

## 21 Reasons why going to church this Sunday is the best plan

### Reason #1 why going to church this Sunday is the best plan: YOU WILL FIND ETERNAL

**HOPE.** Thinking about God and the things of eternity are very important aspects of our present sense of hope and wellness. The Bible says that *"God has planted eternity in the human heart."* (Ecclesiastes 3:11) It's natural for us to want to think about things that will last forever. When we spend more time thinking about the things that will never end, like God and heaven and God's kingdom, then we tend to be more at peace and less anxious.

Our greatest hope, of course, is found in having a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. 1 John 5:11 says this... *"And this is the testimony: God has given us eternal life and this life is in His Son."*



### Reason #2 why going to church this Sunday is the best plan: SUNDAY IS THE LORD'S DAY.

People often wonder why Christians meet on Sunday and why we call it the LORD'S DAY. The answer is because Jesus rose from the dead on a Sunday. So, when we gather together as a church, just by our very gathering we are honoring Jesus. Luke writes in Acts 20:7...

*"On the first day of the week we came together to break bread."* He's referring to the early church. They gathered on the first day of the week, Sunday. Why? In commemoration of Jesus' resurrection. When we honor Christ by making sure to worship Him on Sunday, we are setting our hearts and our minds on the best thing possible: God. Matthew 6:33 says this... *"Seek ye first, the kingdom of God and His righteousness and all these things will be added unto you."*

Gathering to worship God on Sunday, the first day of the week, is a way of showing God He is first in our lives. Everything else will fall into place after that!



### Reason #3 why going to church this Sunday is the best plan: YOU WILL EXPERIENCE THE PRESENCE OF GOD MORE FULLY.

Sometimes we get so busy with the different aspects of our lives, it seems we can't see God or hear from God very easily. That's not surprising.

But when we gather together in fellowship we are better able to focus on the reality and presence of God. I believe that's what Jesus meant when he said in Matthew 18:20... *"For where two or three have gathered together in My name, I am there in their midst."* This is a very famous Bible verse with a very important concept.

God hasn't changed his address... He's everywhere, all the time. But when we come together in His name, our experience of Him is greater. And we certainly need more of God in our lives! In Acts 2:42-43, the early church believers had this same experience... *"They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Everyone was filled with awe..."* Why were they filled with awe? Because when they came together they could help each other see the amazing, all-consuming glory of God.



**Reason #4 why going to church this Sunday is the best plan: FRIENDS.** (Church is a great place to be with friends and to make new friends. (Or, you can sit at home on Sunday morning and watch reruns of Brady Bunch on Netflix.) Being with friends is one of the greatest gifts from God in life. Ecclesiastes 4:9-10 says, *"Two are better than one, because they have good return for their labor. If either of them falls down, one can help the other up. But pity anyone who falls and has no one to help him up."* I may be a bit old fashioned, but the "friends" I have on Facebook are fun and interesting, but they

don't necessarily become my closest friends. Our closest friends are the ones we spend time with in person. I love to see people talking and hanging out together at church. It's such a good and natural meeting place. Plus, if someone is at church like you, there is a really good chance they are seeking good things, not bad, and are the kind of people you want to spend time with. Proverbs 13:20 warns, *"Those who walk with the wise grow wise, but a companion of fools suffers harm."* Church is a great place to find friends. (Oh, and by the way, I met my wife at church!).



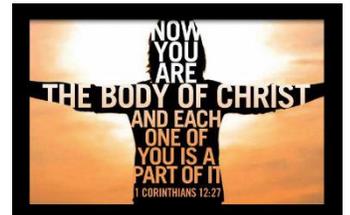
**Reason #5 why going to church this Sunday is the best plan: IT WILL HELP YOU DEFINE WHAT YOU BELIEVE.**

There are so many voices in our current American culture, crying out with different messages, values and beliefs. Which ones are right? Which ones are best? When you gather together in church, studying the Word of God together, you will gain a deeper understanding of WHY you believe what you believe. You won't just learn new facts, you will gain a better foundation for your whole belief structure. Thinking alongside others, sharing ideas and learning together is a great way to challenge and refine your thinking. The Apostle Paul said to the Christians in Colossae, *"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom..."* (Colossians 3:16). Plus, if you take on a teaching role of any kind (Bible Study leader, Sunday School teacher, etc) you will learn exponentially. *"The teacher always learns twice,"* as the saying goes.



**Reason #6 why going to church this Sunday is the best plan: THE BODY OF CHRIST NEEDS YOU.**

The Bible is clear that the church is a body with Jesus as it's head. But the body is made up of many unique parts. One of those unique parts is YOU! Without your uniqueness, the body is not whole. When you participate in the body-life of a church, you will be blessing others. 1 Corinthians 12:12-15 says, *"For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ.... For the body does not consist of one member but of many. If the foot should say, 'Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body,' that would not make it any less a part of the body."* YOU are unique and you have something to contribute. No one is more important or less important – everyone is needed... INCLUDING YOU!



**Reason #7 why going to church this Sunday is the best plan: IT'S WHAT GOD WANTS FOR YOU.**

In the Old Testament, God's people were commanded to observe the Sabbath and rest in God. The Sabbath was the seventh day of the week and His people would rest and worship in recognition of the greatness of God who worked at creation for six days and then rested on the seventh. God said in Exodus 20:5... *"Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the LORD your God. On it you shall not do any work."* By resting and worshipping God on the Sabbath they were "keeping it holy." Holy means "set apart" or "sacred." In the New Testament, Christians now rest and worship God on Sunday, the Lord's Day, in much the same manner. Sunday is the first day of the week and we observe that day in recognition of the resurrection of Christ, which happened on a Sunday. We are "keeping it holy" by resting and worshipping on that day. Plus, Sundays are a time to collectively look forward to the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. Hebrews 10:25 says this... *"Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching."* In American culture today, we are sorely tempted to busy ourselves with other activities: sports, entertainment, food, etc. It takes a conscious decision to set aside Sunday for rest, corporate worship and expectation of Jesus' coming. But when we do, we will be blessed with a peace that is far more important than one more busy activity or amusement.



**Reason #8 why going to church this Sunday is the best plan: TO TEACH YOUR KIDS TO LOVE GOD.**

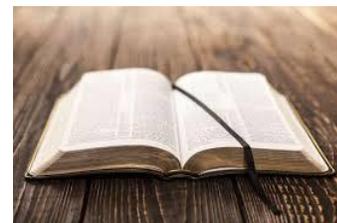
I am so blessed by the young families of our church. They are my heroes! In a culture where so many people are walking away from God and walking towards selfishness and narcissism, the young families that bring their kids to church are wise beyond their years. Kids watch what their parents really do. Kids know what their parents really believe by watching their actions. Josh McDowell wrote, *"You can con a con, you can fool a fool, but you can't kid a kid."* So true. Kids will most often become like their parents. Jesus said in Luke 6:40 that a student will become like his teacher. It doesn't say that a student will become what the teacher teaches him; he will become what his teacher is. Kids will become like their parents. When parents love God by participating in a church family, the kids will more likely do the same. Christian author, Julie Rupp, wrote: *"Our children will learn more about faith from watching us live out our own faith journey... than from us telling them about God."*



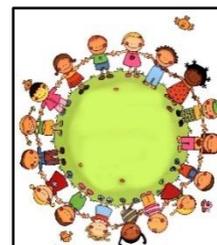
**Reason #9 why going to church this Sunday is the best plan: TO BEAR EACH OTHER'S BURDENS.** Life can be hard, right?! In a moment everything can change. Just when things are going great, a phone call, a diagnosis, or a host of other mishaps can leave you feeling afraid and alone. But those who are a part of a church should never feel alone. The Apostle Paul said to the church at Galatia in Galatians 6:2: *"Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ."* Notice it's a two-way street. When you're feeling down and out, you can come and be lifted up. Conversely, if you're feeling great one Sunday, that's not the time to skip church. That's the time to be there for someone else. Your smile, your simple conversation, your presence may be the thing that encourages someone that day. The word in the New Testament for this is "fellowship." That's the English word for the Greek word "koinonia." It means participating in community. Being active in the group. There's something very special and encouraging about being present with other people in church.



**Reason #10 why going to church this Sunday is the best plan: TO GROW SPIRITUALLY BY LEARNING FROM THE WORD OF GOD.** If you attend a Bible teaching church, then a significant portion of the church service should be dedicated to teaching from the Bible, the written revelation from God. We grow spiritually when we dig in and learn the Word of God. A Christian will desire to learn the Bible, a non-Christian won't. Paul said in 1 Corinthians 1:18... *"For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God."* Also, in 2 Corinthians 2:14, Paul said, *"The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned."* As believers in God, there is something inside us that makes us yearn to know more about God and grow. That "something" is the Holy Spirit. It's the Holy Spirit that is impressing it upon you to go and listen and learn and then put your faith into action. If you have that yearning, that's a good sign! Now, listen to it and respond. Go and learn and grow in God's Word.



**Reason #11 why going to church this Sunday is the best plan: IT WILL HELP YOU RAISE YOUR KIDS.** Raising kids is hard. Being with like-minded people of faith gives you support and fresh ideas. Teaching kids wholesome values like respect, honesty, kindness, compassion, patience, self-assurance, and peace are very important. Those values need to be reinforced by a community of people who agree with you about their significance. When your kids come to church they will learn the Fruit of the Spirit from Galatians 5:22-23... *"... love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control..."* They will learn the Two Greatest Commandments from Matthew 22:37-40... *"Jesus replied: 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'"* They will learn what it means to be born again from John 3:7 and what it means to have the Holy Spirit in their hearts from Romans 5:5. They will learn Jesus' Golden Rule from Luke 6:31... *"Do unto others as you would have them do to you."* PLUS, as your kids are learning, you will meet other parents who are striving to raise their kids with the same faith and values.

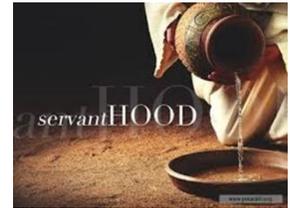


**Reason #12 why going to church this Sunday is the best plan: GOD DESERVES IT!** Really, this is the most important reason of all. God deserves to get the glory always. When we give Him glory on Sundays, it's just a reflection of how we are to give Him His due glory all the time. Psalm 96:7-8 says, *"Ascribe to the LORD, O families of nations, ascribe to the LORD glory and strength. Ascribe to the LORD the glory due his name; bring an offering and come into his courts."* We can give God glory in many different ways: By giving Him thanks in prayer, by singing worship songs, by focusing our attention when we study the Bible, by confessing our sin, etc., etc. There are so many ways to give God the glory. Basically, anytime we increase the reputation of God, we are glorifying Him... anytime we identify great attributes about Him, we are glorifying Him. There are two sides to this: One side is our joy in talking about God's greatness. The other side is that God deserves it, or is due it. Psalm 115:1 declares, *"It does not belong to us, LORD. The glory belongs to you because of your love and loyalty."* God created us for the specific purpose of bringing Him glory. And this, by the way, is not selfish on God's part because He knows that when we praise Him, it is the best thing for us. There is no other activity that will bring us as much fulfillment, joy and blessing than giving God the glory due His name. Commanding us to glorify Him is the most loving thing God can do.



**Reason #13 why going to church this Sunday is the best plan: SO YOU CAN SERVE**

**OTHERS.** Bottom line, church is not primarily a building where you go and watch a spiritual program. Church is people – people coming together to worship God and serve one another. Just think what a church would be like if EVERYONE showed up and waited for the others to serve them. It would be a very lonely place. In fact, no one would come back the next week. NO ONE! People are blessed in church because they find the love of God there. But the love of God is only there when someone expresses it – by serving. The Apostle Paul encouraged the Roman Christians in Romans 12:1... *“Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual act of worship.”* Notice he said that acting sacrificially was an act of worship. Worship is not just singing a song. Worship is any way in which our behavior brings glory to God. When you serve others in church, you are participating in an ancient tradition of exalting God by making church a beautiful and loving place. Jesus said in Matthew 23:11, *“The greatest among you will be your servant.”*



**Reason #14 why going to church this Sunday is the best plan: YOU WILL PRAISE GOD IN**

**SONG.** And those songs will lift you up! God commands us to sing praise songs to Him. Why? Because He knows it will encourage our hearts. Humans are created to worship. We praise things every day. We praise our favorite TV shows, our favorite sports teams, our favorite restaurants. We praise movie stars and athletes and authors. We are creatures of praise. God created us that way. But most of all, He created us to praise **HIM**. Psalm 96:1-2 commands this... *“Sing to the LORD a new song; sing to the LORD, all the earth. Sing to the LORD, praise his name; proclaim his salvation day after day.”* We are commanded to sing. Did you ever think about that? Why would God command us to sing? He knows that there is something inside of us that wants to sing praises; and the greatest object of our praise ought always to be Almighty God. Plus, God knows that it will encourage our spirits when we do. Usually in church I feel like singing, but every once in a while I don't feel like it, so I just listen. And when I just listen, I'm still encouraged. I hear the voices around me and I am reminded of how awesome God is. Psalm 68:4 states... *“Sing to God, sing praises to His name; Lift up a song for Him.”*



**Reason #15 why going to church this Sunday is the best plan: IT WILL HELP YOU THINK**

**ABOUT HEAVEN.** We spend a lot of time thinking about the goings-on of earth; not so much time thinking about God and heaven. The Apostle Paul stated in Colossians 3:2... *“Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things.”* There is so much to worry about these days. We worry about our jobs and making money. We worry about what we own, our houses, our clothes, our cars. We spend so much time trying to make all the earthly stuff work in our lives. And then we tend to slip by without thinking about God and the things of His realm. And, in fact, all throughout the Bible God tells us to think more about Him and how our lives fit into His realm, and not just the earth. We forget that even the greatest thing on earth will pale in comparison to the lowliest thing in heaven. The Apostle John said to beware of this tendency. *“Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him... The world and its desires pass away, but the man who does the will of God lives forever.”* (1 John 2:15,17) Let's come together this Sunday, not to put our head in the sand and deny the world around us, but rather to celebrate that in the midst of so much worry and anxiety, we look forward to a better day in God's kingdom... AND, that God's kingdom is coming in and through our hearts right now.



**Reason #16 why going to church this Sunday is the best plan: TO HEAR THE PREACHING OF GOD'S**

**WORD.** The word “preaching” has fallen on hard times in 21<sup>st</sup> century America. Many people think of that word as bad, as in “condemnation” or “getting up on your moral high horse.” But the Bible says that preaching is simply the act of proclaiming God's Word and His Good News. It's an explanation or a telling of the things of God. Listening to preaching should be an encouraging experience – yes, sometimes convicting – but encouraging, nonetheless; for even in conviction, there is a joyful outcome. Jesus is our model in preaching. The Apostle Paul, the greatest human preacher of all time, said of Jesus in Ephesians 2:17... *“Christ came and preached peace to you who were far away from God, and to those who were near to God.”* Paul, himself, said this about his preaching in Ephesians 3:8-9: *“Although I am less than the least*



of all God's people, this grace was given me: to preach to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, and to make plain to everyone the administration of this mystery, which for ages past was kept hidden in God, who created all things." On Sunday mornings, or any time preaching takes place, there are three active participants: The preacher, the listener, and the Holy Spirit; all three are required for this holy endeavor. Come be a part of the preaching of God's Word.

**Reason #17 why going to church this Sunday is the best plan: IT WILL REMIND YOU OF THE AMAZING SUPREMACY OF GOD.**

We should never domesticate God! God will always be more than we can fully explain or imagine. He is the power creator, the ever-present sustainer and even the keeper of our very futures. And while we know many wonderful things about the character and nature of God, we will never stop being shocked by how big and magnificent and powerful He is.

Recently I've been memorizing Psalm 29 in which it says... *"Ascribe to the LORD, O mighty ones, ascribe to the LORD glory and strength. Ascribe to the LORD the glory due his name; worship the LORD in the splendor of his holiness. The voice of the LORD is over the waters; the God of glory thunders, the LORD thunders over the mighty waters."* (Ps. 29:1-3). The imagery here is telling us of the vast power of God, that He has ultimate supremacy over our world and over our lives. When we come to church, we often remind ourselves of this truth. And reiterating that truth will result in greater peace, knowing that God is in control. The supremacy of God results in our good. In the final words of Psalm 29... *"The LORD sits enthroned over the flood; the LORD is enthroned as King forever. The LORD gives strength to his people; the LORD blesses his people with peace."* Putting God in the place of His glory and power this Sunday will bring blessing and strength into your own heart as you worship.



**Reason #18 why going to church this Sunday is the best plan: TO THANK JESUS FOR DYING ON THE CROSS FOR YOU.**

If it's true – and it is – that because of the forgiveness of sins through Jesus Christ we can have eternal life, then that's surely the biggest reason to be thankful. Without Jesus we have no eternal life. Eternal life is a very long time! Is that worth showing up to church and thanking God for every week? OF COURSE! The Apostle Paul shouted in 1 Corinthians 15:57... *"But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ!"* And again in Ephesians 1:3...

*"Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ."* And again in 1 Peter 1:3... *"Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead!"*

WOW. Again and again the Scriptures exhort us to be thankful for the new life we have through Jesus Christ. THANK YOU JESUS! Because of you I have eternal, never ending, everlasting life!



**Reason #19 why going to church this Sunday is the best plan: BECAUSE A GROUP OF DIVERSE PEOPLE PRAISING GOD IN UNITY SHOWS GOD'S POWER.**

We live in turbulent times filled with division, accusations and hurtful rhetoric. The news is so filled with protests, hate and arguing that it's defeating just to turn on the TV or read online news articles. **People are looking for something different!** People are looking for unity and cooperation and a place of belonging. The gathering of God's people has always been just that. We gather together around the most important purpose of all: WORSHIP. We worship the one true, almighty God... TOGETHER. Psalm 22:22 says, *"I will tell of Your name to my brethren; In the midst of the assembly I will praise You."* Psalm 35:18 says, *"I will give you thanks in the great assembly; among throngs of people I will praise you."* John Piper writes, "Therefore, when human beings with diverse ethnicities, backgrounds, tastes, expectations, desires, priorities, peeves, admirations, and needs join their hearts and minds and voices and actions in unified worship of the one true God through Jesus Christ, a reality has come into the world that is beautifully fitting – it befits the power and the worth of God, whose glory can win such humble, self-forgetting praises from a diverse people." *"How good and pleasant it is when brothers live together in unity!"* (Psalm 133:1)



**Reason #20 why going to church this Sunday is the best plan: BECAUSE IT WILL GIVE YOU A CHANCE TO PRAY FOR OTHERS AND BE PRAYED FOR YOURSELF.**

The Bible says in James 5:16... *"...pray for each other so that you may be healed."* No man is an island – we all need the help of others. And we especially need the spiritual support of people who care about us. Church is the absolutely perfect place for that. At our church people can ask for prayer through our "Welcome Card" process on Sunday mornings. It's easy. You can share your name if you wish or stay anonymous. Sometimes we have an "Open Altar" time of prayer where you can pray for others or ask God for His mighty inward strength. Beyond that, we have dozens of small groups in our church where people pray for one another on a regular basis. ***Praying for each other is so important!*** The Bible says in Colossians 1:9... *"For this reason, since the day we heard about you, we have not stopped praying for you and asking God to fill you with the knowledge of his will through all spiritual wisdom and understanding."* At our church we also have a prayer team that meets mid-week to pray for the needs of the people in church. We take it very seriously, asking God to bring His strength and comfort and help. Jesus said that His house should always be "A HOUSE OF PRAYER." (Luke 19:46)



**Reason #21 why going to church this Sunday is the best plan: BECAUSE SOMEONE INVITED YOU... AND YOU WANT TO GO ANYWAY.**

When I was 14-years-old I got invited to church for the first time. I was a bit unsure at first, but I was also curious. When I went, I was mildly surprised to find a bunch of kids that were fun to be with and were genuinely nice. I also quickly learned that they put a lot of thought into what they were thinking and doing. They really loved God and were striving to work out their faith in a heartfelt way. Looking back, I'm so glad that someone invited me to come! Maybe someone has invited you to go to church recently and you've put it off. You know, you should just go and discover. In the Bible, the person who was famous for inviting someone was Andrew. It says in John 1:40-42, *"Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, was one of the two who heard what John had said and who had followed Jesus. The first thing Andrew did was to find his brother Simon and tell him, 'We have found the Messiah' (that is, the Christ). And he brought him to Jesus."* We get really busy in our American culture. Sometimes we get so busy we don't have time for God. Now is a really good time to change that. Stop saying YES to the busyness and NO to God. God with a friend to church... OR, if no one has invited you recently, go make a NEW friend this Sunday.

