and honor, which are pleasing to HIM.

The psalmist wrote, "I will declare YOUR name to MY brethren; In the midst of the assembly I will praise YOU" (**Psa. 22:22**). People are often motivated toward Church attendance for how it will bless themselves, however we should **remember** that the primary purpose of the corporate gathering is to bring "service" to the Lord as a blessing to HIM (**Psa. 134:2**). Indeed, the Lord is deserving of our time and energy to honor HIM with our service of devotion. "You are worthy, O Lord, To receive glory and honor and power; For YOU created all things, And by YOUR will they exist and were created" (**Rev. 4:11**).

#### (2) It builds up our **Spiritual** Strength

Receiving the preaching and teaching of the Word of God increases our faith and builds us up **spiritually**. Every believer knows what it is to face **spiritual** conflicts to their faith, and must realize the importance of being fed **spiritually** so that they can overcome the challenges.

Paul states that Christians face a wrestling match with the **Devil** and **his evil spiritual** forces and warns that the Church must put on **spiritual** armor for protection, as it will take everything at our disposal to stand (**Eph. 6:10-18**). How important that we take every opportunity available to receive ministry and strength from God's Word. "So, then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (**Rom. 10:17**).

### (3) It brings a special visitation of the Lord's Presence

There is the promise of a special visitation of the Lord's presence whenever two or more gather specifically in the name of Jesus. By implication, this means whenever "Jesus" is the object of gathered prayer, worship, praise, preaching, etc.

Even though Jesus resides within the heart of every believer, HE honors a gathering in HIS name by coming in the "midst," with HIS power, awareness, and anointing. In such a gathering, Christ is able to do things in hearts that HE may **not** at any other time. The scripture says that God inhabits the praise of HIS people (**Psa. 22:3**), and in such an atmosphere the **Holy Spirit** will often manifest spiritual gifts that minister to the body of Christ. "For where two or three are gathered together in MY name, I am there in the midst of them" (**Matt. 18:20**).

### (4) It provides fellowship with other Christians

Gathering together also has compounded importance to the relationship of the Christian brethren. The Bible makes it clear that a right relationship with God requires a "vertical" and "horizontal" alignment -- that is, we must have a vertical fellowship with God and a horizontal fellowship with other believers. It is **not** possible to love God and refuse to love the brethren. If you have a problem loving other Christians, you have a problem in your relationship with God. Scripture warns us that unforgiveness toward others will void God's forgiveness of our own **sins** (**Matt. 6:15**).

John wrote, "He who says he is in the light, and **hates** his brother, is in darkness until now. He who loves his brother abides in the light, and there is **no** cause for stumbling in him" (**1 John 2:9 - 10**).

One of the most important reasons that we go to Church is to practice love toward the brethren in the form of fellowship. The Bible clearly shows that if we have a right relationship with God, we have fellowship with other believers.

"But if we walk in the light as HE is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the **blood** of Jesus Christ HIS Son cleanses us from all **sin**" (**1 John 1:7**). Keeping ourselves in love and harmony with other believers keeps us humble before God so that Christ's **blood** can continue to cleanse us from our **sins**.

### (5) It is an act of obedience to God

**Not** to be forgotten, going to Church is also a matter of obeying God's Word. The writer of the Hebrew epistle tells us **not** to forsake assembling together, implying that continued absence can lead to willful **sin**. "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. For if we **sin** willfully after we have received the knowledge of the **truth**, there **no** longer remains a sacrifice for **sins**," (Heb. 10:24 - 26).

Once again, we are reminded that a great part of the purpose of the gathering is for the consideration of our brethren, coming together to help motivate and encourage one another. This is a responsibility charged to every believer. To reject Church attendance, is a rejection of one of the sacred duties of the believer. "Therefore, to him who knows to do good and does **not** do it, to him it is **sin**" (James 4:17).

(6) It provides accountability to spiritual leadership

More strong evidence that proves that we're to be a part of a Church fellowship, is that we're told to submit to the authority of **spiritual** leaders (**within the boundaries of God's Word**).

"Obey those who rule over you, and be submissive, for they watch out for your souls, as those who must give account. Let them do so with joy and **not** with grief, for that would be unprofitable for you" (Heb. 13:17). God designed this system of accountability for the progress and protection of HIS flock. Obviously, this really **isn't** possible unless we are a part of an organized fellowship which has identified elders, pastors, or leaders. It is easy to see that one **cannot** genuinely be under submission to a TV pastor who has never met you. Nor is it possible to be under submission by visiting a different Church each week. The Bible tells us to know them that are over us in the Lord (1 Thes. 5:12).

Submission necessitates a commitment and relationship to a local body of believers and to their **spiritual** leaders.

(7) It combines our **spiritual** strength in prayer

The Bible indicates that agreement in prayer with other believers has special favor with God. "Again, I say to you that if two of you agree on earth concerning anything that they ask, it will be done for them by MY Father in **heaven**" (Matt. 18:19). There is multiplied strength in the combined faith of God's people, and it is clear that greater **spiritual** gains can be realized through corporate prayer and worship. This agrees with how God has historically blessed the union of HIS people in battle against their **enemies**. "Five of you shall chase a hundred, and a hundred of you shall put ten thousand to flight; your **enemies** shall fall by the sword before you" (Lev. 26:8).

### (8) It honors the Lord's Day

The fourth commandment of the law that God gave Moses was to set aside the seventh day of the week, Saturday, as a **Holy** day to the Lord. "**Remember** the Sabbath day, to keep it **Holy**" (Ex. 20:8). This was, and will always remain, the official Sabbath.

However, after Jesus rose from the **dead** on the first day of the week, Sunday, the early Christians began meeting together on this day as well as with the Jewish community in the synagogues on the Sabbath. History indicates that due to the enmity of the orthodox Jews toward the Christian Jews in their midst, the Jewish Christians were eventually ostracized.

And although they were **no** longer bound to a rigid code of laws (Gal. 3:10 - 11, Col. 2:16), it is believed that they came to view Sunday as a combined observance of the Sabbath and the resurrection day of Jesus (Acts 20:7, 1 Cor. 16:2). This day of Christian worship came to be called the Lord's Day (Rev. 1:10), a day to fellowship in celebration of the resurrection, to worship, pray and study the Word together.

Today, the Christian Jew or gentile, is free from the bondage of the old law. The indwelling of God's **spirit** has brought a new way for Christians to fulfill the desires of God through HIS love (Gal. 5:18, Rom. 13:8 - 10). However, the new covenant does **not** invalidate the relevance of the ten commandments as they pertained to God's wishes for HIS people. As much as it remains God's desire for man **not** to **kill**, steal or commit adultery, God is still very much pleased for believers to honor HIM on a day reserved for HIM, out of their love for HIM and HIS people.

<http://www.victorious.org/pub/why-church-169>

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### Why Would I Want To Go To Church?

Christianity is **true**, verifiable, and provable; so, it makes sense to find a great Church to learn more about God, Jesus, and the Bible. Still, most people who have **not** been to Church in a while need the answers to two **questions**:



[Can a person be a Christian and \*\*not\*\* attend Church?](#)



## How do I go about finding a good Church?

We explore both of these issues on this page.

Can a person be a Christian and **not** attend Church?

This is a valid **question**, since going to Church does **not** save people. They are saved (**and get to go to heaven**) by getting right with God. Still, getting right with God is only the start of being a Christian, as a birth is only the start of having a life.

We understand that some people may find themselves in a position where they do **not** attend Church for a short time. (**Perhaps they just moved to a new city and have not found a Church or are in the hospital and can not physically go to Church.**). That is **not** what we are referring to in this section.

This section is about people who **can not** be bothered with going to Church and purposefully and consistently stay away from Church. We believe that such people **can not** remain Christians for at least three reasons:

1. The Bible has **no examples** of anyone who was right with God but also stood alone and did **not** spend time with other believers. **Hebrews 10:23 - 25** tells us clearly that we should gather together and encourage and spur one another on toward love and good deeds.

2. In **Ephesians 5:21 - 33**, Paul tells us how husbands and wives ought to relate to one another. There, **HE** teaches that Christ relates to the Church as if it were **HIS** “bride.” **HE** always wants the best for her and loves the Church so much that **HE** gave **HIMSELF** up for her (**Ephesians 5:25**). If you told someone, “I love you and I want to have a close relationship with you, but I **can’t** stand being around your spouse at all,” you might get a punch in the nose!

3. In the same way, people who say, “I love Jesus, but I do **not** want to have anything to do with the Church,” are putting up a wall between themselves and Jesus.

4. Using figures of speech, **Ephesians 5:23** and **Colossians 1:18** refer to Christ as the “head” and the Church as the “body.” **1 Corinthians** chapter 12 further explains how the Church (**the body**) is made up of individuals who work together, pooling their

talents, skills, and strengths — all for the purpose of helping as many people as possible get right with God and grow closer to HIM. To refuse to be a part of the body is to say that we do **not** want to follow God’s plan. In a sense, such people believe that by acting on their own that they have a better plan than God does. There is a lot of arrogance in such thinking.

### A Special Comment

Church can be a gathering of thousands in a “mega-church.” It could also be a few people getting together for breakfast at a restaurant and helping each other “grow in Christ,” since Jesus says, “For where two or three come together in my name, there am I with them” ([Matthew 18:20](#)).

“Growth in Christ” happens when we meet to “spur one another on toward love and good deeds” ([Hebrews 10:24](#)) or “sharpen” each other ([Proverbs 27:17](#)). It does **not** have to be in a Church building on Sunday morning.





It is possible that some of us may live where there are **no** Churches close by, or those that are available do **not** follow the Bible. We still have a responsibility to do all we can to locate other believers and get together with them. We may need to start something on our own and do our best to help people around us get right with God, so we can grow from there.

### How do I go about finding a good Church?

Unfortunately, the only exposure many of us have had to a Church is seeing someone on TV ([who also happened to be a little strange](#)).

Others might make a plunge and go to a Church because someone invited them.

However, you can still have one or more of the following reactions:

-  “What they had to say had nothing to do with the real world.”
-  “They used weird talk, lots of words I never heard before.”
-  “They **didn’t** really use the Bible, and I **didn’t** learn anything new.”
  
-  “They seemed more interested in my money than anything else.”

☹️ “The music was pretty **bad**.”

☹️ “They asked the new folks to stand up and introduce themselves.”

☹️ “Frankly, the people I met there seemed a little odd. They also seemed to have their own personal opinion of everything.”

Actually, Church should be:

😊 Practical and relevant to today’s world.

😊 Use normal language.

😊 Follow the Bible, using it as their only source of God’s truth, and their final authority.

😊 Let the visitors know that they are **not** expected to give any money.

😊 Have good music.

😊 Allow people to visit the Church without putting them “under a spotlight” or have them do something they would **not** normally do in public.

😊 Teach the **truth**, **not** existentialism.

“Existentialism” probably needs some clarification. The formal definition is “each person exists as an individual in a purposeless universe, who must oppose the hostile environment through the exercise of their free will.”

Put simply, this says that since we are “on our own” in the universe, we can believe anything that seems right to us. But does believing something make it **true**? For **example**, if someone told you to use the brake on your car instead of the accelerator because it “made sense to them,” how far would you get? Obviously, you need to be told the **truth**, so you can use the accelerator to make your car move.

The same thing is **true** of Christianity. Since it is **true**, verifiable, and provable; we need to know the **truth** — **not** some person’s opinion or interpretation. It just makes sense — if God is really God, HE should know exactly what we need and how to tell us using the Bible.



So now the **question** is, how do I find a good Church in my area? To help you get started, we placed several links below. The first link will give you an **example** of what you should look for in a good Church teaching. You will find it more interesting than you first suspect. The second link will give you **examples** good Church music. (**They are also better than you might think they would be.**) The next two links should lead you to better – than - average Churches. Sometimes the first Church you try will be perfect (**it happened to my brother – in - law, who lives 1000 miles from here**). Sometimes the first Church you try will be less-than-ideal.

Use the checklists above. If you attend a service and they do **not** do any of the **bad** things, and do all of the good things, then you located a winner. Even a great Church may miss on one minor point (**such as passing an offering plate past everyone**) but it should consistently pass this test. Never accept a Church where the speaker does **not** teach the **truth** out of the Bible. If the Church you try fails your test, scratch it off your list and try a different one next Sunday. **Remember** that you are looking for a source of eternal **truth** and it is worth some time and effort.

<http://www.clarifyingchristianity.com/church.shtml>

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### **10 reasons** why going to Church can make you feel better

Everybody has their reasons for going to Mass. Here are my **top 10**.

#### 1. What a wonderful way to start your day.

Ah, yes, the weekend is finally here. Friday and Saturday came and went, and inevitably, Sunday morning rolls around. If you're like most Catholics, the thought of going to Church is somewhere in your mind – even if it's waaayy far back there. You know you should go, that's what a good Catholic would do.

You want to be a good Catholic, you really do. But this is your day off, and you're tired. And let's be honest – the snooze button seems a lot more appealing.

Waking up for Mass in the morning can certainly be difficult. If that's the main problem, there are evening Masses, but you probably already knew that. And if that's **not** the only issue, surely you might come up with another excuse to skip. Your intentions are good, but you **don't** follow through. This prevalent occurrence is a reality in today's world. But, ladies and gentlemen, we **can't** make excuses for God.

Catholics need to go to Church, people. And **don't** be a Chreaster, either. Chreasters are folks who show up to Church only about twice a year ... on Christmas and Easter. **Don't** be one of those.

So, rise and shine. It really is the best way to start your Sunday.

## 2. Going to Church weekly is good for you.

Studies have found that attending Mass is directly linked with enhancing your mood and improving your **spiritual** health. Supposedly it boosts the immune system and decreases **blood** pressure. It's an opportunity to strengthen your faith.

Your faith is something to be proud of, and **not** only is it good for you, but you will feel good about yourself. Potentially, it will give you a sense of purpose. If you attend with your family, a closer bond may develop.

A new report from Gallup found that the happiest people are those who frequently go to a place of worship. And happiness, my friends, is crucial to our well-being. By doing this regularly, this enables the Church to center and ground you. It will bring you the joy you crave, and the humility you need.

## 3. Whatever you are dealing with, religion is always part of the answer.

In our everyday lives, there are curve balls and ups and downs. Life is fair to no one. Attending Church is a nice habit that will bless your life and produce positive results. It may help you understand what you are dealing with, or at least gain a better perspective.

In tough times especially, you will find that attending Church is full of benefits and only one outcome – a good one. It's uplifting, motivating, and inspiring. Simply put – practicing religion is good for your soul.

## 5. It is peaceful.

Mass can be a time of relaxation for you. A glorious hour of prayer and reflection can do wonders for your mind, body, and **spirit**. It's a time to listen, to give thanks, to forgive and to worship. Ultimately, this will bring you inner peace.

## 5. Gain relationships.

Going to Church is **not** just that. Going to Church means you become part of the parish family. It's **not** something you do by yourself. It's a reminder that you are **not** alone.

You do this together, with other people, which will remind you that you have a supportive community by your side. These community members may become some of your closest friends. The people you see every Sunday will look for you to say hello. They will miss you if you **aren't** there. They will keep you in their thoughts in prayers in a time of need. They will encourage and support you.

## 6. Keeps Jesus Christ the center of your life.

It is of great significance to be in God's presence. Personally, I think of it as setting apart a time for God because he more than deserves my time. It's in gratitude for what Christ has done for me. We are called to be disciples and follow the Lord's commandments. If you're a Christian and God is in the center of your life, you're doing it right.

The Son of God sacrificed his life and **died** for our **sins**. The least we can do is take one hour of 24, one day of the week to visit HIS **Holy** Place. Anyone who claims to be a follower of Christ should do so. During Mass, receiving the Body and **Blood** of our Lord brings us into a continuous reminder that God is with us and in us. If we believe that, then it has a huge effect on our behavior and mindset.

## 7. You learn about your faith.

Things said in the Mass have the ability to open your mind and speak to you. Hearing the Word of God is special and has a lot of meaning to be interpreted. Each Gospel has a story, and homilies come with life lessons. You may even start to incorporate these teachings into your life. It's an opportunity to grow mentally and **spiritually**, plus it can be pretty interesting.

## 8. Helps you **heal**.

Certainly, many Churchgoers struggle with behaviors they would like to change, but on average, regular Church attendees drink less, smoke less, use fewer recreational drugs and are less **sexually** promiscuous than others.

The Church offers guidance and acceptance, reconciliation and everlasting love. Whatever you are going through, the Church can help you through it.

## 9. What better way to prepare for your week?

It's a fresh start for the next seven days. Practicing your faith, consistently, is something to be proud of. You will be challenged, you will learn, you will grow. It's a good example for those around you.

There are many important and valuable parts of life. Practicing your faith religiously – **no** pun intended – is one of them.

So, make it a priority. Let it be a part of who you are. Set a good **example** for your children. If you devote yourself, you will be rewarded ... in this life, and the next.

## 10. For the last reason: why **don't** you go and find out?

<http://catholicphilly.com/2015/07/commentaries/10-reasons-why-going-to-church-can-make-you-feel-better/>

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

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[extra@marriagesecondtimeplus.org/](mailto:extra@marriagesecondtimeplus.org/)

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**Does God Care If I Don't Go to Church?**

Is it acceptable to be a Christian and **not** go to Church?

Find out here.

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There are many Christians who love going to Church but there are also many Christians who **don't**. It has become increasingly popular for Christians to stay at home and find alternative methods to practice their faith including prayer, meditation and personal Bible study. Many people who **don't** attend Church regularly or at all wonder what the point of going to Church is if they have a personal relationship with God. While **not** attending Church will **not** send you to **hell** or make God love you any less, it is **not** what God hoped for HIS people and can hinder **spiritual** growth.

First, to understand why God cares if we go to Church, it's important to understand the definition of Church. Church is commonly understood to be a building used for public Christian worship but the biblical definition characterizes the Church as people. We see the word Church used in the Bible multiple ways. First, it is described as the body of Christ. The Church is often defined as a local assembly or group of believers. Paul, who was called to be an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, says in his greeting "To the

Church of God in Corinth, to those sanctified in Christ Jesus and called to be HIS Holy people, together with all those everywhere who call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ – their Lord and ours: Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Corinthians 1:2). This is just one example of the Church being defined as company or assembly.

Next, the Church is defined as the body of living, individual believers.

When Paul preaches the Gospel after receiving it by revelation from Jesus Christ, he says, “For you have heard of my previous way of life in Judaism, how intensely I persecuted the Church of God and tried to destroy it” (Galatians 1:13).

Paul also said, “For I am the least of the apostles and do not even deserve to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the Church of God” (1 Corinthians 15:9). Both of these verses signal that the Church is a body of living people.

Finally, it is defined as the universal group of all people who have trusted Christ through the ages. When Peter makes his confession of Christ, Jesus replies, “And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build MY Church, and all the powers of hell will not conquer it” (Matthew 16:18). From these examples, we see that Church is not something we do individually. It is something we do collectively. A very important aspect of Christian life is not just what you do by yourself but also what you do together with other people. Biblically, the Church is considered to be the “family of God”. We understand family to be a group that is mutually dependent on each other. The same goes for the Church. If we don’t attend Church, we are negating what God intends for HIS people: community.

One reason we know that God valued Church is because Church it is what Jesus did. The Bible tells us, “[Jesus] went to Nazareth, where HE had been brought up, and on the Sabbath day HE went into the synagogue, as was HIS custom” (Luke 4:16). This was in line with the obeying of the Ten Commandments, the fourth being, “Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it Holy”. As followers of Christ, we are called to do what Jesus has done. Just as Jesus would go to Church, we as followers should do the same. We are called by God to do so.

God wants us to go to Church is because it’s a good habit. The Bible says, “Some people have gotten out of the habit of meeting for worship. But we must not do that. We should keep on encouraging each other, especially since you know that the day of the Lord’s coming is getting closer” (Hebrews 10:25). Scripture tells us that it is a good habit to regularly attend Church and worship. Church is important for fellowship. It is also a place where we come together to not only hear God’s Word, but also encourage each other. We do this not only through prayer, but also by being involved in classes, groups and serving where we get to know, pray, help and encourage others on an intimate level. Church is a good habit and when it is a regular part of our practice, we benefit and those who we are in community with benefit as well.

When we become Christians, we attend Church **not** simply because it's a good habit for growing in **spiritual** maturity. We join a Church because it's what Christ called us to do and who Christ made us to be – members of HIS body. When we are in are union with believers, we are in union with Christ.

There are many reasons Christians make for **not** liking or going to Church. Some of the reasons are warranted. If your local Church is **not** directed in Scripture and **not** centered in Christ, this is cause for alarm.

If money consumes the Church and is used recklessly or the Church teaches **false** doctrine, this is **not** in line with the New Testament outlines for the Church. If you've experience any of these things, these are good reasons to leave your Church and find another.

If you are rejecting the Church, it's time to examine where your heart is and why you are closing yourself off. There are many who reject worship because they are uncomfortable with the style of worship or reject mission because it's uncomfortable. However, being a part of a community of believers is what we are called to be as Christians. If you are rejecting parts of the body of Christ, it will hinder your own **spiritual** growth.

Church is a place where we go to be inspired to model our lives after Jesus', to live more Godly lives, and to discover our sense of purpose. The Church helps us see that we are here to serve and to love. Instead of occasionally going to Church or shutting it off all together, make Church attendance a priority. It is a part of who we are as believers. Yes, there are a million other things we could be doing on a Sunday but none of these reasons outweigh being in fellowship and mission. This is what God wants for you.

Read more at <https://www.beliefnet.com/faiths/christianity/articles/does-god-care-if-i-dont-go-to-church.aspx#1pWuH6udp5HdZUQX.99>

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## Church

People often ask, “Why is Church important? Why do I need to go to a Church once I'm saved?”

The Bible encourages believers — new and old alike — to “grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ” ([II Peter 3:18](#)). The first step in this process is to become actively involved in the ministry of a local Church.

All Christians are members of the body of Christ. In fact, Church is **not** just a building but a group of people who have decided to follow Christ as their Savior.

It is God's will that Christians meet together as a **spiritual** body on the local level, which they have been doing for nearly 2,000 years. A number of New Testament letters were written to local groups of believers in different parts of the Roman Empire.

There are four main reasons we need Church.

**First**, we need to identify ourselves with God's people, to be counted as Christ's followers, to come together and remain strong in the faith. Interaction with other believers builds friendship and gives **spiritual** stability. The writer of [Hebrews 10:25](#) admonished the first-century followers of Christ: "Let us **not** neglect our Church meetings, as some people do, but encourage and warn each other, especially now that the day of HIS coming back again is drawing near" (TLB). We **cannot** overemphasize the importance of fellowship in the Church.

There is something about fellowship within the body of believers in the local Church that is unique and **cannot** be found elsewhere. If one live coal falls from the **fire**, it soon grows cold. The same principle holds **true** in the **spiritual** sense. To neglect fellowship in Church is to give up the encouragement and help of other Christians. We gather together to share our faith and strengthen one another in the Lord.

**Second**, Church brings people together for worship. There is nothing to compare with the work of the **Holy Spirit** in a Christian's heart and mind during the singing of hymns and songs of praise, public Scripture readings, prayer and the teaching of God's Word.

**Third**, regular and accurate teaching of the Bible helps us grow and live successfully as Christians. Teaching that is in step with biblical **truths** convicts us to do what's right and helps us lovingly hold our fellow Christians accountable.

**Fourth**, Church is ideal for serving Christ and others. The evangelist Billy Graham once wrote, "I would choose a Church which opens its arms to everyone with a **spiritual** need, regardless of social standing or race, one which has concerns about the social **sins** of the community, which has a missionary vision and **spirit** which cooperates with any worthwhile effort to bring Christ to the world. I would also choose a Church which is worthy of one's (**financial gifts**), and where I could unstintingly give of my talents and capabilities for the glory of God." As we seek a Church like this, we will have the opportunity to minister to others. Our lives will bear witness to Christ's love ([Matthew 5:16](#)).

#### Other things to look for in a Church

Churches differ by congregation and community, but the main goal is to find one that focuses on teaching the Bible. Key teachings include: the Bible as the **true**, authoritative Word of God ([II Timothy 3:16](#)); there is one God who exists in three persons — God the Father, God the Son (**Jesus**) and God the Holy Spirit ([John 14:26](#); [Matthew 28:18 - 19](#));



salvation by grace through faith ([Ephesians 2:8 - 9](#)); and **spiritual** maturity that develops as Christians dedicate themselves to prayer, studying the Bible and obeying God ([II Timothy 3:16 - 17](#); [Colossians 2:6 - 7](#)).

**No Church is perfect.** Every Church is made up of **sinners** who struggle with the same things you do, so fellowship might require patience, forgiveness and love. Realize that you, too, are in need of these things.

It's also wise to **not** get involved with groups that call themselves Christians but deviate from the message of the Bible or **don't** practice what they preach. We should, however, still love and care for people who identify with these groups and use opportunities to share our faith with them.

<https://goingfarther.net/basics-of-christianity/church/>

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Superbook Episode 1 - "In The Beginning": When Chris disobeys his father by sneaking into the Quantum lab to look at the Professor's latest invention, he has an accident that

almost destroys the top secret work - in-progress. Chris is mortified and **doesn't** know what he'll say to his father. Superbook intervenes and takes our three heroes on a journey to witness a blistering heavenly battle.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fn-wEOpPsMo> 26 ½ min

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A praying single mother, her children and her powerful God.

Unfortunately society has **bad** expectations for children growing up in a single parent homes but **fear not** because GOD has the final say in the lives of our beautiful children.

God loves mothers / fathers who are raising their babies alone, trust me I know. I have experienced so many amazing testimonies so far a single mum of 3 and I did that through constant prayers over my children since they were born.

After my separation and **divorce** from their father, I was broken and completely lost but I ran straight to Yahweh God and fell on my knees literally begging for restoration and strength. Best thing I ever did. Single mothers must pray constantly over their kids to break **curses** and **bad** expectations cooked up by **enemy** and the society. **Remember** that God is our helper and that we can achieve all things with Christ who strengthens us. Be encouraged, support and love your children and pray over them constantly. Always cover them in the **blood** of Jesus Christ and the armour of God.

I plead the **blood** of Yahshua Jesus Christ upon my testimonies. I pray for every single parent watching this video, May God bless your children abundantly in all they do, may the protection of God be upon them and may HE give your household peace and strength in the name of Yahshua Jesus Christ our lord and savior, amen.

PRAISE GOD! Check out [Isaiah 54 1:17](#)

AMAZING BOOKS THAT HELPED ME. ([Affiliate links](#))

HELP I'M RAISING MY CHILDREN ALONE By TD Jakes: <https://goo.gl/vJOWlp>

PRAYING THE SCRIPTURES FOR YOUR CHILDREN By Jodie Berndt:  
<https://goo.gl/JH7SgR>

Check out my blog <https://herculesinheels.wordpress.com/>

Thank you so much for watching.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IHq7zWF4mR0> 18 min

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### **8 Keys to Knowing God's Will For Your Life**

When I was a young man, I seemed to continually wrestle with knowing God's will for my life. I wanted more than anything to follow HIS plan.

Interestingly, now that I'm "old" (**currently 47 years old**), I still wrestle with doing HIS will in my life. I have come to learn that this is **not** just something that a young person does early in life; it is a lifelong pursuit in order to stay in the exact center of HIS plan and to trust in it!

So, then, how can we know God's plan for our lives?

Over the past twenty-five years that I have been in ministry, I have discovered eight vital keys to knowing God's will and plan for your life. Here they are:

#### 1) Walk with God.

For starters, if you are interested in knowing God's plan for your life, then you must learn to walk with God. You need to develop a relationship with HIM. Christianity is all about relationship rather than just religion.

And so, you must cultivate your relationship with God. You must seek to know HIM and **not** just seek to know about HIM.

You will cultivate that relationship best by spending time in HIS Word, taking time for prayer, and taking every opportunity you can to be involved in Church and small group [Bible](#) study opportunities. When you seek these disciplines in your life, God will begin the first steps to revealing HIS plan to you. [Proverbs 3:5 - 6](#)

<sup>5</sup>Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean **not** on your own understanding; <sup>6</sup> In all your ways acknowledge HIM, and HE shall direct your paths.

#### 2) Surrender your will to God's.

Many times, when we say we are seeking God's will, what we are really wanting to say to God is this: "OK, God, here's what I'm planning to do. Now I need you to rubber stamp this, all right?" I must tell you that this is **not** really effective in finding HIS **true** will.

Before God will begin to reveal HIS will to you, you must be committed to doing whatever it is that HE desires for you to do. God will likely be slow to show you HIS plan if HE knows you will likely **not** do that plan anyway. [Romans 12:1 - 2](#)

<sup>1</sup> I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, **Holy**, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. <sup>2</sup> And do **not** be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

Jesus was willing to die for us, so shouldn't we be willing to live for HIM?

When we surrender to HIM, that is when HE really begins to direct our steps.

3) Obey what you already know to be God's Will.

Many people seem to want to know what God's plan is for their lives, but they overlook the fact that 98% of HIS will is already delineated carefully through HIS Word.

God is very clear about many, many aspects of HIS will. For instance, it is clearly HIS plan that we abstain from **sexual** immorality ([1 Thessalonians 4:3](#)).

If we do **not** obey the things that God has shown us clearly to be HIS will, why would we think HE would reveal any further information regarding HIS plan for our lives?

**Obedience** is an important first step.

4) Seek Godly input.

One key component to finding God's will is to seek the input of godly advisors in your life. If you **don't** currently have 3 to 4 Godly **mentors**, then I would highly recommend that you seek them out right away.

Think of it this way: you should understand that you are basically a composite of the five people you spend the most time with. So, then, it is vital that you choose those three to five people well.

If you choose to surround yourself with godly advisors, they will be instrumental in helping you discern God's plan for your life. But if you surround yourself with people who are far from God, your hope of finding HIS best for your life will be greatly diminished. [Proverbs 11:14](#)

Where there is **no** counsel, the people fall; but in the multitude of counselors there <https://goinswriter.com/tips-writing-book/e> is safety.

The Church is designed to help you greatly with this. I would encourage you to be in Church every single time the doors are opened. The more you involve yourself with a community of believers, the greater your chances will be of finding godly men and women who can help you discern God's will.

5) Pay attention to how God has wired you.

God has created you to fulfill a specific role in this world. There is **no** one else who can achieve completely what God has purposely created you to do.

The Apostle Peter gives us this admonition: [1 Peter 4:10](#)

As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.

God has gifted every one of us to perform a special mission for which we alone were created. How amazing is that? **Wow!**

So, when you seek to discover God's will for your life, pay attention to how HE has gifted you. HIS plan for you will always be directly related to the gifts that HE has bestowed upon you. The great news is that you will automatically be good at whatever it is that HE has called you to do!

6) Listen to God's [Spirit](#).

I experienced a major turning point in my own prayer life when I learned simply to shut up while I was praying. That may sound odd to you, and it seemed odd to me at first.

You see, I used to do all the talking when I prayed to God. But then, several years ago, I read Bill Hybel's book, "[Too Busy Not to Pray](#)". That book completely changed the way I approached God through prayer. Since reading that book, I have added a significant component to my prayer life: listening. I take time to listen to what God might have to say to me.

Practically, the way I go about this is to bring a notepad with me when I sit down to pray. Then I write at the top of several page things like the following:

- "What is the **next step** in my career?"
- "What is the **next step** in my ministry?"
- "What is the **next step** for my family?"
- "What is the **next step** for my marriage?"

- “What is the **next step** in my education?”
- “What is the **next step** in my finances?”

During my prayer time, I meditate on **questions** such as the above. Often, God will start flooding my heart with ideas and information regarding one or more of those **questions**. I write as fast as I can as HE speaks to my heart. What a glorious experience that is to sense HIS **Spirit** on me, guiding my thoughts and words.

Through experiences like this, HE has shown me many times with great clarity what HIS will is for my life. I long for those experiences when HE speaks to me like that. Those times are truly life changing. [John 10:27](#)

My sheep hear MY voice, and I know them, and they follow ME.

<sup>27)</sup> Listen to your heart.

In addition to listening to the **Spirit**, I also recommend listening to your heart. To understand my point here, consider the following passage: [Psalms 37:4 - 5](#)

<sup>4</sup> Delight yourself also in the LORD, and HER shall give you the desires of your heart. <sup>5</sup> Commit your way to the LORD, trust also in HIM, and HE shall bring it to pass. (NKJV)

I love this passage, because it shows me that, when I am walking with the Lord, HE will actually let me do many really cool things that I actually love to do! When you are close to HIM, HE actually begins to shape your desires so that you desire the things that HE has already called you to do.

So then, HIS plan actually becomes a super-exciting adventure. I always have the most fun in life when I am doing God’s will. And that is because HE shapes my personal “wanter” to want to do the things for which HE has actually created me.

8) Take a look at your circumstances.

God often clearly demonstrates HIS plan for our lives by lining up circumstances in obvious ways. And HE also shows us what HIS will is **NOT** for us to do in that same way.

It is **not** HIS will for you to take the job that is **not** offered to you. If you are 5’ 6” tall and weigh 125 lbs., it is **not** likely that God has created you to play professional football.

Over the years, I have discovered that God is pretty good at opening and closing doors. HE even did that for the Apostle Paul and his enterouge in [Acts](#). Take a look at this passage: [Acts 16:6 – 10](#)

<sup>6</sup> Now when they had gone through Phrygia and the region of Galatia, they were forbidden by the **Holy Spirit** to preach the word in Asia.

<sup>7</sup> After they had come to Mysia, they tried to go into Bithynia, but the **Spirit** did **not** permit them.

<sup>8</sup> So passing by Mysia, they came down to Troas.

<sup>9</sup> And a vision appeared to Paul in the night. A man of Macedonia stood and pleaded with him, saying, “Come over to Macedonia and help us.”

<sup>10</sup> Now after he had seen the vision, immediately we sought to go to Macedonia, concluding that the Lord had called us to preach the gospel to them.

So, even Paul had to face closed doors in his ministry. God often uses closed doors to show us clearly what HE does **NOT** want us to do. And HE also uses open doors at times to show us what HE DOES want us to do. Of course, this does **not** mean that every open door is definitely God’s plan, but it does help to give you some basic direction.

#### A Closing Thought:

The next time you begin to ponder God’s plan for your life, I would encourage you to mull over the above eight keys. Use these principles to help you to hone in on HIS plan. And when you seek HIS will earnestly, you will find it!

The wonderful benefit to be a New Testament Christian is that God has added a “want to” to the “have to” aspect of HIS commands. The **Holy Spirit** dwelling within us convicts, prompts, and inspires a desire to follow God wholeheartedly.

<https://www.biblestudytools.com/blogs/chris-russell/8-keys-to-knowing-god-s-will-for-your-life.html>

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Given a little, then really do something with it – or – Given a little and do nothing!

You **can’t** manage even a little - Then the little you have will be taken.

**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 who uses well what he is given - shall be given more, and he shall have abundance. But from the man who is unfaithful, even what little responsibility he has shall be taken from him.

[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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**It's a Miracle**

One of the many ways that God shows HIMself is through miracles. In fact, miracles happen every day around the world. Miracles especially happen to God's children when they pray. This miraculous story is a miracle that modern medicine cannot explain, because this miracle happened through the power of the **Holy Spirit**.

**It's a Miracle!**

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<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3uZjuK2ItTw> **6 min**

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

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**Join up with a volunteer non - profit program.**

Like to have new **positive** friends. 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 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, just maybe might meet the new next Him or Her for YOUR life. This “Web Site” is sponsored by a **Lions Club**.

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**Note:** Yes. Both single people, people dating, and older married people have reviewed (**Well Pre – viewed**) this “WEB SITE” and its **MSTP PDFs** parts so far. As a summary of the parts and up - coming **PDF** 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:** First - one may have a Subscription as over age 18 Adult (**including the open part**) or the open Blog part for only a small fee of \$3 for each month. If you like these ideas and tips – please tell a few others.

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

A new Blog: <http://marriagesecondtimeplus.org/>

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

Also: may like to visit: [www.Tri-CountyRegion.US](http://www.Tri-CountyRegion.US)

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This sponsoring Lions Club does **NOT** endorse all information contained this **PDF # 5** part.

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