

Benefits of Attending Church

Jesus Habit – Disciplines of the Christian faith embodied in the regular life of Jesus

Luke 4:16 So He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up. And as His *custom* was, He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up to read.

Custom: 1) manner; To be accustomed, used to 2) Habit

Hebrews 10:24-25 And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, 25 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.

Manner: 1) custom; habit 2) usage prescribed by law, institute, prescription, rite

Hebrews 10:25 (AMP) Not forsaking *or* neglecting to assemble together [as believers], as is the habit of some people, but admonishing (warning, urging, and encouraging) one another, and all the more faithfully as you see the day approaching.

Forsake: Abandon, desert

Acts 2:42 And they continued *steadfastly* in the apostles' doctrine and *fellowship*, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers.

Steadfastly: 1) to continue all the time in a place 2) to persevere and not to faint

Fellowship: koinonia

1) fellowship, association, community, communion, joint participation, intercourse

2) the share which one has in anything, participation

3) intercourse, fellowship, intimacy

4) a gift jointly contributed, a collection, a contribution, as exhibiting an embodiment and proof of fellowship

God's attitude and Design:

Exodus 20:8 "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. 9 Six days you shall labor and do all your work, 10 but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord your God.

Isaiah 58:13,14 "If you turn away your foot from the Sabbath, From doing your pleasure on My holy day, And call the Sabbath a delight, The holy day of the Lord honorable, And shall honor Him, not doing your own ways, Nor finding your own pleasure, Nor speaking your own words, 14 Then you shall delight yourself in the Lord; And I will cause you to ride on the high hills of the earth, And feed you with the heritage of Jacob your father. The mouth of the Lord has spoken."

Mark 2:27 And He said to them, "The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath.



David's attitude:

Psalms 26:8-12 Lord, I have loved the habitation of Your house, and the place where Your glory dwells. 9 Do not gather my soul with sinners, nor my life with bloodthirsty men, 10 In whose hands is a sinister scheme, and whose right hand is full of bribes. 11 But as for me, I will walk in my integrity; Redeem me and be merciful to me. 12 My foot stands in an even place; In the congregations I will bless the Lord.

Psalms 65:4 Blessed *is the man* You choose, and cause to approach *You, that* he may dwell in Your courts. We shall be satisfied with the goodness of Your house, of Your holy temple.

Psalms 122:1 I was glad when they said to me, "Let us go into the house of the Lord."

Practical Benefits of attending Church:

- You find out you are the church, not the building!
- You have opportunity to be involved
- Have a purpose in life
- Find your giftings
- Take your eyes off your problems
- Encounter with God
- Sense of belonging (family)
- Connection
- Relaxes your nerves
- Better health - Studies showed a 25% lower mortality rate for those who attend religious services at least weekly.
- Regular attendance (especially when you don't feel like it) is like spiritual exercise, training to submit your will to Christ.
- It brings peace and guidance.

Proverbs 27:17 As iron sharpens iron, So a man sharpens the countenance of his friend.

Scriptural reasons:

1. It is an act of obedience to God and it honors the Lord's Day. Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy (Ex. 20:8).
2. 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.
4. We benefit from being taught and led in worship by others, rather than depending on ourselves to read and study the bible.
5. We need regular reminders of our standing in Christ, help in acknowledging and confessing our sins, and teaching about God's truth.
6. We need a conscious break from work, family problems, and self-interests in order to concentrate on the Lord.
7. Keeps us in alignment:

1 John 1:7 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.

8. We need one another

Hebrews 3:12–13 Beware, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God; ¹³ but exhort one another daily, while it is called “*Today*,” lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.

Lies of the devil: He is competing for your priorities!

- You're too busy
- You need a break from church
- You can have too much of church
- You can become too religious



Important Encouragements:

Understand that for each church service you attend, the spirit of God has something special planned for you. It's an opportunity for your life to be improved through the blessing of the Spirit that is imparted to you. Thus it is important that you cultivate the habit of not missing church services. Every church service is specially ordained of God with you in mind. An avenue bringing blessing to his people; to learn God's word so you can grow in grace, and in the knowledge of His word. Never take attending church services lightly irrespective of how busy your schedules might be. Don't allow your job; spouse, children, money, etc. deprive you from going to church. That's God's place of appointment to bless you:

Attitudes:

- People who only attend **Sunday Morning Service Only!** (Smsos)
- Person who attended church like someone punching a time card @ work
- Person who came only for word, and always arrived after the worship
- Persons who disappear right at noon
- People who don't like sermon so they will get up and walk out, or boycott
- People who perform on worship team and jet out the service after their time is up
- People who only attend if there is a guest speaker or prophet. They go for dessert and avoid a healthy steady diet



Observations:

- ✚ When people miss 3-4 weeks, I see digression, never progression in their life
- ✚ The less people attend Christian Services and fellowship the more out of alignment and off kilter their life becomes. They become a train wreck. Nobody plans on backsliding!



Excuses heard on a regular basis:

- ✓ Birthdays (Husband, wife, kids)
- ✓ Anniversary
- ✓ Vacation
- ✓ Sickness
- ✓ Stayed up too late
- ✓ Tired, did not sleep
- ✓ Had rough week - warfare
- ✓ Had to clean house
- ✓ Friends, family in from out of town and they don't want to attend church
- ✓ Favorite football team, NASCAR, etc.
- ✓ Had to cook for after church fellowship

**#1 reason for backsliding:
Not attending Christian fellowship**

Busy: engaged in activity, occupied
Too busy: a relative term, meaning we have prioritized certain activities above other activities.

Q) Why should pastors be concerned about this?

A) A good pastor will be concerned for the state of your soul. Our motivation for wanting you in the house of the lord is encourage you spiritually; to help you, not make you more religious.

Proverbs 27:23 Be diligent to know the state of your flocks, *and* attend to your herds;

Luke 15:4 “What man of you, having a hundred sheep, if he loses one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness, and go after the one which is lost until he finds it?”

One person had a pastor came by the house to visit because he had not been in fellowship. He jumped out the back window and ran away until he left. He referred to his pastor as the Pentecostal police!



Q) What about grace?

- The grace of God should motivate us to be in the house of the Lord not an excuse to live any way we choose, justify ourselves and get away with whatever we want.
- False teaching on grace tries to nullify holiness and convicting teaching from scriptures
- God's grace is not an excuse to sin, but rather a reason to love and serve Him more fully
- True grace is motivated by love, and is not shame or guilt based. No Church should become “The Guilt Center”

1 Corinthians 16:14 Let all *that you do* be done with love