

## 4 Reasons why people either don't or won't come to church.

**Heb 10:19** Therefore, brothers, having boldness to enter into the Holy of Holies by the blood of Jesus,

**Heb 10:20** by a new and living way which He has consecrated for us through the veil, that is to say, His flesh;

**Heb 10:21** and having a High Priest over the house of God,

**Heb 10:22** let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies having been washed with pure water.

**Heb 10:23** Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering (for He is faithful who promised),

**Heb 10:24** and let us consider one another to provoke to love and to good works,

**Heb 10:25** not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.

After reading this passage and living it myself I often wonder why more people won't attend church more often and regularly?

I have talked to several people that I work with as well as those in my own family about this same situation. It takes me back to a time in my life that I chose not to attend and if I did it was at the behest of my father or someone close to me and only on occasion.

### So why is it that people don't want to come to church?

There are several reasons for this but I will only cover a few that I hear most often.

**1<sup>st</sup>:** One of the most common and most used reason that people don't come to church is that they feel that they have done so much and are so bad that even God cannot forgive or love them.

I had talked to a young man at work about church and why he doesn't go, what he said to me made me think and broke my heart. He said that he doesn't go because of the things in his past, that he hears preachers talk about drinking issues and how God has brought them from that to where are, but he said he was much worse than that and God couldn't love or forgive him for what he has done. That every time he walks into a church he feels every eye on him and it makes him feel self-conscious.

**2<sup>nd</sup>:** Another reason I see that some people don't go to church is that **they are living in a situation in which they believe that a church would not accept them or would judge them for it.**

Let's face it; Christians are not the most accepting people sometimes. We get saved and we start to look around us and judge those people that don't fit into our belief structure,

Whether these people are alcoholics, drug addicts, unmarried and living together, gay, or it could be just about anything that doesn't fit what we believe that the Bible teaches we start to look down on these individuals.

The worst person on smoking is one that used to smoke.

I know of a couple of people that I am in contact with that have problems with drinking and when approached about church they say they just wouldn't be comfortable there because of the life they are currently living. **They wouldn't be accepted so what's the point.**

**3<sup>rd</sup>:** **They are Mad at God for something that happened in there life.** Whether it is the loss of a loved one such as a spouse or a child or some situation in their lives that caused them hurt or pain to such a magnitude that God was their only hope and He never showed up.

What can you say to a woman who as a child was molested by her father a person who was there to protect her from harm, or woman who has lost a spouse or a child, when they ask where was God when this was happening?

**How can you say God loves me when he let this happen to me?**

After the death of my 4-year-old grandson who lived with me from birth to death I felt some of the same anger and frustration with God. Why did you take such an innocent young child, where were you when he got sick, why did he have to die? Instead of turning to God at that time of my life to seek out the answer I turned to the bottle and spent many years away from the church and from God.

**4<sup>th</sup>:** They think that they **will have to give up their lifestyle if they start coming to church.**

Some people actually like how they are. **They don't see any problem with how they live or what they do and don't want to give it up.**

These are just a few of the reasons why people don't or won't come to church, there are many more like someone in the church whether it is a pastor or someone they depended on let them down or many other reasons.

**Maybe you or someone you know falls into one or all of these categories.**

## **So how do we approach these people and these situations?**

First I want to say this; before I became a minister and an assistant Pastor of my church I was an alcoholic drug user and a womanizer who was living with my then girlfriend outside of marriage. I used my knowledge of the bible and spiritual things to justify my every action and get what I wanted from those around me. And I liked it. But through the actions and prayers of those around me God began to change me and took me from who I was to who I am today.

So to those people who feel that they are just too bad for God to love or forgive this is what I have to say to you.

If you look in Exodus chapters 1 thru 8 you find the story of Moses. Most of us know who Moses is. He was the guy who wrote the first 5 books of the Bible; also he led the children of Israel out of Egypt and bondage to the land of Israel. But did you know that before any of that happened he killed an Egyptian out of anger and was a hothead with anger issues. Even with all that happening God sought him out and used him to set his people free.

He is just one example of many that you will find in the Bible of someone who has done really bad things in their life yet not only did God Love them and forgive them he used them to do great things.

For those people that are in situations that they feel that those in the church would not understand or accept and to those individuals that are in situations and don't want to give up what they are doing, whether it be drinking, smoking or living with someone outside of marriage I say this:

Look at John 4 the woman at the well, Christ tells her all about her living situation and her lineage, she a Samaritan first of all a Jew with mixed heritage those who worshipped both Idols and Jehovah, but she had 5 husbands. To this woman he said to believe on him as the Messiah and he would give her living water, she was one of the few that He did not say sin no more. Also look at the calling of the Disciples he did not say give up your sin and then come to me, he said follow me and I will make you fishers of men. He also states in Mathew 11:

**Mat 11:28 Come to Me all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.**

**Mat 11:29 Take My yoke on you and learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and you shall find rest to your souls.**

**Mat 11:30 For My yoke is easy, and My burden is light.**

He tells us to come as we are and he will do the rest. I never had to give up anything that I wanted to keep in my life.

To those that are mad at God for something that happened in your life whether it be the loss of someone close or some wrong done to you and you feel God wasn't there for you. This is the hardest situation as a minister that I have dealt with because quite frankly I don't know why God allows certain things to happen to people.

All I can say is this, that the Bible is full of bad things happening to people such as Joseph who was sold into slavery by his brothers imprisoned for a crime that he did not commit but ended up where he needed to be when he needed to be there so that in the end he could save not only his family but the whole nation of Israel from famine and plague. And Daniel who was taken from his family and friends from his home to a foreign land where he was held captive, it was he who became second in command of the nation of Babylon only the King himself held more power, it was because of his insights from God the hundreds of years later the three wise knew where to look and what to look for at the birth of Christ.

I think that some situations arise or some things happen that only we can handle and that in time that experience will allow us to help someone else who if not helped wouldn't make it.

I have to believe that God has a plan for everything that happens in our lives and that as the verse says that all things work together for the good to those who Love the Lord works to our benefit. Jeremiah 31:3 says that God has Loved us with an everlasting Love and if this is so he would not let anything happen that would destroy us completely but in the long would make us stronger for those around us that aren't.

And finally to those who do go to church but have people in their lives that they are trying to help we must remember 2 things:

**1) We have to meet them where they are not where we want them to be.**

If we can't get them into church why not try to bring church to them through evangelism tools such as DVD's or audio tapes, tracts or just by sitting and talking to them not pushing your beliefs but listening to what they have to say. Sometimes it just takes a little time and patience to get them to come with you to church and a whole lot of prayer.

**2) We need to Focus on their souls not their sin.**

If we keep nagging them about what they are doing they are never going to listen. We have to allow them to keep living the way they are and praying for them until God opens that door where we can talk to them about him without telling them that if they don't change they are going to hell. A statement like that will not only close the door that God opened for you but will push them to the point they would most likely not ask you for help again. Instead of saying I told you so or you are wrong in how you live try saying I know where you can go to get help and bring them to church and let the Holy Spirit and God do the rest.