

10 Reasons for Going to Church

By Teddy Roosevelt

Some people go to church regularly, some go occasionally, and others seldom go at all. How important is church participation? Are there good reasons that I should go to church? Actually, the Bible calls on believers to be the church, and not just go to church. But to effectively be the church, believers need to faithfully gather with the other members of the body of Christ for equipping and encouragement.

Theodore Roosevelt, the 26th president of the United States, believed in attending and participating in church. In 1917, in an interview with Ladies Home Journal, President Roosevelt offered at least 10 reasons for going to church:

1) "In the actual world a churchless community, a community where men have abandoned and scoffed at or ignored their religious needs, is a community on the rapid downgrade.

2) "Church work and church attendance mean the cultivation of the habit of feeling some responsibility for others and the sense of braced moral strength, which prevents a relaxation of one's own moral fiber.

3) "There are enough holidays for most of us that can quite properly be devoted to pure holiday making. Sundays differ from other holidays, among other ways, in the fact that there are 52 of them every year. On Sunday, go to church.

4) "Yes, I know all the excuses. I know that one can worship the Creator and dedicate oneself to good living in a grove of trees, or by a running brook, or in one's own house, just as well as in church. But I also know as a matter of cold fact, the average man does not thus worship or thus dedicate himself. If he strays away from church, he does not spend his time in good works or lofty meditation. He looks over the colored supplement of the newspaper.

5) "He may not hear a good sermon at church. But unless he is very unfortunate, he will hear a sermon by a good man who, with his good wife, is engaged all the week long in a series of wearing, humdrum and important tasks for making hard lives a little easier.

6) "He will listen to and take part in reading some beautiful passages from the Bible. And if he is not familiar with the Bible, he has suffered a loss.

7) "He will probably take part in singing some good hymns.

8) "He will meet and nod to, or speak to, good quiet neighbors. He will come away feeling a little more charitably toward all the world, even toward those excessively foolish young men who regard churchgoing as rather a soft performance.

9) "I advocate a man's joining in church works for the sake of showing his faith by his works.

10) "The man who does not in some way, active or not, connect himself with some active, working church misses many opportunities for helping his neighbors, and therefore, incidentally, for helping himself." (Teddy Roosevelt)

Ninety-nine years have passed since that historic interview with President Roosevelt. And church attendance and participation is still vitally important to faith development and Christian service. The Scriptures admonish us: "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" (Heb. 10:25). (Barry Howard, Ethics Daily, Nov. 18, 2009)

Prayers for Help

"The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much" (James 5:16). "The prayer of the upright is His delight" (Prov. 15:8). "For the eyes of the LORD are on the righteous, and His ears are open to their prayers" (1Peter 3:12).

A young boy was doing his best to lift a rock that was too large for someone his size. He grunted and puffed as he tried various methods for lifting the rock. But, in spite of all his efforts, the rock wouldn't budge. His father walked by and, after watching his son's struggle, asked if he was having trouble. The boy answered, "Yes, I've tried everything, and it won't move." The father replied, "Are you sure you have tried every possibility - that you have used every resource at your disposal?" The boy looked up with frustration and exhaustion and grunted out, "Yes!" With kindness, the father bent over and softly said, "No, my son, you haven't. You haven't asked for my help."

How often are we like the little boy, struggling with our problems but unable to solve them -- because we have not asked for our heavenly Father's help. (1500 Illustrations for Biblical Preaching, p. 55)

A Moments Wisdom on Grace

--"The grace of God transcends all our feeble efforts to describe it. It cannot be poured into any of our mental receptacles without running over." (Vance Havner)

--You can plow the field and sow the seed, but what will you do without rain? Likewise is the Divine blessing of grace.

--American Christianity is in crisis, because some have marketed as a religion of good people getting better. It is a religion of sinful people scripturally addressing their failure to be good.

--"Grace is given, not to them who only speak their faith, but to those who live their faith." (Gregory of Nazianzus)

--God's grace will not take us to where it cannot keep us.

--No one is so empty of grace as he that thinks he is full.

--Grace is glory begun, and glory is grace fulfilled.

--"I compare the troubles which we have to undergo in the course of the year to a great bundle of sticks, far too large for us to lift. But God does not require us to carry the whole at once. He mercifully unties the bundle, and gives us first one stick, which we are to carry today, and then another, which we are to carry tomorrow, and so on." (John Newton)

--"A man can no more take in a supply of grace for the future than he can eat enough today to last him for the next 6 months, nor can he inhale sufficient air into his lungs with one breath to sustain life for a week to come. We are permitted to draw upon God's store of grace from day to day as we need it." (D. L. Moody)

"I am graven on the palms of His hands. I am never out of His mind. All my knowledge of Him depends on His sustained initiative in knowing me. I know Him, because He first knew me, and continues to know me. He knows me as a friend, One who loves me; and there is no moment when His eye is off me, or His attention distracted for me, and no moment, therefore, when His care falters." (J. I. Packer)

--What is the effect of grace in your life? When you've experienced grace and you feel that you've been forgiven, you're a lot more forgiving of other people. You become more gracious to others.

--Grace puts its hand over our boasting mouths, and shuts them once for all.

--The grace that does not make a man better than others is a worthless counterfeit. Christ saves people, not IN their sins, but FROM their sins. Without holiness, no man shall see the Lord.