

Sermon Notes *by Pastor Jamie Tonge*



Making the most of my time.

Making the most of Sunday morning.

Easy like a Sunday morning the song was used to advertise the ease of using ATM bank machines. The world around us sees Sunday as an easy day.

But we come to Church.

Is it a good investment of time?

In a door-to-door survey conducted by Willow Creek Community Church the question was asked: if you don't go to church, why?

The five biggest reasons:

- 1) Boring.
- 2) Irrelevant.
- 3) Asking for money all the time.
- 4) I'm too busy already.
- 5) I feel awkward at church.

Some of these would be assumptions, but it gives the understanding that the world does not see church as something that will benefit their life.

How do we see it?

How did we come to have church on Sunday? The act of worship on the first day of the week goes right back to the early church.

First day of the week good way to start the week.

First day of the week the day of the resurrection.

There are many reasons why this day over another, but it has become enshrined in the life of the Christian Church and few that have tried to change the day they meet have made it work. It's not really about the day it's about what we do when we are at church.

How do we make the most of Sunday in Church? Remember our life is made up of segments of time. It's our life we are investing in coming to Church, so we should be making it work for us, for others and for God.

Why do we come to Church?

Worship
Fellowship
Teaching,
Prayer,
Encouragement,
Inspiration,

Direction,
Strength.

Some keys to open up a profitable Sunday morning.

1. Expectation.

What do I expect?

PS 122:1 “I was glad when they said unto me let us go to the house of the Lord today” (KJV)
“I rejoiced with those who said to me let us go to the house of the Lord”. (NIV)
“When they said let’s go to the house of God, my heart leapt for joy! (Message)

Do we have a heart of joyful expectation like David here in this Psalm, or maybe we just expect Church, singing, preaching, etc;

Expecting the same as last week or maybe we expect nothing!

Someone wrote this about why they stopped going to football matches: -

“Every time I went, they asked me for money.

The people with whom I had to sit didn't seem very friendly.

The seats were too hard and not at all comfortable.

I went to many games, but the coach never came to call on me.

The referee made a decision with which I could not agree.

I suspected that I was sitting with some hypocrites.

They came to see their friends and what others were wearing rather than to see the game.

Some games went into overtime, and I was late getting home.

The band played some numbers that I had never heard before.

It seems that the games are scheduled when I want to do other things.

I was taken to too many games by my parents when I was growing up.

I don't want to take my children to any games, because I want them to choose for themselves what sport they like best”.

This guy was not a very committed supporter of his team, sometimes we can be like this about church.

What did people expect when they came to Jesus?

- Peter and Andrew (**Matt 4:18**) Kingdom of God and to be fishers of men.
- Man with leprosy (**Matt 8:1**) to be healed.
- The twelve in (**Matt 10:1**) - heal the sick, cast out demons.
- The disciples in the feeding of the 5000 (**Matt 14**) you give them a miracle.
- The people in the upper room in (**Acts 2**) to receive power in the Holy Spirit.

There are many examples of what people expected when they came to Jesus.
Jesus met with them and changed their life.

What are our life changing expectations?

What did the early church expect when they got together?

(**Acts 2:42 – 47**) whatever it was, it was exciting and challenging. We may not experience this level of the Holy Spirit in the meetings all the time, nor did they. We only have to read the books of

Corinthians and **Revelations 2 -3** to see that, but we can know the power of God in the meeting on Sunday morning.
Come expecting!

2. Preparation.

When we come together we are meeting with God and other people. There is a need to be prepared.

Prepare my heart.

The preparation of the heart.

Proverbs 4:23 "above all else guard your heart for it is the well spring of life".

We must live out of the well.

Heart preparation – the heart is fed by the mind, the mind is fed by the eyes and ears.
It's not just Sunday it's all the time.

The heart is important because "*out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks*" (*Mat 12:34*).

Prepare my mind.

The mind feeds the heart. As we have just seen its good to take some time before coming to Church to pray and read the bible, asking the Holy Spirit to speak to you during the meeting, to use you at Church. Even a few minutes can make a difference.

Prepared physically.

Get ready; this is nothing to do with wearing my best clothes.

Get up in time, do what needs to be done before coming, be prepared for the unseen.

Remember the meeting starts at 10:45 - be early - there may be something to be done, someone to see.

3. Participation.

Church is something we do - not something we just turn up for.

It's not the cinema or the theatre; we are not here to be entertained.

Too often we equate enjoyment with entertainment.

We think church is like going to the gym. We know it's doing us good, but we endure instead of enjoy, it is God's desire that we enjoy Church.

To enjoy we must join in.

We all have something to bring (*1 Cor 14:26*).

It does not have to be a word, reading or something spiritual. There are other things too, to make Church a wholesome experience. It takes the whole body of Christ (*1 Corinthians 12:12*) – one body many parts.

To hear people give God thanks for all he means to them has an amazing effect on other believers and the angelic hosts and thrills the heart of Almighty God.

The Psalm says we bring a sacrifice of praise into the House of the Lord.

The Bible also talks of the fellowship of the saints.

4. Teaching.

There are two main parts to Sunday church worship and teaching. We have said much on worship, so I will not touch this to day.

Teaching to us this is an important part of our Christian life.

The problem of western thinking: -

The Bible, Christ teaching nor the early Church were Western in culture or thinking. Eastern in culture and thinking Hebrew in teaching and discipleship.

The basic difference is: -

It's about being and doing more than head knowledge.

Listen to this Jewish Rabi on teaching and discipleship: -

'not just a body of knowledge we have mastered, but a submission of our will to Him as Lord'

Bring my Bible, note book, how can this make me like Jesus.

5. The Visitor.

It's is not about us trying to make worship and the word palatable to the world.

It's about making them comfortable in an environment that is foreign to them.

It's about making them welcome, when they don't feel sure of their surroundings.

It's about them feeling they can meet with Almighty God in this place, among people who have a living relationship with Him.

It is also about us - we have needs too.

Some pointers to the above: -

- ✓ Be in church before they are.
- ✓ Give them the opportunity to sit where they feel safe.
- ✓ Speak to them but don't overwhelm them.
- ✓ Help them understand what's going on.

Remember we are being watched how we do Church.

Conclusion.

We invest time in Church on a Sunday morning. Make it work for you - come, invest time, energy and practical participation.

Come expecting and you will receive.