

THE BIBLE VIEW

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Volume: 543 March 3, 2016

I'm Outa There!

Bill Brinkworth

“And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.” Hebrews 10:24-25

Church is the place we should be hearing the Word of God and be strengthened in following the Lord. Our own Bible reading is one way we grow in the things of the Lord. However, God has ordained the local church to also assist us in our spiritual walk. It is there we get spiritual food God has given His appointed preacher to disburse to us. It is there many can hear the Gospel and be saved. It is inside a church that we can find a place of ministry, and where we can serve God.

Going to church is the right thing to do, but many reasons keep people from heeding God's command to attend. I certainly would not give the devil the credit all the time; sometimes our own natural flesh, which struggles at doing right, intervenes and keeps us from attending. Between the two, there are a lot of excuses and wrong decisions

that people use to keep themselves out of church. Here are a few of them that keep too many from attending church:

Sin. Going to church and hearing from God's Word, will remind too many of their sin. To avoid conviction they stay away from church; so they do not get the unpleasant reminders of their wrong doings.

Church hopping. They try this church; then that one; then go to another with a friend. Soon they find themselves out of their routine of faithfulness to the church God had led them to. In a short time, they are not attending church at all.

Discontentment. Folks can easily find a reason for not being happy with their church. "I don't like the way the preacher preaches. He screams too much," or "They sing too much". There is no perfect church; and if there were one, it would not be perfect after we entered.

Hurt feelings. Probably the number one killer of church attendance is when folks get their feelings hurt and leave the church. "No one shook my hand," or "No one even said hello to me. It just is not a friendly church."

Lack of understanding. Many do not have a clue as to what the Bible teaches. If they attend a church that does preach and practice the doctrines taught in the Bible, they do not understand it, do not like it, and leave. Many just go for the religious trappings of the denomination they were

raised in, and do not realize that many “religious” practices are not biblical.

Pride. The old folded-arm excuse, “No one is going to tell me what to do!,” keeps many out of church. They have not figured out that the preacher’s message that got them indignant and wanting to leave was from the Word of God. Often, they leave not because of what the preacher said, but what God said to their heart.

Legitimate reasons. Legitimate excuses for missing church like sickness, or vacations can become a habitual reason for non-attending.

Few excuses are acceptable that keep us from church attendance. We cannot please God, when we are staying home from church. Even the unsaved know where a Christian should be on Sunday morning.

God started the church and sent His Son to die for it. The local church is important to God. Be at one this week! Be faithful in attending one that is teaching what the Bible instructs, and where you believe God has led you to attend.

“For we are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building.” — I Corinthians 3:9

Reasons for Going

Bill Brinkworth

There are two categories of reasons for people's attending church: spiritual and unspiritual reasons. Here are some reasons for attendance that fall under those divisions:

Spiritual:

- "The Word of God is taught, believed, and practiced there."
- "I grow spiritually at that church."
- "The Holy Spirit convicts my heart through the preaching."
- "It is where unsaved people can come and get saved!"
- "The church is a place where I can serve God."
- "The music glorifies and honors God."
- "There are good spiritual influences there."
- "It is a good place for my family to learn more about spiritual things."
- "It is where God wants me."

Unspiritual:

- "I feel good when I listen to the preaching, and don't feel guilty about anything."
- "It's a place to learn about God, but they're not fanatical about it."
- "It is a very modern church. They use the newest "bibles", music, and popular books."
- "It's a good place to get clients for my business."

- “Going there will make me look like a Christian, and people will trust me more in my business.”
- “Going there eases my conscience, and I feel like I am doing something spiritual.”
- “I can give money to them and count it as a tax write-off.”
- “It’s not a strict church. I can do anything I want, and no one says anything.”
- “It is the most popular church in the area.”
- “The services are always entertaining.”
- “It’s a good place to meet girls.”
- “The music is almost the same as I listen to at home; just a few of the words are different.”

Are your reasons for attending church “spiritual” or “unspiritual”?

“The church is not a gallery for the exhibition of eminent Christians, but a school for the education of imperfect ones, a nursery for the care of weak ones, a hospital for the healing of those who need assiduous care.” — Henry Beecher

Not Offered Anywhere Else

Author Unknown

A man, proud of his defiance of many of the teachings of God asked a young Bible student, “What does the church have to offer me that I cannot get elsewhere?”

The young, wise student replied, “The church offers you Jesus Christ, and He is not offered to you anywhere else in the world.”

The City Church

Author Unknown

*God bless the church on the avenue
That hears the city's cry,
The church that sows the seed of the Word
Where the masses of men go by;
The church that makes midst the city's roar
A place for an altar of prayer,
With a heart for the rich and a heart for the poor,
And rejoices in their burdens to share.
The church that's true to the call of Christ,
Who wept o'er the city's need,
And who sent His disciples to labor for Him
Where the forces of evil breed.
The church that gives and the church that lives,
As seen by the Master's eye —
God bless the church on the avenue
That answers the city's cry!*

Found on a Bronx, New York church sign: “Do come in — Trespassers will be forgiven.”

The Atheist Went to Church

Dr. Harry Ironside

The evangelist Billy Sunday used to relate a story of a well-known village atheist who was seen running vigorously to a burning church building intent on joining with others in subduing the flames. A neighbor observing him exclaimed, "This is something new for you! I never saw you going to church before."

The atheist replied, "Well, this is the first time I have ever seen a church on fire."

Who can tell how many might be drawn to God, if the people of God were on fire for Christ and burning with zeal to win the lost?

"The church is not a club of saints; it is a hospital for sinners."