

The Link Between Church Attendance and Good Health

A John Hopkins University medical researcher asserts that regular church attendance is good for your health. The good doctor has found that, "Faithful attendance at church is statistically related to a lower incidence of a dozen major diseases." So - If an early death you seek, stay away from church each week." "Or positively - If a longer life interests you, get yourself a comfortable pew." Yes, spiritual disciplines can be good for your health, both physically and spiritually.

These days, we are hearing much negative press about churches. Personally, I don't go to church expecting to find perfection. But I find that if I go with an open mind and heart, I always receive a blessing from some aspect of the service, whether it's music, prayer or sermon. We who attend are either sinners saved by grace or sinners in need of a Saviour.

I definitely do not go to church to feel morally superior to those who seldom, if ever, attend. No, just the opposite! I go because I need God, spiritual food and the support of other believers to overcome problems that could ruin my life.

In the parable Jesus told (Luke 18:9 – 14), I can identify with the publican who humbly prayed, "God be merciful to me a sinner!" He went home forgiven, while the proud Pharisee, full of his own importance, went home unchanged.

Church attendance is also good for our emotional and relational health. A massive study, entitled FAITHFUL ATTRACTION by Andrew Greeley, reveals that 70% of couples who attend church regularly report a happy marriage with a satisfying sex life and a much lower rate of divorce.

One of the many challenges faced by churches today is over radical changes in Sunday observance. Prior to 1980, Sunday morning was largely reserved for Communities of Faith. Most children attended Sunday school or some form of religious instruction. But now many are growing up with little or no knowledge of God or ethical values.

This is leading to some very serious consequences because we have been neglecting moral training, starting with our youth. This helps to explain why we are seeing so much unacceptable behavior in our schools and society as a whole.

We need to send forth a strong S OS message. Save our Sunday, safe Sunday for the Soul. Your own soul, and for the man who thinks he has no soul. These days we are living under terrific physical, mental and moral pressures. We now know that everyone needs a day of pause with less tension and stress. At the University of Basil it has been scientifically proven that a person can accomplish more in six days with a day of rest than they can in seven days without a break.

Sunday can be an oasis in the midst of our asphalt jungles. We need one day a week when we can let our blood pressure down, have our physical, mental, emotional and spiritual batteries recharged and spend more time with our families.

“Make Sunday your strong day and the rest of your days will not be weak.”