

# Interim Ministry Resources

## Chapter 3 Worship

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# Reflections and Resources

## 1) What happened?!

Church and society have changed dramatically in the 50 years

### Reflections on the church's talking points

What ought to claim our attention now is "The Nones," those living in this **post-Christian culture** who claim no religious affiliation. **Most of us were born when the culture agreed that church membership was part of the American way of life.** That's less and less a given, particularly among younger generations, a trend we shouldn't view as a threat, but as an opportunity. Biblically and historically, the church is at its best as a missionary presence in a secular society, not as the dominant secular power. This is a good time to be the church.

<http://www.spas-elca.org/mutual-conversation/reflections-church%E2%80%99s-talking-points>  
Images for post-Christian culture

since the time of my confirmation at Immanuel Lutheran Church in Story City, Iowa in May 1967

### Immanuel Lutheran Church, Story City, IA / Welcome / Welcome ABOUT US

<http://www.immanuelstorycity.org/?view=mobile>  
Images for Immanuel Lutheran Church, Story City, IA  
<http://www.immanuelstorycity.org/about-us/our-history/?view=mobile> our history  
<https://www.facebook.com/ImmanuelLutheranStoryCity/>

to the time of this original posting on 11/3/2017. Sometimes, I stop and ask myself, "What happened?!" Many of the following posts, which seek to address this question, come under the rubric of **coming to terms with history.**

### Resources

#### [PDF] The 5 Tasks of Interim Ministry 1. Coming to Terms with History

##### 1. Coming to Terms with History

It is important for congregations to know their history so that they can appreciate their heritage and at the same time be **aware of the issues and concerns that need to be resolved in order to move freely into the future.**

[http://s3.amazonaws.com/dfc\\_attachments/public/documents/3203806/5-The\\_5\\_Tasks\\_of\\_Interim\\_Ministry.pdf](http://s3.amazonaws.com/dfc_attachments/public/documents/3203806/5-The_5_Tasks_of_Interim_Ministry.pdf)  
Images for Interim Ministry Coming to Terms with History

#### The Tasks of a Church During the Interim Period - Transition Ministries

The central focus of the interim time is not merely on what happened in the past. The purpose of **coming to terms with history** is to deal with history so as not to be bogged down by it, but rather to be freed by it to move on into the future.

[http://www.interimministries-abc.org/Local/five\\_tasks.aspx](http://www.interimministries-abc.org/Local/five_tasks.aspx)  
Images for happened in the past

Darrell Jodock taught at Luther Seminary in St. Paul, MN while I studied there. He wrote a thoughtful piece on The Journey from 1968 to 2018.

#### The Journey from 1968 to 2018 by Darrell Jodock

The changes of the last fifty years have expanded the church's calling. With the right kind of theological resources and with its many social resources, it can undertake significant new (or revived) ventures that will benefit our larger society. For this to happen, contemporary Christians will need to learn how to live faithfully into their calling. Western Christians will need to do this gracefully, without claims to cultural dominance.

#### Issues - Word & World

<https://wordandworld.luthersem.edu/issues.aspx>  
[https://wordandworld.luthersem.edu/issues.aspx?issue\\_id=152](https://wordandworld.luthersem.edu/issues.aspx?issue_id=152)  
[https://wordandworld.luthersem.edu/issues.aspx?article\\_id=4048](https://wordandworld.luthersem.edu/issues.aspx?article_id=4048)  
Images for Journey from 1968 to 2018 by Darrell Jodock

1968 Vol. 38, No 2, Spring, 2018  
Page 157

One of the memorials at the 2019 ELCA Churchwide Assembly requested permission to explore Merging or Consolidating Synods as a result of membership decline.

#### Category D10: Merging or Consolidating Synods

##### 1. Western Iowa Synod (5F) [2019]

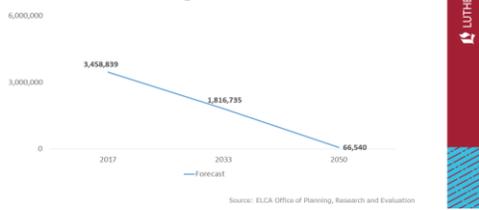
WHEREAS, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) celebrated its thirtieth anniversary in 2018 and WHEREAS, the ELCA continues to function under the original structure of sixty-five synods in nine regions; and WHEREAS, the number of congregations, rostered leaders, and congregational members constituting the ELCA has declined significantly throughout those years: 5.2 million members in 1988 to 3.5 million today; 11,138 congregations in 1988 to 9,062 in 2018; 9,105 clergy with active calls to 6,868 between the years of 2005 to 2014; and WHEREAS, contributions to synods and to the churchwide organization continue to decline at a rate that is raising serious concerns and questions about the fiscal sustainability of these structures of the church; and

I served as a voting member to the American Lutheran Church convention in 1987 in Moorhead, Minnesota from the Northern Wisconsin District. This convention was a constituting convention for the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA). That convention was filled with anticipation and expectation. Now 30+ years later, the decline as spelled out above makes me wonder where the ELCA will be in 30+ years from now. How many churches will be ringing their bells to call people to services of worship? The following article poses a daunting question:

### Will the ELCA Be Gone in 30 years? - Faith+Lead

According to projections from the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America's (ELCA) Office of Research and Evaluation, the whole denomination will have fewer than 67,000 members in 2050, with fewer than 16,000 in worship on an average Sunday by 2041. **That's right: according to current trends, the church will basically cease to exist within the next generation.**

#### Baptized Membership in the ELCA 2017-2050 Projections



<https://faithlead.luthersem.edu/decline/>

Images for Will the ELCA Be Gone in 30 years? - Faith+Lead

<https://faithlead.luthersem.edu/tag/future-of-the-church/>

Images for [faithlead.luthersem/future-of-the-church](https://faithlead.luthersem.edu/future-of-the-church)

The decline is projected to go from 5.2 million members in 1988 to fewer than 67,000 in 2050.

The article gives three ways to name the root cause:

- 1) We live in a culture that makes it hard for people to imagine and be led by God.
- 2) We aren't clear about what's distinctive about being Christian
- 3) For these reasons, church isn't helping many people make meaning of their lives.

The article gives some steps to take:

- 1) Go back to basics.
- 2) Shift from performative to participatory spirituality.
- 3) Listen.
- 4) Translate.
- 5) Experiment.
- 6) Share.

The posts in this file and the following file seek to address the question, "What happened?!"

## 2) It's Not Your Parents' Church Anymore

**Interim Ministry in Action: A Handbook for Churches in Transition** by Norman B. Bendroth (Author) includes a chapter titled It's Not Your Parents' Church Anymore in which the author expounds on how the culture, church, and mission has changed. He then asks, "How then shall we live?"

### Interim Ministry in Action: A Handbook for Churches in Transition by Norman B. Bendroth (Author)

Many churches today find themselves in frequent transition, whether due to the changing culture, the struggles of mainline churches, or the changing nature of mission. *Interim Ministry in Action* helps guide churches and their leadership through these times of change. The book will guide readers step-by-step through the process of how and why to decide to call an interim minister, the process for deciding what's next, and more. Each chapter concludes with exercises for readers, search committees, or boards to illustrate key themes and help them determine the best path forward.

<https://www.amazon.com/Interim-Ministry-Action-Handbook-Transition-ebook/dp/B07CPHVS3V>

<https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/38508423-interim-ministry-in-action>

<https://www.barnesandnoble.com/w/interim-ministry-in-action-norman-b-bendroth/1127939338>

[https://books.google.com/books/about/Interim\\_Ministry\\_in\\_Action.html?id=im5YDwAAQBAJ](https://books.google.com/books/about/Interim_Ministry_in_Action.html?id=im5YDwAAQBAJ)

[Interim Ministry in Action: A Handbook for Churches in Transition](https://imnedu.org/imn-library/interim-ministry-in-action-a-handbook-for-churches-in-transition/)

<https://imnedu.org/imn-library/interim-ministry-in-action-a-handbook-for-churches-in-transition/>

<https://www.imaelca.org/bendroth-norman-b-interim-ministry-in-action/>

<https://www.amazon.com/s?i=digital->

[text&rh=p\\_27%3ANorman+B.+Bendroth&s=relevancerank&language=es&text=Norman+B.+Bendroth&ref=dp\\_byline\\_sr\\_ebook\\_1](https://www.amazon.com/s?i=digital-text&rh=p_27%3ANorman+B.+Bendroth&s=relevancerank&language=es&text=Norman+B.+Bendroth&ref=dp_byline_sr_ebook_1)

[https://www.goodreads.com/author/show/14747959.Norman\\_B\\_Bendroth](https://www.goodreads.com/author/show/14747959.Norman_B_Bendroth)

Images for Interim Ministry in Action: A Handbook for Churches in Transition by Norman B. Bendroth (Author)

### 3) Loss of clout

Emerson Powery, in commenting on the second reading for All Saints Sunday 2019 Ephesians 1:11-23, begins by stating,

In the western portion of the northern hemisphere, the church has lost much of its clout.

He goes on to give some reasons.

Some of this loss is due to a less religious age, in which people's needs (spiritual and otherwise) are met in other ways besides the local, ecclesial community. Declining attendance throughout the nation is one outcome of this situation. Equally significant is the presence and effect of scandals that plague the church community. From child abuse to support of unethical political leaders, the church has misplaced its loyalties unable to match its actions with its verbal commitment to follow the Jesus who resides on the side of the least of these.

He speaks of the challenges ahead.

One of the grand challenges of the contemporary church is not to regret its loss of status in the history of the Western world and attempt to reclaim it. Rather, this is an opportunity to return to (first-century) roots, when the Christian ecclesia held no influence. In fact, letters such as this one were sent to these small, surviving believing communities primarily to reassure fellow believers so that they would persevere in their faith. Even this letter written to a second (or, third) generation community—notice the language of Ephesians 12-13—was intended to inspire believers to remain faithful as people of the “pledge.”

Ephesians 1:11-23 Commentary by Emerson Powery – Working Preacher

[https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary\\_id=4269](https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=4269)

Images for challenges of the contemporary church

### 4) Heracles or Jesus?

When I was growing up during “The numerical height of mainline Protestantism in the United States (which) occurred in the year 1965,”<sup>1</sup>

#### Resources

Being the Church Today – Alban Institute

The numerical height of mainline Protestantism in the United States occurred in the year 1965.<sup>1</sup> That was the year that the largest percentages of American people affiliated with and attended church. More Americans were going to church than at any other time in U.S. history.

Alban at Duke Divinity School » Being the Church Today - Alban Institute

<https://alban.org/archive/being-the-church-today/>

<http://www.amazon.com/Healthy-Esteem-Ministry-Membership-Church/dp/0881773727>

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Images for numerical height of mainline Protestantism in the United States occurred in the year 1965

#### Mainline decline - The Lutheran Magazine

Mainline denominations grew through the 1940s and 1950s, but about 1965 they began to lose members.

[http://www.thelutheran.org/article/article.cfm?article\\_id=5806&key=33709634](http://www.thelutheran.org/article/article.cfm?article_id=5806&key=33709634)

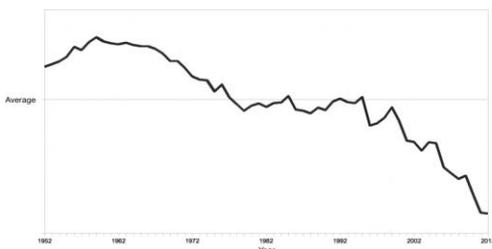
Images for mainline denominations decline - The Lutheran Magazine

[http://www.ewaldsynod.org/images/E\\_Apr\\_16\\_CC\\_HiRes.pdf](http://www.ewaldsynod.org/images/E_Apr_16_CC_HiRes.pdf) • The peak year for ELCA (and predecessor church bodies) membership and financial support was 1965.

[The above quote will be used in future posts, but in the interests of space the references will not always be duplicated.]

#### The Great Decline: 60 years of religion in one graph – Religion News Services

The Great Decline: 60 years of religion in America



Graph by Center of Church & State, Religion News Services 1962.  
Source: Aggregate Participation Index, J. Tobin Grant, Sociological Forum.

<https://religionnews.com/2014/01/27/great-decline-religion-united-states-one-graph/>

Images for The Great Decline: 60 years of religion in one graph

the thought of sports on a Sunday morning was unthinkable. Now, it is commonplace.

### Resources

[88 best Images of HERACLES \(Hercules\) images on Pinterest](#)

<https://www.pinterest.com/clownloach64/images-of-heracles-hercules/>

<https://www.pinterest.com/marilola678/hercules/>

Images for HERACLES (Hercules) Pinterest

### Eric Liddells decision not to run on a Sunday

In his book 'Running the Race', John W Keddie describes, in chapter 7 the period during which Eric decided that he would not run on the Sabbath at the Olympics.

<http://www.ericliddell.org/ericliddell/running-on-sunday>

Images for Eric Liddells decision not to run on a Sunday

<http://www.amazon.com/Running-Race-Liddell-Champion-Missionary/dp/0852347804>

<http://www.christianity.com/church/church-history/church-history-for-kids/eric-liddell-greater-than-gold-11634861.html>

<https://www.challies.com/running-the-race/>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fRdrtp5YAxU> Eric Liddell - Original Footage of his Gold Medal Winning Race – YouTube

Images for Eric Liddell - Gold Medal Winning Race - YouTube

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eric\\_Liddell](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eric_Liddell)

Images for Eric Liddell

### Heracles - Wikipedia

Gatekeeper of Olympus

God of strength, heroes, sports, athletes, health, agriculture, fertility, trade, oracles and divine protector of mankind.



One of the most famous depictions of Heracles, [Farnese Hercules](#), Roman marble statue on the basis of an original

by [Lysippos](#), 216 CE. [National Archaeological Museum, Naples, Italy](#)

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Heracles>

Images for heracles

Images for hercules

### Youth sports: a modern-day idol for some families? | The Christian Chronicle

Sunday used to be reserved for worship and rest. Now, youth sports compete for many families' time and attention on the Lord's day. "I would go so far as to say that children's sports are the idol of this generation," said Judy Square, whose husband, Woody, serves as youth and family minister for the San Leandro Church of Christ in California. "Everything on the family's schedule bows down to it." That includes the Sunday morning assembly.

<http://www.christianchronicle.org/article/youth-sports-a-modern-day-idol-for-some-families>

Images for Youth sports: a modern-day idol for some families? | The Christian Chronicle

<http://www.faithandathletics.com/why-your-kids-should-not-play-sports/> #2

Images for faithandathletics/why-your-kids-should-not-play-sports

### 5) Bleachers or pews?

When I was growing up during "The numerical height of mainline Protestantism in the United States (which) occurred in the year 1965,"<sup>1</sup> the thought of sitting in the bleachers rather than in the pews on Sunday morning was unthinkable. Now, 50 years later at the time of this post in 2015, sitting in the bleachers rather than in the pews on a Sunday morning is commonplace. Each Sunday morning, people make choices about what is most important in their lives.



Bleachers in the Park by Shari Weinsheimer

<http://www.publicdomainpictures.net/view-image.php?image=13357>

[Images for Bleachers in the Park](#)



Pews in rows in a church

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pew>

[Images for Pews in rows in a church](#)

## Resources

### Five Reasons Church Members Attend Church Less Frequently - Thom Rainer

1. We worship the idols of activities. Many members will replace a day in their church with a day at kid's soccer or softball games or sleeping off the hangover of the previous day's activities.

<http://thomrainer.com/2017/05/five-reasons-church-members-attend-church-less-frequently/>

[Images for Five Reasons Church Members Attend Church Less Frequently - Thom Rainer 1. We worship the idols of activities. Images for Many members will replace a day in their church with a day at kid's soccer or softball games or sleeping off the hangover of the previous day's activities.](#)

<http://thomrainer.com/2016/02/ten-common-frustrations-of-pastors/> #1

<http://thomrainer.com/2014/07/11-differences-college-football-fan-church-member/>

<http://thomrainer.com/2017/05/eight-signs-church-may-closing-soon/> Christopher says May 17, 2017 8:26 am

<http://thomrainer.com/2015/05/seven-trends-in-worship-service-times/>

<http://thomrainer.com/2013/08/the-number-one-reason-for-the-decline-in-church-attendance-and-five-ways-to-address-it/>

[Images for thom rainer \(author\)](#)

### How Youth Sports and Activities Are Killing Sunday School

This battle between God and sports has been ongoing, and one-sided. Religious figures from popes on down have tried to fight the [incursion of sports onto Sunday services, and Sunday school](#), to no success. My church tried [sponsoring youth sports](#) as a way to reach sports parents and bridge the Sunday school/Sunday game gap. Of course, the Sunday school issue is more than the incursion of youth sports, or fear of safety -- it's about a long-term decline in church attendance. Not only are fewer people going, but [those who attend are doing so less frequently](#). The workplace, the school, the sports teams are demanding more and more time, and something is getting squeezed out. Ministry Today sings a familiar refrain:

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/bobcook/2015/03/29/how-youth-sports-and-activities-are-killing-sunday-school/#42b6be4978f3>

[Images for Youth Sports and Activities Are Killing Sunday School](#)

<https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation/2015/03/22/ozy-has-sun-set-on-sunday-school/25080073/>

[Images for has-sun-set-on-sunday-school](#)

<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/05/07/well/how-to-avoid-burnout-in-youth-sports.html>

[Images for how-to-avoid-burnout-in-youth-sports](#)

### On Sunday, 'Let Us Pray' or 'Let Us Play' - The New York Times

[When games and services collide, parents get caught in the middle](#). "When you have to choose almost every weekend between church and sports, that's a bad decision to have to make," said Thomas C. Wilson, Jr. of Bay Shore, whose son Sean, 9, and daughter Mary, 7, are members of local soccer teams.

<http://www.nytimes.com/1999/04/04/nyregion/on-sunday-let-us-pray-or-let-us-play.html>

[Images for On Sunday, 'Let Us Pray' or 'Let Us Play'](#)

### Parenting in the Pew: Guiding Your Children into the Joy of Worship by Robbie Fox Castleman (Author), Ruth Bell Graham (Foreword)

Baseball and ballet are taught through participation, practice and patience. Children learn best by doing. Great baseball players are not made in the [bleachers](#). Dancing is not learned by remote control. Children learn to worship by worshipping -- through participation, practice, and patience...

Worship, ballet and baseball are all learning by example as well. A good trainer or teacher can hit the ball or demonstrate a pirouette. And parents in the pew can show by example what it means to be encountered by God, to love his Son, and to respond to the Holy Spirit in worship. Children learn that prayer is important when they see their parents make it a priority.

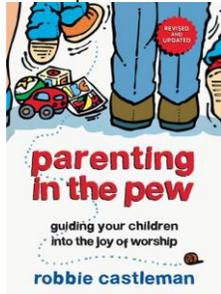
Children learn to give generously when their parents do. Children dress, sing, and participate by following examples as well as instruction. When worship is an obvious joy to parents, children will expect to experience the same.

<https://books.google.com/books?isbn=0830866477>

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[Images for Children learn to worship by worshipping](#)

"Daddy, I'd like you to meet my children." That's Robbie Castleman's attitude about taking her children to church. She believes that Sunday morning isn't a success if she has only managed to keep the kids quiet. And she knows there's more to church for kids than trying out their new coloring books. Children are at church for the same reason as their parents: for the privilege of worshipping God. Worship, Castleman writes, is "the most important thing you can ever train your child to do." So, with infectious passion, nitty-gritty advice and a touch of humor, she shows you how to help your children (from toddlers to teenagers) enter into worship. In this significantly revised and updated edition Castleman includes a new preface and two new appendices that provide new perspectives on children's sermon and intergenerational community. She also provides a study guide for personal reflection or group discussion. More than ever, *Parenting in the Pew* is essential reading for parents and worship leaders who want to help children make joyful noises unto the Lord.



<https://www.amazon.com/Parenting-Pew-Guiding-Children-Worship/dp/0830837779>  
<http://www.goodreads.com/book/show/20643769-parenting-in-the-pew>  
<https://www.ivpress.com/parenting-in-the-pew>  
<https://books.google.com/books?isbn=0830866477>  
[https://books.google.com/books/about/Parenting\\_in\\_the\\_pew.html?id=lzrOxM3uW6EC](https://books.google.com/books/about/Parenting_in_the_pew.html?id=lzrOxM3uW6EC)  
[https://books.google.com/books/about/Parenting\\_in\\_the\\_Pew.html?id=bIFyzQrEKUAC](https://books.google.com/books/about/Parenting_in_the_Pew.html?id=bIFyzQrEKUAC)  
<https://www.barnesandnoble.com/w/parenting-in-the-pew-robbie-f-castleman/1110948325>  
[http://www.goodreads.com/author/show/4258630.Robbie\\_Fox\\_Castleman](http://www.goodreads.com/author/show/4258630.Robbie_Fox_Castleman)

Images for Robbie Fox Castleman

Images for Parenting in the Pew: Guiding Your Children into the Joy of Worship by Robbie Fox Castleman (Author)

### Rethinking Sunday Morning - Luther Seminary

For many, it's already happening. Whether Sunday morning finds them seated at work or at a coffee shop, in the **bleachers or on a pew**, they're already rethinking churchgoing. And perhaps you are, too.

But what is God up to in all of this? And to what more faithful future are Christian communities now being called? What are the practices of discipleship for a post-churchgoing world?

Join the conversation and discover the courage to ask some fresh questions and engage them more boldly.

<https://www.luthersem.edu/rethinking/>

Images for Rethinking Sunday Morning

### 10 Reasons Even Committed Church Attenders Are Attending Church Less Often – Carey Nieuwhof

#### 2. Higher focus on kid's activities

A growing number of kids are playing sports. And a growing number of kids are playing on teams that require travel. Many of those sports happen on weekends. And affluent parents are **choosing sports over church**. It's as simple as that.

<http://careynieuwhof.com/2015/02/10-reasons-even-committed-church-attenders-attending-less-often/>

Images for 10 Reasons Even Committed Church Attenders Are Attending Church Less Often – Carey Nieuwhof 2. Higher focus on kid's activities

Images for affluent parents are choosing sports over church

<https://careynieuwhof.com/8-lame-excuses-church-leaders-make/>

#3

<https://careynieuwhof.com/9-signs-your-church-is-ready-to-reach-unchurched-people/>

#1

Images for carey nieuwhof (author)

### The Most Disturbing Church Trend of Them All — Charisma News

**Increasing involvement with kids' activities** including more "multiple activity" commitments (sports, music, etc.) for longer duration with greater competitiveness. The growth of club sports and the intensity of competition creates a market for kids to get started earlier and be involved longer. This is literally eating our families alive when it comes to time.

<http://www.charismanews.com/us/47835-the-most-disturbing-church-trend-of-them-all>

Images for increasing involvement with kids' activities

Images for growth of club sports and intensity of competition creates a market for kids to get started earlier and be involved longer.

### 3 Negative Attitudes Toward Church And How We Can Change Them

#### #3. **I DON'T HAVE TIME FOR CHURCH BECAUSE OF KIDS SPORTS**

<http://orangeblogs.org/orangeleaders/2016/03/23/3-negative-attitudes-toward-church-and-how-we-can-change-them/>

Images for I DON'T HAVE TIME FOR CHURCH BECAUSE OF KIDS SPORTS

## 6) Wrestling and guns

On the Sunday of the Baptism of Our Lord, I was happy to receive as many as came at the 2 congregations I was serving. It helped that the weather had warmed up after being bitterly cold the Sunday before. Also, there was a baptism at one of the churches.

At the same time, there was an elementary school wrestling tournament at the elementary school in one town and a gun show at the high school in the other town. If there ever was a time that the social context was more deferential to congregations, that time has long past, and as evidenced by the previously mentioned events, that time is not coming back. Pastors are called to remain faithful to a Word and Sacrament ministry amid the competition for people's time and attention.

Occasionally, in the sermon, I will say something to the affect, "I want to thank you for being present in this service of worship as part of the gathered assembly. No doubt, there are many other activities that beckon for your attention. But you have chosen to worship God here today with the gathered assembly, and for that I thank you!"

### Resources

#### Sports vs. Church | Family Discipleship Path

Could there be a better way? What if we ALL joined together and said, "NO! No more sports on Sundays!"? When we were kids, there was never anything scheduled on Sundays. We never had to choose between sports and church. Sundays were saved for church and family and gathering with friends. Can we reclaim our Sundays if we all worked together?

<http://familydiscipleshippath.com/2013/11/22/sports-vs-church/>

Images for Sports vs. Church | Family Discipleship Path

<https://familydiscipleshippath.wordpress.com/2013/11/22/sports-vs-church/>

<https://www.leadertreks.org/sports-vs-church/>

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Images for skipping church for sports

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Images for rise of sports decline of church

<http://www.veritesport.org/?page=neveronsundays>

Images for Sunday mornings spent at church

<http://worship.calvin.edu/resources/resource-library/sunday-morning-worship-who-s-not-there-and-why-not/>

Images for notice who's absent from worship

#### Why I Would Never Force my Kids to go to Church | TruthNotes

*My parents forced me to eat three times a day growing up. No joke. Three times. Every. Single. Day. And it wasn't always stuff I liked, either. Matter of fact, I complained a lot about what my mom made. "Ewww, gross! Sauteed zucchini?*

*Seriously? Mom, you know we hate this stuff!" So, as I approached adulthood I made an important decision. Since my parents forced me to eat while I was growing up, I decided I was done with meals. Oh, here and there I'll eat out of obligation. I mean, family traditions like Thanksgiving and Christmas, yeah, I'm there. But daily eating? No way. I'm done.*

*Set in any other context, excuses people make for not going to church sound completely ridiculous. But set in the context of Christianity, people say these things in all seriousness while others nod sagely in somber agreement.*

<http://truthnotes.net/2014/03/24/why-i-would-never-force-my-kids-to-go-to-church/>

Images for excuses people make for not going to church sound completely ridiculous

<http://truthnotes.net/2014/03/31/to-brainwash-a-child/>

## 7) Mow the grass

When I was growing up in Story City, Iowa in the 1960s, my dad wanted the grass to be mowed at the end of the week so that it looked presentable for Sunday. As the oldest son, it was my job to mow the grass. Sunday was meant for church in the morning, dinner at noon, and taking a nap or visiting the relatives in the afternoon. Now, I look around, and it seems as if Sunday is as good a day as any to mow the grass, especially if the lawn is big enough that it does not lend itself to being mowed on a weeknight. While the neighbors may cut their grass short and mow every 3 to 4 days, I set the mower as high as possible and mow 1X a week at the end of the week to make the lawn presentable for Sunday.

#### How often should I mow my grass? | Eco Green

Normally weekly mowing is the rule, but some lawns need cutting more often. Other lawns will grow more slowly and might need cutting only once every ten days or two weeks. Generally, don't cut off more than one third of the grass blade.



<https://www.ecogreen.ca/how-often-should-i-mow-my-grass/#:~:text=Normally%20weekly%20mowing%20is%20the,that%20may%20harm%20the%20grass.>  
[Images for How often should I mow my grass? | Eco Green](#)

## 8) Increasing activities for youth on Sunday mornings

When I related to a colleague all the activities scheduled for youth on Sunday mornings, he opined that in the Third Reich one of the ways Adolf Hitler tried to kill the church was to schedule activities for youth on Sunday mornings.

### Resources

#### Catholic Church and Nazi Germany - Wikipedia

Hitler wanted to end all Catholic political life. The church wanted protection of its schools and organizations, recognition of canon law regarding marriage and the right of the Pope to select bishops.<sup>[114]</sup> The non-Nazi Vice Chancellor Papen was chosen by the new government to negotiate with the Vatican.<sup>[104]</sup> The bishops announced on April 6 negotiations toward a concordat would begin in Rome.<sup>[115]</sup> On April 10, Francis Stratmann O.P., a chaplain to students in Berlin, wrote to Cardinal Faulhaber, "The souls of the well-intentioned are deflated by the National Socialist seizure of power—the bishops' authority is weakened among countless Catholics and non-Catholics because of their quasi-approbation of the National Socialist movement." Some Catholic critics of the Nazis soon chose to emigrate. Among them, [Waldemar Gurian](#), [Dietrich von Hildebrand](#), and [Hans A. Reinhold](#).<sup>[116]</sup> Hitler began enacting laws restricting movement of funds (making it impossible for German Catholics to send money to missionaries), restricting religious institutions, education, and **mandating attendance at Hitler Youth functions (held on Sunday mornings).**

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Catholic\\_Church\\_and\\_Nazi\\_Germany](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Catholic_Church_and_Nazi_Germany)

[Images for Hitler Youth functions \(held on Sunday mornings\)](#)

#### The Hitler Youth - Hitler's Children

During their time in the Hitler Youth, children learned about Hitler as a sort of benevolent father figure who was always watching. **Children were intended to consider Hitler as more important than their own father or family.**

<http://www.hitlerschildren.com/article/1431-understanding-the-role-of-the-hitler-youth-in-nazism>

[Images for hitler youth functions](#)

### True Greatness

18At that time the disciples came to Jesus and asked, 'Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?'<sup>2</sup> He called a child, whom he put among them,<sup>3</sup> and said, 'Truly I tell you, unless you change and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.<sup>4</sup> Whoever becomes humble like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.<sup>5</sup> Whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me.

**6 'If any of you put a stumbling-block before one of these little ones who believe in me, it would be better for you if a great millstone were fastened around your neck and you were drowned in the depth of the sea.**

[oremus Bible Browser : Matthew 18:1-6](#)

<http://bible.oremus.org/?passage=Matthew+18:1-6>

[Images for put a stumbling-block before one of these little ones](#)

Neither the colleague nor I are suggesting there is such a malevolent motive acting today, but the increasing activities for youth on Sunday mornings are keeping them away from the services of worship.

## 9) Stadiums have become shrines and cathedrals along the lines of the Colosseum

Being a sports fan is engaging in ritual. For an increasing number, an obsession with sports is becoming one's god.

### Resources

#### Best NFL Football Stadiums, Ranked: From Dallas to Lambeau - Thrillist

**Football, America's religion, has some truly kick-ass cathedrals.**

<https://www.thrillist.com/travel/nation/best-nfl-stadiums-football-ranked>

[Images for Best NFL Football Stadiums, Ranked: From Dallas to Lambeau - Thrillist](#)

#### Colosseum - Wikipedia

The name *Colosseum* has long been believed to be derived from a [colossal statue of Nero](#) nearby<sup>[4]</sup> (the statue of Nero was named after the [Colossus of Rhodes](#)).<sup>[*citation needed*]</sup> This statue was later remodeled by Nero's successors into the likeness of [Helios](#) (Sol) or [Apollo](#), the sun god, by adding the appropriate [solar crown](#). Nero's head was also replaced several times with the heads of succeeding emperors. Despite its [pagan](#) links, the statue remained standing well into the medieval era and was credited with [magical powers](#). It came to be seen as an iconic symbol of the permanence of Rome.



<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Colosseum>  
Images for Colosseum

### Lambeau Field - Wikipedia

Two months after the death of Packers founder Curly Lambeau, New City Stadium was renamed "Lambeau Field" by the Green Bay city council on August 3, 1965.<sup>[1][2][47]</sup> Besides founding the team in 1919, Lambeau played for the Packers in their early years and was the team's coach for 31 seasons through 1949. He shares the distinction with rival George Halas of the Chicago Bears of coaching his team to the most NFL championships, with six. Lambeau was inducted as a charter member of the Pro Football Hall of Fame in Canton, Ohio in 1963.

*The Frozen Tundra, Titletown USA - The Shrine of Pro Football*



[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lambeau\\_Field](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lambeau_Field)  
Images for lambeau field

### Mudbaths and Bloodbaths: The Inside Story of the Bears-Packers Rivalry by Gary D'Amato, Cliff Christl

In this age of high-tech stadiums, with their Teflon domes, convertible roofs, exploding scoreboards, and sterile corridors, even the newly renovated Lambeau Field stands in stark contrast as a shrine of simple elegance and a cathedral of tradition. "That's what I love about it," said John Madden, the ABC network football analyst and former head coach of the Oakland Raiders. "If they ever build a shrine to pro football, it ought to be Lambeau Field. Every time I go there, I think, "This is what the hell it's all about.' This is kind of how it all started, and it goes off in different directions, where you get domes and theme parks and all that stuff."

<https://books.google.com/books?isbn=1879483955>

Page 40

[Images for newly renovated Lambeau Field stands in stark contrast as a shrine of simple elegance and a cathedral of tradition](#)

Covering 152 Bears-Packers games since the series began in 1921, this book unfolds the history of the teams and their competition with intensity. This is the definitive book on one of NFL's fiercest rivalries.

<https://www.amazon.com/Mudbaths-Bloodbaths-Inside-Bears-Packers-Rivalry/dp/1879483955>

[https://www.goodreads.com/author/show/281522.Gary\\_D\\_Amato](https://www.goodreads.com/author/show/281522.Gary_D_Amato)

Images for Gary D'Amato, author mudbaths and bloodbaths

<https://www.thriftbooks.com/a/cliff-christl/506679/>

[https://www.goodreads.com/author/show/281521.Cliff\\_Christl](https://www.goodreads.com/author/show/281521.Cliff_Christl)

[Images for Mudbaths and Bloodbaths: The Inside Story of the Bears-Packers Rivalry by Gary D'Amato, Cliff Christl](#)

### Ritual Aspects of Sports Consumption: How Do Sports Fans Become Ritualized?

ABSTRACT – Previous research on sports fans has focused on entertainment value, collective group influence, and self-enhancement in explaining why and how they become sports fans. The research has paid little attention to ritual aspects of sports consumption, which potentially offer individuals a chance to maintain and celebrate cultural meanings embedded in the consumption. Drawing upon in-depth interviews, we suggest that an individual's desire for cultural identity can be a possible motivation for being a sports fan. Our data indicate that sports fans actively ritualize their sports consumption activities to acquire and maintain cultural identities. Sports fans employ several fan ritualization strategies, formalism, symbolic performance, traditionalism, and social interaction in order to legitimize their sports consumption as meaningful ritual practice, and thus, to connect themselves to cultural identity in a society.

<http://www.acrwebsite.org/search/view-conference-proceedings.aspx?ld=11930>

[Images for Ritual Aspects of Sports Consumption: How Do Sports Fans Become Ritualized?](#)

<https://steadfastlutherans.org/2016/07/why-go-to-worship-when-you-can-go-to-wrigley/>

[Images for why-go-to-worship-when-you-can-go-to-wrigley](#)

### Sunday Is for Football | National Review

The NFL is more popular than organized religion by two measures: the number of us who make time for it in our lives, and the amount of time we make for it. Consider that 34 percent of men and 18 percent of women spend six or more hours a week watching professional football (to say nothing of college games), according to an *Adweek/Harris poll* in 2011. Six hours is a lot. The typical church service lasts only about one hour, and the best estimates based on headcounts — not, as in Gallup, on self-reporting — are that less than 20 percent of American adults put in any pew time at all on the Christian Sabbath.

<https://www.nationalreview.com/2015/01/sunday-football-nicholas-frankovich/>

Images for Sunday Is for Football

[Images for The NFL is more popular than organized religion by two measures: the number of us who make time for it in our lives, and the amount of time we make for it.](#)

People of faith cling to God.

### Short Quotes by Martin Luther | Praying the Gospels

"Whatever your heart clings to and confides in, that is really your God." — Martin Luther  
<http://www.prayingthegospels.com/martin-luther-quotes-2/short-quotes-martin-luther/Images-for-Whatever-your-heart-clings-to-and-confides-in,-that-is-really-your-God.-Martin-Luther>

### 10) Is television the new home altar?

When I was growing up during "The numerical height of mainline Protestantism in the United States (which) occurred in the year 1965,"<sup>1</sup> our family did not own a television set. Others did, but we didn't.



File:Family watching television 1958.jpg - Wikimedia Commons  
[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Family\\_watching\\_television\\_1958.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Family_watching_television_1958.jpg)  
Images for File: Family watching television 1958.jpg

Now 50+ years later, the average amount of television viewing is 5 hours a day. I do not want my home life to revolve around television. I occasionally watch VHSs and DVDs of my choosing as well as YouTube and Vimeo on the internet and sometimes go to public establishments to watch sporting contests, but otherwise eschew television consumption. I look at a computer screen enough for work and do not desire to look at a television screen for recreation.

Efforts today to rediscover the partnership in the early church of the assembly and the household as places of worship face an uphill battle. I point out to confirmands and their parents/guardians in the orientation that I will be with them for approximately 20-24 hours of face-to-face time during the school year, but that the average amount of television viewing is more than that in 1 week.

### Resources

#### Average American watches 5 hours of TV per day - NY Daily News

Time spent watching live TV increases steadily as we get older, according to a new report from Nielsen. African-Americans, followed by whites, watch more TV than other ethnic groups.

<http://www.nydailynews.com/life-style/average-american-watches-5-hours-tv-day-article-1.1711954>

Images for 5 hours of TV per day

<http://www.cnn.com/2015/11/03/health/teens-tweens-media-screen-use-report/> Teens spend 9 hours a day using media

<https://www.cnn.com/videos/living/2015/11/03/teens-tweens-media-screen-use-report-kelly-wallace-brooke-nr.cnn>

Images for teens-tweens-media-screen-use

<https://www.cnn.com/2016/06/30/health/americans-screen-time-nielsen/index.html>

<https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/teens-spend-mind-boggling-9-hours-day-using-media-report-bouffard>

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<https://www.nytimes.com/2009/03/27/business/media/27adco.html> Adults Spend 8 Hours a Day in Front of a Screen, Study Finds

Images for Adults Spend 8 Hours a Day in Front of a Screen

#### 11 Reasons You Should Stop Watching Television Now

Are You Losing Your Life to Television?

Few people realize the number of issues that television causes in our life.

<http://www.lifehack.org/articles/productivity/11-reasons-you-should-stop-watching-television-now.html>

Images for Reasons to Stop Watching Television

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 Images for overcome tv addiction  
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## 6 Ways to Make a Bigger Impact with Your Life – Carey Nieuwhof

### 2. Cut Out Trivial Pursuits

#### Any idea how much TV you watch?

The **average American watches 5 hours...**a day. That's. Per. Day.

And yet I have never heard anyone say "TV changed my life. Watching TV is why my life is filled with passion and significance."

<http://careynieuwhof.com/2014/09/6-ways-make-bigger-impact-life/>

Images for Any idea how much TV you watch? - Carey Nieuwhof

<https://careynieuwhof.com/7-secrets-to-becoming-far-more-productive-with-your-time/> #1

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<https://careynieuwhof.com/is-there-balance-in-greatness/>

Images for carey nieuwhof (author)

## Television "A Vast Wasteland" (1961) - YouTube

In 1961 the FCC Chairman, Newton Minnow, gave a scathing speech at the National Association of Broadcasters Convention calling television "a vast wasteland." This short excerpt from his speech is featured in "Captivated: Finding Freedom in a Media

Captive Culture." [www.captivatedthemovie.com](http://www.captivatedthemovie.com) You can listen to this speech in its entirety at [www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/newtonminow.htm](http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/newtonminow.htm)  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9dGRqLfaGwo>  
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<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uZJJSb5Nu50> Newton Minnow on his 1061 "Vast Wasteland" speech to TV broadcasters  
EMMYTVLEGENDS.ORG - YouTube  
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<http://www.saturdayeveningpost.com/2012/06/03/history/post-perspective/vast-wasteland.html>  
Images for Television "A Vast Wasteland"

### Television consumption - Wikipedia

Television consumption has for decades constituted a major part of [media consumption](#) in [Western culture](#). According to a [Nielsen](#) report, United States adults are watching five hours and four minutes of television per day on average (35.5 h/week, slightly more than 77 days per year).<sup>[1][2]</sup> Older people watch more (less than 50 h/week), younger people less (more than 20 h/week), both with a seasonal pattern that peaks in the winter months.<sup>[3][4]</sup> While overall media consumption continues to rise, live TV consumption was on the decline in 2016.<sup>[5]</sup>

1. John Koblin (30 June 2016). *"How Much Do We Love TV? Let Us Count the Ways"*. NY Times. You still love television. You use your tablet more than ever. And now you are as likely to have paid services like [Netflix](#) or [Amazon Prime](#) as you are to have a [DVR](#) service. ... On average, American adults are watching five hours and four minutes of television per day. The bulk of that – about four and a half hours of it – is live television, which is television watched when originally broadcast. Thirty minutes more comes via DVR.
2. Jump up^ *"Average American watches 5 hours of TV per day, report shows"*. NY Times. 5 March 2014. We watch a lot of television while we're young and mostly at home. Our viewership drops when we hit our teen years and start to develop more outside interests. But after that our viewing then rises in pretty much a straight line for the rest of our lives.

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Television\\_consumption](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Television_consumption)

Images for Television consumption

### Television: Decreasing Level of Competency | The Trust Edge

Why is there a lack of trust in businesses, organizations, and relationships? There is a lack of competency. To be successful there should an increased level of learning and expanding the brain. How do you do this? Read. Read everything. Americans today spend much more time watching television than they do reading [...]

<http://trustoutlook.com/category/trust-in-technology/>

Images for Television: Decreasing Level of Competency

[http://www.goodreads.com/author/show/4396221.David\\_Horsager](http://www.goodreads.com/author/show/4396221.David_Horsager)

<https://www.amazon.com/Trust-Edge-Leaders-Relationships-Stronger/dp/1476711372>

Images for Trust-Edge-Leaders-Relationships-Stronger

### Television Quotes - BrainyQuote

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Images for television quotes

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Images for tv addiction quotes

[www.quoteagarden.com/television.html](http://www.quoteagarden.com/television.html)

<http://www.azquotes.com/quotes/topics/television-watching.html>

<https://www.descriptionari.com/quotes/watching-television/>

<http://bestfunny.net/quotes/about/television>

### What? You Don't Have a TV! | Adam J. Copeland

Megan and I are part of the 1% — we don't have a television. In fact, we haven't for over five years (well, ten years, if roommates' TVs don't count). The decision to eschew a television was not one we pondered for long. It was not a measured countercultural stand against multinational corporations' braincell-destroying dross called "entertainment" these days. Rather, we just figured, "Nah, guess we don't really want a TV."

<http://www.adamjcopeland.com/2011/11/01/what-you-don%E2%80%99t-have-a-tv-part-1/>

[Images for What? You Don't Have a TV! | Adam J. Copeland](#)

<http://www.adamjcopeland.com/2011/11/03/what-you-dont-have-a-tv-part-2/>

<http://www.adamjcopeland.com/2011/11/16/what-you-dont-have-a-tv-part-3/>

I introduce them to Faith Inkubators Faith 5 of Share – Read – Talk – Pray – Bless so that, even if the household huddles for 5 minutes a day, they will have at least ½ hour of home worship a week.

### About | Milestones Ministry

David has written numerous books and articles on **partnering home and congregation** in faith formation. Some of his publications include the following:

*Frogs without Legs Can't Hear: Nurturing Disciples in Home and Congregation* (co-author)

*Coming of Age: Exploring the Identity and Spirituality of Younger Men* (co-author)

*The Child in Our Hands Leadership Manual*

*From the Great Omission to Vibrant Faith*

*Vibrant Faith in the Congregation*

Now, at Milestones Ministry, LLC, David joins the leadership team to continue to support homes and congregations with the development, promotion, and distribution of resources that help individuals, families, and congregations in the important work of faith formation and outreach.

<http://milestonesministry.org/milestones/our-story/>

[Images for Milestones Ministry partnering home and congregation in faith formation](#)

[http://www.lifelongfaith.com/uploads/5/1/6/4/5164069/faith\\_milestones.pdf](http://www.lifelongfaith.com/uploads/5/1/6/4/5164069/faith_milestones.pdf)

[http://www.faithformationlearningexchange.net/uploads/5/2/4/6/5246709/renaming\\_and\\_reclaiming\\_a\\_faith\\_practice.pdf](http://www.faithformationlearningexchange.net/uploads/5/2/4/6/5246709/renaming_and_reclaiming_a_faith_practice.pdf)

### Faith Inkubators + Inkubators / The FAITH 5

Check out the new FAITH5 website at [www.faith5.org](http://www.faith5.org) for videos, information on the 6-week FAITH5 Course, the new Holding Your Family Together book and more!

<http://www.faithink.com/inkubators/f5.asp>

[Images for Faith Inkubators + Inkubators / The FAITH 5](#)

Even as the early Christians joined the temple and the home, present Christians can join the congregation and the household.

The Apostles Are Persecuted

<sup>42</sup>And every day in the **temple and at home** they did not cease to teach and proclaim Jesus as the Messiah.

[oremus Bible Browser: Acts 5:42](#)

<http://bible.oremus.org/?passage=Acts+5:42>

[Images for in the temple and at home Acts 5](#)

### 11) Have casinos and shopping malls replaced churches and synagogues?

When I was growing up during "The numerical height of mainline Protestantism in the United States (which) occurred in the year 1965,"<sup>1</sup> I did not recall casinos and shopping malls in my home area. Now, 50 years later, it can be said in looking back that both casinos and shopping malls proliferated as places where people flocked, while attendance at services of worship at churches and synagogues declined precipitously.

### Resources

#### A Look at Casino Growth in the United States - Poker News

The first casino opened in the United States in 1931. Today, there are nearly 1,500 that generated a total of \$34.6 billion in gross gaming revenue in 2011. Twenty years ago, just six states in the nation offered legalized land-based or riverboat casinos. Today, that number has grown to 22 states, and doesn't include the 24 other states with Native American properties, card rooms, slot parlors or racinos.

<http://www.cardplayer.com/poker-news/13189-a-look-at-casino-growth-in-the-united-states>

[Images for A Look at Casino Growth in the United States - Poker News](#)

<https://www.playusa.com/commercial-casino-revenue-rise/>

<http://www.casinonewsdaily.com/2015/04/22/the-future-of-the-gambling-industry-in-the-united-states/>

[Images for gambling industry in the us](#)

<http://digitalcommons.fiu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1239&context=hospitalityreview> [PDF]Casino Gaming in the US: Past, Present, and Future - FIU Digital Commons

Page 64

<https://www.ibisworld.com/industry-trends/market-research-reports/accommodation-food-services/casino-hotels.html>

### Minnesota Casino Guide | Reviews of all 20 Casinos in MN

Minnesota Casino Guide features a list of all 20 casinos in MN as well as a casino map, promotions & events calendars, hotel information, and more.

<http://www.minnesotacasinoguide.com/>

Images for Minnesota Casino Guide | Reviews of all 20 Casinos in MN

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_casinos\\_in\\_Minnesota](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_casinos_in_Minnesota)

### The God of Consumerism: Identity and Meaning Flow from Consumption in the West

Aug 1, 2011 - Consumption is our god, our faith and our religion. Like a cargo cult dependent on a magical connection to prosperity, we are terrified by the prospect that our religion is based on a false god, that consumption and consumption alone leads to prosperity and happiness.

<http://www.davidwesterfield.net/2011/08/the-god-of-consumerism-identity-and-meaning-flow-from-consumption-in-the-west/>

Images for The God of Consumerism: Identity and Meaning Flow from Consumption in the West

<https://www.christianitytoday.com/pastors/2006/july-online-only/from-lord-to-label-how-consumerism-undermines-our-faith.html>

Images for from-lord-to-label-how-consumerism-undermines-our-faith

[http://www.ethos.org.au/site/Ethos/filesystem/documents/In-depth/Consumerism\\_as\\_Spirituality\\_Glover.pdf](http://www.ethos.org.au/site/Ethos/filesystem/documents/In-depth/Consumerism_as_Spirituality_Glover.pdf)

Images for Consumerism Spirituality

<https://hilo.hawaii.edu/campuscenter/hohonu/volumes/documents/Vol10x12YouAreWhatYouBuy-PostmodernConsumerismandtheConstructionofSelf.pdf>

Coincidentally, two of the best-known malls – the Mall of America and Southdale Center

### Mall of America: Home

Since opening its doors in 1992, Mall of America® has revolutionized the shopping experience and become a leader in retail, entertainment and attractions.

<http://www.mallofamerica.com/>

Images for mall of america

<https://www.facebook.com/MallofAmerica/>

<https://www.bloomingtonmn.org/things-to-do/mallofamerica>

<https://www.youtube.com/user/OfficialMOA> Mall of America - YouTube

Images for Mall of America – YouTube

### Mall of America (mallofamerica) on Pinterest

<https://www.pinterest.com/mallofamerica/>

Images for mall of america pinterest

<https://www.pinterest.com/explore/mall-of-america/>

<https://www.pinterest.com/lexitess/mall-of-america/>

<https://www.pinterest.com/theUGSeries/mall-of-america/>

<https://www.pinterest.com/explore/minneapolis-mall-of-america/>

<https://www.pinterest.com/bloomingtoncvb/mall-of-america/>

<https://www.pinterest.com/stormytucker17/mall-of-america/>

<https://www.pinterest.com/bonamore/mall-of-america/>

<https://www.pinterest.com/tracidubac/mall-of-america/>

### Mall of America - Wikipedia

The Mall of America (MoA) is a [shopping mall](#) owned by the [Triple Five Group](#) and is the largest mall in the United States. It is located in [Bloomington, Minnesota](#) (a suburb of the [Twin Cities](#)), southeast of the junction of [Interstate 494](#) and [Minnesota State Highway 77](#), north of the [Minnesota River](#) and across the interstate from the [Minneapolis–St. Paul International Airport](#). Opened in 1992, the mall receives over 40 million visitors annually, the most of any mall in the world. 80 percent of the visitors are from [Minnesota](#), [Wisconsin](#), [Iowa](#), [the Dakotas](#), [Illinois](#), [Ohio](#), and Canada.<sup>[2]</sup> The [Triple Five Group](#), owned by Canada's [Ghermezian family](#), owns and manages the Mall of America, as well as the [West Edmonton Mall](#).



The entrance to Mall of America

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mall\\_of\\_America](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mall_of_America)

Images for mall of america

### Southdale Center - Wikipedia

Southdale Center, colloquially known as Southdale, is a [shopping mall](#) located in [Edina, Minnesota](#), a suburb of [Minneapolis](#). It opened in 1956 and is the oldest fully enclosed, climate-controlled mall in the [United States](#).<sup>[1][2][3][4][5][6][7]</sup> As of 2011, much of the original Southdale structure is still in use, as well as later additions to the building.

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Southdale\\_Center](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Southdale_Center)

Images for southdale center

- are situated in the same metro area as the headquarters for the former American Lutheran Church, while the state as a whole offers 20 casinos.

### American Lutheran Church - Wikipedia

The American Lutheran Church (ALC or sometimes TALC) was a [Christian Protestant denomination](#) in the United States and Canada that existed from 1960 to 1987. Its headquarters were in [Minneapolis, Minnesota](#). Upon its formation in 1960, the ALC designated [Augsburg Publishing House](#), also located in Minneapolis, as the church publisher. The *Lutheran Standard* was the official magazine of the ALC.

The ALC's immigrant heritage came mostly from [Germany](#), [Norway](#), [Finland](#), [Sweden](#), and [Denmark](#), and its demographic center was in the Upper Midwest (with especially large numbers in [Minnesota](#)).

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/American\\_Lutheran\\_Church](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/American_Lutheran_Church)

Images for American Lutheran Church headquarters in Minneapolis, Minnesota

Interestingly, though, even casinos and shopping malls nationwide are facing their own difficulties now and may face ever increasing difficulties post-COVID-19.

### Resources

#### Casinos Close as Revenue Falls in Gambling-Saturated US

The closing could be a sign of things to come as the \$38 billion U.S. gambling industry bumps up against two unlucky trends, a proliferation of casinos and still-skittish consumers in the wake of the financial crisis.

<http://www.bloomberg.com/bw/articles/2014-04-03/casinos-close-as-revenue-falls-in-gambling-saturated-u-dot-s>

Images for Casinos Close as Revenue Falls in Gambling

<https://www.thedailyjournal.com/story/news/local/2014/10/15/revenue-falls-atlantic-city-casinos-close/17314955/>

[https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/storyline/wp/2014/09/23/the-last-hand-the-epic-bust-of-atlantic-citys-gambling-economy/?utm\\_term=.e3a0afd0ca5f](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/storyline/wp/2014/09/23/the-last-hand-the-epic-bust-of-atlantic-citys-gambling-economy/?utm_term=.e3a0afd0ca5f)

<https://www.newyorker.com/business/currency/americas-casino-saturation-problem>

<https://news.worldcasinodirectory.com/in-the-news/casino-news/casino-closures>

<https://nypost.com/2018/01/29/cuomos-casinos-are-now-cannibals/>

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Trump\\_Plaza\\_Hotel\\_and\\_Casino](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Trump_Plaza_Hotel_and_Casino)

Images for trump plaza hotel and casino

#### The death of the American mall | Cities | The Guardian

Once-proud visions of suburban utopia are left to rot as online shopping and the resurgence of city centers make malls increasingly irrelevant to young people.

<http://www.theguardian.com/cities/2014/jun/19/-sp-death-of-the-american-shopping-mall>

Images for death of the American mall

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dead\\_mall](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dead_mall)

<https://www.wsj.com/graphics/death-of-the-american-mall/>

<http://time.com/4865957/death-and-life-shopping-mall/>

<http://www.theamericanconservative.com/urbs/why-i-mourn-the-death-of-the-american-mall/>

<https://www.businessinsider.com/play-american-mall-the-game-2018-2?r=UK&IR=T>

<http://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/counterpoint/dead-malls/9228136>

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLNz4Un92pGNxQ9vNgmnCx7dwchPJGJ3IQ> Dead Mall Series - YouTube

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uRMcPEaD1I0> Death of the American Mall – YouTube

Images for Death of the American Mall – YouTube

<https://nowthisnews.com/videos/money/the-american-mall-is-suffering-a-slow-excruciating-death>

<https://www.vox.com/videos/2018/4/11/17220528/american-shopping-malls-death-third-place>

<https://money.cnn.com/2017/12/12/news/companies/mall-closing/index.html>

<https://digit.hbs.org/submitmission/death-to-american-malls-its-2018-and-the-largest-mall-operator-in-the-us-refuses-to-agree/>

[https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/business/wp/2017/04/05/the-troubles-at-the-american-mall-are-coming-to-a-boil/?utm\\_term=.5cfba7298c17](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/business/wp/2017/04/05/the-troubles-at-the-american-mall-are-coming-to-a-boil/?utm_term=.5cfba7298c17)

Images for troubles at the American mall

#### The Death of the Mall and the Future of Church Buildings – Thom Rainer

It will be fascinating to watch these trends unfold. Large malls will yield to online shopping and smaller and more intimate shopping villages. And large church buildings will yield to smaller church buildings and other venues that aren't "churchy" at all. The result may be that we will see our church facilities actually utilized more; greater facility stewardship could result. After all, only college football stadiums are utilized less than church facilities.



<http://www.christianpost.com/news/the-death-of-the-mall-and-the-future-of-church-buildings-88150/>  
Images for The Death of the Mall and the Future of Church Buildings – Thom Rainer  
<http://www.citylab.com/work/2012/12/death-american-shopping-mall/4252/>  
<http://echurch.com/death-spiral-your-future-church-sears/>  
<https://www.amazon.com/Autopsy-Deceased-Church-Yours-Alive/dp/143368392X>  
Images for thom rainer (author)

The question can be asked, “Will the malls decline even faster post-pandemic?”

#### Malls were dying before COVID-19. Imagine them post-pandemic

The Great American Mall. Most of us know it as the gleaming postmodern shopping temple of the '70s, '80s, and '90s, pillared by mighty department stores, where worshippers laid their wallets on the altar and prayed to the gods of capitalism. But amidst the retail apocalypse of the past decade, those malls have been slowly disappearing—a cultural death now hastened by the global pandemic.

The COVID-19 economic crisis has already curtailed consumer spending, with department stores among the most devastated—the goal is simply to stay solvent, as Macy’s, J.C. Penney, Lord & Taylor, Nordstrom, and Neiman Marcus are all reportedly on the edge of bankruptcy (Sears already filed in 2018). And as real estate research firm Green Street Advisors explained to CNBC, if department stores start closing up shop, it could doom the malls they vacate as well.

<https://www.fastcompany.com/90498983/shopping-malls-were-dying-before-covid-19-imagine-them-post-pandemic>  
Images for malls have been slowly disappearing—a cultural death now hastened by the global pandemic.

The question can be asked, “In the end, what is most important?”

#### Only One Life: a poem by C.T. Studd | with one aim

Two little lines I heard one day,  
Traveling along life’s busy way;  
Bringing conviction to my heart,  
And from my mind would not depart;  
Only one life, ’twill soon be past,  
Only what’s done for Christ will last.

<https://joshuavandermerwe.wordpress.com/2014/01/23/only-one-life-a-poem-by-c-t-studd/>  
Images for Only One Life: a poem by C.T. Studd | with one aim

## 12) The more urban, the less religious

The publication of *The Secular City* in 1965 coincided with “the numerical height of mainline Protestantism in the United States” and proved to be predictive of what was to come.

#### The Secular City: Secularization and Urbanization in Theological Perspective [Harvey Cox]

Since its initial publication in 1965, *The Secular City* has been hailed as a classic for its nuanced exploration of the relationships among the rise of urban civilization, the decline of hierarchical, institutional religion, and the place of the secular within society. Now, half a century later, this international best seller remains as relevant as when it first appeared. The book’s arguments—that secularity has a positive effect on institutions, that the city can be a space where people of all faiths fulfill their potential, and that God is present in both the secular and formal religious realms—still resonate with readers of all backgrounds.

<https://www.amazon.com/Secular-City-Harvey-Cox/dp/B000MRD6FC>  
<http://press.princeton.edu/titles/10117.html>  
[http://www.chaplaincyacademy.com/files/The%20Secular%20City%20\(Cox,%20Stewart\).pdf](http://www.chaplaincyacademy.com/files/The%20Secular%20City%20(Cox,%20Stewart).pdf)  
<http://www.pbs.org/wnet/religionandethics/2009/09/25/september-25-2009-harvey-cox-extended-interview/4342/>  
<https://www.firstthings.com/web-exclusives/2007/03/harvey-coxs-secular-city>  
<http://faithandform.com/feature/sacred-secular-city-conversation-harvey-cox/>  
<http://thesimplepastor.co.uk/book-review-the-secular-city/>  
<http://readingreligion.org/books/harvey-cox-reader>  
<https://www.commentarymagazine.com/articles/religion-in-the-secular-city-by-harvey-cox/>  
<http://www.nytimes.com/1988/05/22/magazine/spreading-the-gospel-at-harvard.html?pagewanted=all>  
<https://ar.pinterest.com/pin/329748003938065933/> The secular city : secularization and urbanization in theological perspective  
Images for secular city harvey cox pinterest  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Harvey\\_Cox](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Harvey_Cox)  
<https://www.amazon.com/Harvey-Cox/e/B001KDSHUG>  
[https://www.goodreads.com/author/show/2051822.Harvey\\_Cox](https://www.goodreads.com/author/show/2051822.Harvey_Cox)  
Images for Harvey Cox (author)  
Images for The Secular City: Secularization and Urbanization in Theological Perspective [Harvey Cox]

## Resources

Five Reasons Why Churches Are Dying and Declining Faster Today - Thom Rainer

- 3 Migration from rural areas and small towns to the cities. In 1790, only 5% of Americans lived in cities. By the 1960s, the percentage of Americans skyrocketed to 65%. Today over 80% of Americans are city dwellers. Rural and small-town churches held on tenaciously to their members for over two centuries. But the population base for those tenacious churches has dwindled dramatically.

<http://thomrainer.com/2016/09/five-reasons-churches-dying-declining-faster-today/>

Images for Five Reasons Why Churches Are Dying and Declining Faster Today - Thom Rainer 3 Migration from rural areas and small towns to the cities.

<https://thomrainer.com/2015/08/9-reasons-we-must-connect-our-churches-with-cities/#2>

Images for connect-our-churches-with-cities

#### [PDF] Religion in the Urban Community: An Exploratory Study

Abstract: Many theologians have called for a re-examination of traditional religious practices and beliefs as they exist today in urban societies. Some argue that churches have not changed as quickly or as deeply as is necessary to confront key modern issues. Religious institutions often appear to be bypassed by other social institutions and important individual and societal concerns do not appear in church agenda. The process by which religious institutions are separated from other social arrangements and lose influence throughout many areas of life is known as secularization. Historically, secularization and urbanization have been linked together and the goal of this study is to show how each process has influenced the other.

<http://docsdrive.com/pdfs/medwelljournals/sscience/2013/505-510.pdf>

Images for Religion in the Urban Community

Images for secularization and urbanization linked together

#### Where is the world's most 'godless' city? | Cities | The Guardian

Meanwhile, the author and biopsychologist Nigel Barber has argued that as cities become more stable and prosperous, their inhabitants are less likely to feel the need for religious belief.

<https://www.theguardian.com/cities/2016/dec/07/where-world-godless-city-religion-atheist>

Images for Where is the world's most 'godless' city?

<https://bigthink.com/paul-ratner/what-is-the-most-godless-city-on-earth>

Images for what-is-the-most-godless-city-on-earth

<https://www.ranker.com/list/most-godless-cities-in-america/robert-wabash>

<http://time.com/1541/godless-cities-in-america/>

Images for godless-cities-in-america

<http://www.theimaginativeconservative.org/2017/06/godless-city-buildings-faces-christopher-morrissey.html>

<https://religionnews.com/2014/01/31/salt-lake-city-godless-city-america-try/>

### 13) Creation worship or Creator worship?

I consider myself fortunate to live in what I and many others regard as a beautiful part of God's creation here in Northwest Wisconsin. I appreciate nature, but I worship the Creator and not the creation. I realize, though, that such a distinction is rapidly changing as an increasing number of people choose to be in the woods, on the lake, or otherwise in nature rather than at services of worship.

Hymn calling on all nations to praise the Lord

Make a joyful noise to the LORD, all the earth.

Worship the LORD with gladness; come into his presence with singing.

Know that the LORD is God. It is he that made us, and we are his; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.

Enter his gates with thanksgiving, and his courts with praise. Give thanks to him, bless his name.

For the LORD is good; his steadfast love endures forever, and his faithfulness to all generations.

oremus Bible Browser: Psalm 100

<http://bible.oremus.org/?ql=260434479>

Images for Hymn calling on all nations to praise the Lord

#### Resources

##### Anne Lamott Quotes (Author of *Bird by Bird*) – Goodreads

I didn't need to understand the hypostatic unity of the Trinity; I just needed to turn my life over to whoever came up with redwood trees.

-Anne Lamott, *Plan B: Further Thoughts on Faith*

[http://www.goodreads.com/author/quotes/7113.Anne\\_Lamott?page=4](http://www.goodreads.com/author/quotes/7113.Anne_Lamott?page=4)

Images for Anne Lamott Quotes

##### Do We Worship the Creation or the Creator? – Eric Geiger

*Rejoice* is a simple yet serious word, meaning to celebrate, cheer, exult, or delight in. One synonym for rejoice is *worship*, and we were each created by God to do so, hardwired by our Creator for it. And thus, even those men and women who don't enjoy worshipping their Maker can sometimes be seen with their bodies painted in team colors, becoming emotionally affected for hours, sometimes days, by how the game went on a particular Saturday or Sunday, or Monday night, or Thursday night. They're ready for worship any day of the week—morning, noon, or evening. But, their hearts are yielded to lesser things.

<http://ericgeiger.com/2013/02/do-we-worship-the-creation-or-the-creator/>

<http://www.lifeway.com/Product/creature-of-the-word-P005514775?carid=jhowe-geiger-COTW>

Images for Worship the Creation or the Creator?

<https://ftc.co/resource-library/blog-entries/worship-the-creator-not-the-created>

<http://www.erikkonsmo.com/403/worship-the-creator-not-the-creation/>

<http://www.christiantruthcenter.com/you-are-created-to-serve-the-creator-not-the-creation/>

<http://www.wnd.com/2015/04/the-creator-vs-the-created-whom-do-you-worship/>

Images for Glory to God in the Highest

#### 14) Boat or ark?

Take the boat up to the lake for the weekend

##### How to Plan a Weekend Trip on a Boat: 13 Steps (with Pictures)

A glassy expanse in front of you, a companion alongside you, and the weekend ahead of you – it's what boating is all about. While you could just throttle out of the marina for points unknown, the fact is that you'll have more time for everything (even if that means just doing nothing) and be safer if you plan your weekend boating escape. Best of all, having a plan will actually allow you more time for spontaneity.

<http://www.wikihow.com/Plan-a-Weekend-Trip-on-a-Boat>

[Images for How to Plan a Weekend Trip on a Boat](#)

or gather with the assembly for services of worship in the ark?

##### Noah's Ark - Wikipedia

Noah's Ark (**Hebrew**: תיבת נח; **Biblical Hebrew**: *Tevat Noah*) is the vessel in the **Genesis flood narrative** (**Genesis** chapters 6–9) by which **God** spares **Noah**, his family, and a remnant of all the world's animals from the flood.<sup>[1][2]</sup>



*Noah's Ark* (1846), a painting by the American folk painter [Edward Hicks](#).

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Noah%27s\\_Ark](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Noah%27s_Ark)

[Images for noah's ark](#)

##### The Church as Noah's Ark | internetmonk.com

The nave is the central part of the church from the main front to the chancel. It's the part where the laity sit and in great Gothic churches is sometimes separated from the choir and clergy by a screen. It takes its name from the Latin *navis*, meaning ship, one reason being that the vaulted roof looks rather like an inverted keel. A more interesting reason is that the Church itself is thought of as a ship or Noah's Ark. It's a resemblance worth thinking about.

<http://www.internetmonk.com/archive/the-church-as-noahs-ark>

[Images for Church as Noah's Ark](#)

<http://www.floodofnoah.com/post-early-christianity-church-as-ark>

<http://classicalchristianity.com/2012/03/23/noahs-ark-and-the-church/>

<http://lgchurchofchrist.com/THE%20%20ARK%20AND%20THE%20CHURCH.htm>

<https://www.lcoggt.org/Johnson/bi03.htm> THE ARK A TYPE OF THE CHURCH - Lawton Church of God

[https://sermons.faithlife.com/sermons/59484-noahs-ark-and-the-church-\(lhcoc\)](https://sermons.faithlife.com/sermons/59484-noahs-ark-and-the-church-(lhcoc))

[Images for noah's ark and the church](#)

<https://www.journeywithjesus.net/Essays/20140519JJ.shtm> The Church as Noah's Ark - Journey with Jesus

<https://www.quora.com/Is-Noahs-Ark-the-equivalent-of-the-Christian-Church>

[Images for noah's ark equivalent of christian church](#)

<http://catholicexchange.com/ten-ways-noahs-ark-prefigured-church>

[Images for Noah's Ark Prefigured the Church](#)

Increasingly, people are choosing the former over the latter.

#### 15) What's more interesting?

I arrived at an open country church early one Sunday morning to look out the window to see the former Congregation Council president drive by on a bright green tractor. I found out later he was headed to a rendezvous point for a tractor parade through the hills. If it ever was the case that Sunday morning was reserved for services of worship, that time has long since passed in favor of seemingly more interesting activities.

### Why Don't We Go To Church Anymore? | HuffPost

Another reason is that for centuries, Sunday morning was the only entertainment in town. Shops were closed; sports did not start until after noon, there were no video games and cable TV. **Today church is not the only show in town.**

[https://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/why-dont-we-go-to-church-anymore\\_us\\_58b73de8e4b015675cf65b9d](https://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/why-dont-we-go-to-church-anymore_us_58b73de8e4b015675cf65b9d)

Images for Why Don't We Go To Church Anymore | HuffPost

[Images for Today church is not the only show in town.](#)

## 16) Venture out in bad weather

Although I cannot prove the hypothesis, I have observed that some people will invoke bad weather as an excuse for not attending a service of worship while braving the elements to attend other events of compelling interest.

### Anecdotes and examples - Page 544 - Google Books Result

544 THE COMMANDMENTS OF THE CHURCH

Q. *Is it a mortal sin not to hear Mass on a Sunday or a holy day of obligation?*

A. *It is a mortal sin not to hear Mass on a Sunday or a holy day of obligation, unless we are excused for a serious reason. They also commit a mortal sin who, having others under their charge, hinder them from hearing Mass, without a sufficient reason.*

The Church and the Theater

King Frederic William of Prussia was a god-fearing man and used invariably to go to Church on all Sundays and holy days. One rough December morning he remarked how few people there were in church; evidently, they had not like to venture out in such bad weather. In the evening of the same day the king drove to the theater. The weather had not improved; on the contrary, the snow was beating down more fiercely than in the morning, yet the theatre was crowded. Perceiving this, the king remarked to his attendants: "People will make any sacrifice for the sake of pleasure, but not for God's sake." We are only excused from hearing Mass if serious harm will accrue to us from doing so. **Bad weather and a long distance from church do not always furnish an excuse for not attending Mass.**

<https://books.google.com/books?isbn=587476691X>

Images for People will make any sacrifice for the sake of pleasure

## 17) Do your own thing or do the will of God?

When I started Confirmation instruction in 1965 at Immanuel Lutheran Church in Story City, Iowa during "The numerical height of mainline Protestantism in the United States (which) occurred in the year 1965,"<sup>1</sup> my parents impressed upon me that the most important thing was to do the will of God.

### What Does the Bible Say About Will Of God? - OpenBible.info

[https://www.openbible.info/topics/will\\_of\\_god](https://www.openbible.info/topics/will_of_god)

Images for Bible and the will of God

<https://www.biblestudytools.com/topical-verses/bible-verses-about-gods-will/>

<https://www.patheos.com/blogs/christiancrier/2015/06/25/top-7-bible-verses-about-the-will-of-god/>

<https://everydayservant.com/top-38-bible-verses-doing-the-will-of-god/>

<https://www.billkochman.com/VerseLists/verse076.html> Will of God : KJV - King James Version - Bible Verse List

<https://www.gotquestions.org/know-God-will.html>

<https://bible.knowing-jesus.com/topics/Doing-God-s-Will>

<https://www.jw.org/en/bible-teachings/questions/will-of-god/>

<https://www.compellingtruth.org/Gods-will.html>

<https://www.allaboutfollowingjesus.org/gods-will-faq.htm>

<https://www.crosswalk.com/faith/spiritual-life/what-is-the-will-of-god.html>

<https://www.oneplace.com/ministries/the-bible-study-hour/read/articles/how-to-know-the-will-of-god-11927.html>

<https://www.desiringgod.org/messages/what-is-the-will-of-god-and-how-do-we-know-it>

Images for what-is-the-will-of-god-and-how-do-we-know-it

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Will\\_of\\_God](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Will_of_God)

<https://www.christianity.com/wiki/christian-life/how-do-we-know-god-s-will-for-our-lives.html>

Images for christian-life/how-do-we-know-god-s-will-for-our-lives

Since then, the message of the wider culture has increasingly been to do your own thing.

### Resources

#### Do your own thing definition and meaning | Collins English Dictionary

If you **do your own thing**, you live, act, or **behave** in the way you **want** to, without paying attention to **convention** or **depending** on other people.

<https://www.collinsdictionary.com/us/dictionary/english/do-your-own-thing>

Images for Do your own thing definition and meaning

#### From Hippie to New Ager - Crystalinks

Hippie fashions and values had a major effect on culture, influencing popular music, television, film, literature, and the arts. **Since the 1960s, many aspects of hippie culture have been assimilated by mainstream society.** The religious and cultural

diversity espoused by the hippies has gained widespread acceptance, and Eastern philosophy and spiritual concepts have reached a larger audience.

<http://www.crystalinks.com/hippies.html>

Images for From Hippie to New Ager

<http://healthybodynow.net/new-age-hippie/>

Images for new-age-hippie

<https://www.spiritearthawakening.com/spirituality/consciousness/enlightenment/ways-tell-youre-modern-day-hippie>

Images for [spirituality/consciousness/enlightenment/ways-tell-your-modern-day-hippie](https://www.spiritearthawakening.com/spirituality/consciousness/enlightenment/ways-tell-your-modern-day-hippie)

### Hippie - WikiVisually

On July 7, *Time* magazine featured a cover story entitled, "The Hippies: The Philosophy of a Subculture." The article described the guidelines of the hippie code: "Do your own thing, wherever you have to do it and whenever you want." Drop out. Leave society as you have known it. Leave it utterly. Blow the mind of every straight person you can reach. Turn them on, if not to drugs, then to beauty, love, honesty, fun."<sup>[67]</sup>

<http://wikivisually.com/wiki/Hippie>

Images for hippie

Images for [Do your own thing, wherever you have to do it and whenever you want.](http://wikivisually.com/wiki/Hippie)

### New Age travelers - Wikipedia

New Age travelers are persons who often espouse New Age and hippie beliefs, and travel between music festivals and fairs, in order to live in a community with others who hold similar beliefs. Their transport and homes consist of vans, lorries, buses, cars, and caravans converted into mobile homes.

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New\\_Age\\_travellers](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New_Age_travellers)

Images for New Age travelers

### 180 best New-Age Hippie images on Pinterest

<https://www.pinterest.com/alexsmarie1/new-age-hippie/>

Images for New-Age Hippie on Pinterest

<https://www.pinterest.com/dubmango/hippie-new-age-motivational-graphics/>

<https://www.pinterest.co.uk/kikistarr74/bohohippienew-age/>

<https://www.pinterest.ca/NAHClothing/>

Images for NAHClothing

Now, it takes increasing intentionality to do God's will in a do-your-own-thing society.

## 18) Self-interest or Great Commandment?

The Congregation Council asked 3 members to serve on the transition task force. One of the members attended a service of worship once. Otherwise, I had not met the other 2 members at a service of worship. I suggested scheduling the meeting after a service of worship thinking that they could attend the service of worship and then stay for the meeting. It worked for one member. So, by the second meeting of this task force 3 months into my interim assignment, 2 of the members had each attended a service twice for a combined total of 4 times. One member had yet to attend a service of worship. The members talked excitedly about how they had reworked a previous Ministry Site Profile of 3 years earlier and how much it would cost to get a pastor. Well into the meeting, I drew their attention to the Mission question in the profile and their answer given.

**Mission** In light of the way you have described your ministry context in the Ministry Site Profile, what are the top three mission priorities which, if accomplished, hold the most promise for the continued development of this ministry?

Nurture sense of belonging

Encourage greater participation in worship

Enhance the involvement of our youth within the church

I asked them how they imagined they could "encourage greater participation in worship." One of them nervously replied, "More people come when the children sing." She went on to say that she attended services of worship regularly when her children attended Sunday School and Confirmation, but that she had not been attending regularly since.

The member, who had as yet to attend a service of worship said, "We came 5 out of 6 times when *(a former interim pastor at the congregation who was a retired long-term pastor at a neighboring congregation)* preached." Others chimed in to say that members at the neighboring congregation, from which the long-term pastor had retired, attended services of worship at area congregations when the retired pastor supply preached there.

I then asked, "So, are you going to say to the candidate, 'We'll come if we find you interesting but won't come if we don't find you interesting.?'?" I also asked, "What if a new pastor cannot measure up to *(the former interim pastor)*?"

I went on to say that, in the midst of the clergy shortage, candidates are looking for settings where the members are outwardly focused rather than inwardly focused and will shy away from settings where the members are looking for a piper.

Instead of attending services of worship because of love of God and love of others,

### The Greatest Commandment

'Teacher, which commandment in the law is the greatest?' He said to him, ' "You shall love the Lord your God with all your

heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.” This is the greatest and first commandment. And a second is like it: “You shall love your neighbour as yourself.” On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.’

oremus Bible Browser : [Matthew 22:36-40](#)

<http://bible.oremus.org/?ql=177937885>

Images for Greatest Commandment

this member of the task force indicated he would attend services of worship if he found the pastor interesting.

## 19) Epicurean or Christian?

Many adhere to the philosophy of Epicurus.

### Resources for Epicurean

epicurean - definition of epicurean by The Free Dictionary

*ep·i·cu·re·an*

(ĕp'ī-kyoo-rĕ'ən, -kyoor'ē-)

*adj.*

1. Devoted to the pursuit of sensual pleasure, especially to the enjoyment of good food and comfort.

2. Suited to the tastes of an epicure: *an epicurean repast.*

3. Epicurean Of or relating to Epicurus or Epicureanism.

*n.*

1. A devotee to sensuous and luxurious living; an epicure.

2. Epicurean A follower of Epicurus.

<http://www.thefreedictionary.com/epicurean>

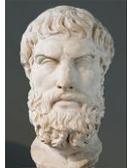
Images for epicurean - definition

### Epicurus - Wikipedia

For Epicurus, the purpose of philosophy was to help people attain a happy, tranquil life characterized by *ataraxia* (peace and freedom from fear) and *aponia* (the absence of pain). He advocated that people were best able to pursue philosophy by living a self-sufficient life surrounded by friends. He taught that the root of all human neurosis is death denial and the tendency for human beings to assume that death will be horrific and painful, which he claimed causes unnecessary anxiety, selfish self-protective behaviors, and hypocrisy. According to Epicurus, death is the end of both the body and the soul and therefore should not be feared. Epicurus taught that although the gods exist, they have no involvement in human affairs. He taught that people should behave ethically not because the gods punish or reward people for their actions, but because amoral behavior will burden them with guilt and prevent them from attaining *ataraxia*.

Roman marble bust of Epicurus

Like Aristotle, Epicurus was an *empiricist*, meaning he believed that the senses are the only reliable source of knowledge about the world. He derived much of his physics and cosmology from the earlier philosopher Democritus (c. 460–c. 370 BC). Like Democritus, Epicurus taught that the universe is infinite and eternal and that all matter is made up of extremely tiny, invisible particles known as *atoms*. All occurrences in the natural world are ultimately the result of atoms moving and interacting in empty space. Epicurus deviated from Democritus in his teaching of *atomic "swerve"*, which holds that atoms may deviate from their expected course, thus permitting humans to possess *free will* in an otherwise *deterministic* universe.



<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Epicurus>

Images for Epicurus

26 best Epicureanism images on Pinterest

<https://www.pinterest.com/slangman/epicureanism/>

Images for Epicureanism Pinterest

<https://www.pinterest.com/marycatherine45/epicurus/>

<https://www.pinterest.com/FootballSteve/epicurus/>

<https://www.pinterest.com/filmorkel/epicurus/>

Images for epicurus on pinterest

<https://www.pinterest.com/tom0267au/epicurean-philosophy/>

<https://www.pinterest.com/pin/468796642442460219/> Discover ideas about Epicurean Philosophy

Images for Epicurean Philosophy on Pinterest

Others follow the crucified and risen Christ.

### Resources for Christian

Christian - definition of Christian by The Free Dictionary

Chris·tian  
(kris'chən)

n.

1. One who professes belief in Jesus as Christ or follows a religion based on the life and teachings of Jesus.
2. One who lives according to the teachings of Jesus.

<http://www.thefreedictionary.com/Christian>

[Images for Christian - definition](#)

#### Exhortation

17 Brothers and sisters,<sup>\*</sup> join in imitating me and observe those who live according to the example you have in us. <sup>18</sup>For many live as enemies of the cross of Christ; I have often told you of them, and now I tell you even with tears. <sup>19</sup>Their end is destruction; their god is the belly; and their glory is in their shame; their minds are set on earthly things. <sup>20</sup>But our citizenship<sup>\*</sup> is in heaven, and it is from there that we are expecting a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. <sup>21</sup>He will transform the body of our humiliation<sup>\*</sup> so that it may be conformed to the body of his glory,<sup>\*</sup> by the power that also enables him to make all things subject to himself.

[oremus Bible Browser: Philippians 3:17-21](#)

<http://bible.oremus.org/?passage=Philippians+3>

[Images for their god is the belly philippians](#)

#### 20) Life's Equation

In 2010, I bought a bank foreclosure house enforced by a sheriff's order attached to the front door and proceeded to rehab it. I constructed rock borders with salvaged field stone for the full length on one side and half-length on the other side. Along the back border, I constructed a stretch of rock art with rock beds on either side.

The first row facing the viewer in salvaged paver bricks

The second row with railroad ties for posts on left and right

The third row in salvaged paver bricks

The fourth row constructed of rocks and salvaged broken concrete

The riddle:

Life's Equation

Some choose wine, women, and song.

Others look to faith.

All die in the end.

[+ - x ÷ =] "Life's Equation."

[bottle tree – wine], [Venus – women], [chimes – song].

[two crosses – faith].

[burial mound - death].

#### Resources

[10 best Bottle Trees images on Pinterest](#)

<https://www.pinterest.com/nancydenmark/bottle-trees/>

[Images for bottle trees on pinterest](#)

<https://www.pinterest.com/explore/bottle-trees/>

<https://www.pinterest.com/kmcgowatt/bottle-tree/>

<https://www.pinterest.com/thebluebottle/cobalt-bottle-trees/>

<https://www.pinterest.com/aupower/bottle-trees/>

[https://www.pinterest.com/joyce\\_watts2/bottle-trees/](https://www.pinterest.com/joyce_watts2/bottle-trees/)

<https://www.felderrushing.net/BottleTreeImages.htm>

<https://www.pinterest.com/explore/wine-bottle-trees/>

[Images for wine-bottle-trees](#)

[Venus \(mythology\) - Simple English Wikipedia](#)

In [Roman mythology](#), Venus is the [goddess](#) of [love](#) and beauty. She was the Roman version of the [Greek](#) Aphrodite and Etruscan [Turan](#).



*The Birth of Venus* by [Sandro Botticelli](#).

[https://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/Venus\\_\(mythology\)](https://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/Venus_(mythology))

[Images for Venus \(mythology\)](#)

[Wine, Women and Song - Josef Danhauser - as an art print](#)

<https://reproarte.com/en/choice-of-topics/style/biedermeier/wine-women-and-song-detail>

[Images for Wine, Women and Song - Josef Danhauser](#)

## Wine, women and song - Wikipedia

"Wine, women, and song" is a hendiadris that endorses hedonistic lifestyles or behaviors. In modern times, it is usually seen in the form "sex and drugs and rock 'n' roll," a phrase popularized by British singer Ian Dury in his song of the same title.

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wine,\\_women\\_and\\_song](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wine,_women_and_song)

Images for Wine, women and song

[https://www.wikiwand.com/en/Wine,\\_women\\_and\\_song](https://www.wikiwand.com/en/Wine,_women_and_song)

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sex\\_%26\\_Drugs\\_%26\\_Rock\\_%26\\_Roll](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sex_%26_Drugs_%26_Rock_%26_Roll)

## 21) Amnesia or awareness?

Many have forgotten God in prosperity.

A warning not to forget God in prosperity

This entire commandment that I command you today you must diligently observe, so that you may live and increase, and go in and occupy the land that the LORD promised on oath to your ancestors.<sup>2</sup>Remember the long way that the LORD your God has led you these forty years in the wilderness, in order to humble you, testing you to know what was in your heart, whether or not you would keep his commandments.<sup>3</sup>He humbled you by letting you hunger, then by feeding you with manna, with which neither you nor your ancestors were acquainted, in order to make you understand that one does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of the LORD.<sup>4</sup>The clothes on your back did not wear out and your feet did not swell these forty years.<sup>5</sup>Know then in your heart that as a parent disciplines a child so the LORD your God disciplines you.<sup>6</sup>Therefore keep the commandments of the LORD your God, by walking in his ways and by fearing him.<sup>7</sup>For the LORD your God is bringing you into a good land, a land with flowing streams, with springs and underground waters welling up in valleys and hills,<sup>8</sup>a land of wheat and barley, of vines and fig trees and pomegranates, a land of olive trees and honey,<sup>9</sup>a land where you may eat bread without scarcity, where you will lack nothing, a land whose stones are iron and from whose hills you may mine copper.<sup>10</sup>You shall eat your fill and bless the LORD your God for the good land that he has given you.

**11 Take care that you do not forget the LORD your God**, by failing to keep his commandments, his ordinances, and his statutes, which I am commanding you today.<sup>12</sup>When you have eaten your fill and have built fine houses and live in them,<sup>13</sup>and when your herds and flocks have multiplied, and your silver and gold is multiplied, and all that you have is multiplied,<sup>14</sup>then do not exalt yourself, forgetting the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery,<sup>15</sup>who led you through the great and terrible wilderness, an arid waste-land with poisonous<sup>2</sup> snakes and scorpions. He made water flow for you from flint rock,<sup>16</sup>and fed you in the wilderness with manna that your ancestors did not know, to humble you and to test you, and in the end to do you good.<sup>17</sup>Do not say to yourself, 'My power and the might of my own hand have gained me this wealth.'<sup>18</sup>But remember the LORD your God, for it is he who gives you power to get wealth, so that he may confirm his covenant that he swore to your ancestors, as he is doing today.<sup>19</sup>If you do forget the LORD your God and follow other gods to serve and worship them, I solemnly warn you today that you shall surely perish.<sup>20</sup>Like the nations that the LORD is destroying before you, so shall you perish, because you would not obey the voice of the LORD your God.

oremus Bible Browser: Deuteronomy 8

<http://bible.oremus.org/?passage=Deuteronomy+8>

Images for warning not to forget God in prosperity

Some continue to acknowledge God as creator and provider.

## THE SMALL CATECHISM

THE CREED

THE FIRST ARTICLE

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth.

*What does this mean?*

I believe that God has made me and all creatures; that He has given me my body and soul, eyes, ears and all my members, my reason and all my senses, and still preserves them; that He richly and daily provides me with food and clothing, home and family, property and goods, and all that I need to support this body and life; that He protects me from all danger, guards and keeps me from all evil; and all this purely out of fatherly, divine goodness and mercy, without any merit or worthiness in me; for all which I am in duty bound to thank and praise, to serve and obey Him. This is most certainly true.

<https://www.blc.edu/comm/gargy/gargy1/ELSCatechism.htm>

Images for I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth.

## 22) Increasing prosperity

My father worked as a non-union carpenter and my mother as a homemaker. When I was growing up, my parents took the family to the local Dairy Queen for a treat. Whereas they would forego buying anything for themselves, my dad bought 4 nickel cones for the boys. At meals, my parents passed around an **Our Daily Bread Promise Box** for us to read bible verses and prayers. I found out what hard times are really like when I went down to visit black famers in Mississippi. I wrote about this in Black Farmers Sand Up For Human Rights in Strengthening Our Rural Communities, Chapter 11 Two Racial Groups Retain Identity Through Community on page 58 as a part of Rural Ministry Resources on this website.



[Why Is Mississippi More Religious Than New Hampshire? | Psychology Today](#)

[Religion thrives on misery—and chokes on prosperity.](#)

<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/the-human-beast/201310/why-is-mississippi-more-religious-new-hampshire>

Images for Religion thrives on misery—and chokes on prosperity

[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/277886951\\_Why\\_Is\\_Mississippi\\_More\\_Religious\\_Than\\_New\\_Hampshire\\_Material\\_Security\\_and\\_Ethnicity\\_as\\_Factors](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/277886951_Why_Is_Mississippi_More_Religious_Than_New_Hampshire_Material_Security_and_Ethnicity_as_Factors)

<https://news.gallup.com/poll/189038/new-hampshire-least-religious-state.aspx>

<http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/1069397114556071?journalCode=ccrc> Why Is Mississippi More Religious Than New Hampshire? Material Security and Ethnicity as Factors

<https://news.gallup.com/poll/203747/mississippi-retains-standing-religious-state.aspx>

<https://www.livescience.com/27088-mississippi-most-religious-state.html>

Images for mississippi-most-religious-state

## Resources

[Do countries lose religion as they gain wealth? | CBC News - CBC.ca](#)

Poor nations have the highest proportion of people who identify as religious

<http://www.cbc.ca/news/world/do-countries-lose-religion-as-they-gain-wealth-1.1310451>

Images for countries lose religion as they gain wealth

<https://www.newsweek.com/less-religious-countries-more-prosperous-study-says-1032778>

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/belief/2016/may/26/the-world-is-getting-more-religious-because-the-poor-go-for-god>

<https://www.marketwatch.com/story/how-a-countrys-views-on-god-affect-its-prosperity-2018-07-20>

[Pentecost 7 C: The Ongoing Mission of the 70 | ...In the Meantime - David Lose](#)

Third, and for all of us: what I find particularly amazing about this passage is not the miracles but the willingness to be dependent on others. Think about it: no purse, no bag, no sandals and, importantly, no guarantees about how they will be received. All they have is the promise of Jesus to go with them, to do great things through them, and to bring them home again. [I sometimes wonder if we could match the decline of the church to the rise in disposable income in our cultures.](#) There is something about wealth that creates the illusion of independence, that insulates us (at least for a time) from the vicissitudes of life, and that spurs us to imagine that we don't really need God or each other.

<http://www.davidlose.net/2016/06/pentecost-7-c-the-ongoing-mission-of-the-70/>

Images for match the decline of the church to the rise in disposable income

## 23) The Age of Decadence

Sir John Bagot Glubb explored the nations and duration in years of Assyria (247), Persia (208), Greece (231), Roman Republic (233), Roman Empire (207), Arab Empire (246), Mameluke Empire (267), Ottoman Empire (250), Spain (250), Romanov Russia (234), Britain (250), [page 2] and discovered stages of their rise and fall: The Age of Pioneers, The Age of Conquests, The Age of Commerce, The Age of Affluence, The Age of Intellect, The Age of Decadence, [page 24], which he wrote about in *The Fate of Empires and Search for Survival*. The United States of America founded in 1776 is 240+ years old.

[\[PDF\] The Fate of Empires and Search for Survival by Sir John Bagot Glubb](#)

[Decadence](#) is a moral and spiritual disease, resulting from too long a period of wealth and power, producing cynicism, [decline of religion](#), pessimism and frivolity. The citizens of such a nation will no longer make an effort to save themselves, because they are not convinced that anything in life is worth saving. Page 20

<http://people.uncw.edu/kozloffm/glubb.pdf>

<http://www.rexresearch.com/glubb/glubb-empire.pdf>

[https://archive.org/stream/pdfy-2F\\_iHS6BLtGJb2ad/TheFateofEmpiresbySirJohnGlubb\\_djvu.txt](https://archive.org/stream/pdfy-2F_iHS6BLtGJb2ad/TheFateofEmpiresbySirJohnGlubb_djvu.txt)

[http://www.friendsofsabbath.org/Further\\_Research/e-books/TheFateofEmpiresbySirJohnGlubb.pdf](http://www.friendsofsabbath.org/Further_Research/e-books/TheFateofEmpiresbySirJohnGlubb.pdf)

[http://time-price-research-astrofin.blogspot.com/2016/12/from-conquest-to-affluence-to-collapse\\_6.html](http://time-price-research-astrofin.blogspot.com/2016/12/from-conquest-to-affluence-to-collapse_6.html)

Images for from-conquest-to-affluence-to-collapse

<https://www.amazon.co.uk/Fate-Empires-Search-Survival/dp/B00P7WZIV2>

<https://www.amazon.com/Life-Times-Muhammad-John-Glubb/dp/0815411766>

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John\\_Bagot\\_Glubb](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Bagot_Glubb)

Images for Sir John Bagot Glubb

## Resources

[The Age of Decadence: Fall of the Roman Empire - YouTube](#)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uNWBgRWn9YM>

Images for The Age of Decadence: Fall of the Roman Empire - YouTube

[The Age of Decadence - Wikipedia](#)

*The Age of Decadence* is a [3D turn-based role-playing video game](#) for [Microsoft Windows](#) by Iron Tower Studio, led by the pseudonymous "Vince D. Weller".<sup>[1]</sup> Set in a low-magic, [post-apocalyptic](#) world inspired by the [fall of the Roman Empire](#), *The Age of Decadence* aims to return to the 'golden era' of role-playing games by emphasizing choices and consequences and providing a comprehensive skill set, multiple solutions to quests, and extensive dialogue trees.<sup>[2]</sup>

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The\\_Age\\_of\\_Decadence](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Age_of_Decadence)

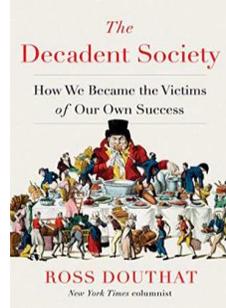
Images for Age of Decadence

[https://ageofdecadence.gamepedia.com/The\\_Age\\_of\\_Decadence\\_Wiki](https://ageofdecadence.gamepedia.com/The_Age_of_Decadence_Wiki)

### The Decadent Society: How We Became the Victims of Our Own Success by Ross Douthat

From the *New York Times* columnist and bestselling author of *Bad Religion*, a powerful portrait of how our age in human history, so superficially turbulent, is actually defined by stagnation, repetition, deadlocks, and decay. Today the Western world seems to be in crisis. But beneath our social media frenzy and reality-television politics, the deeper reality is one of drift, repetition, and dead ends. *The Decadent Society* explains what happens when a rich and powerful society ceases advancing—how the combination of wealth and technological proficiency with economic stagnation, political stalemates, cultural exhaustion, and demographic decline creates a strange kind of “sustainable decadence,” a civilizational malaise that could endure for longer than we think.

Ranging from the chaos of Trump-era Washington to the gridlock of the European Union, from our empty cradles to our increasingly-lonely pathways through middle and old age, from the lost promise of the Space Age and the early internet to today’s earthbound surveillance state, from the recycling of Baby Boomer pop culture to the Brave New World we’re making with drugs and virtual reality escapes, Douthat provides an enlightening diagnosis of the modern condition—how we got here, how long our malaise might last, and how, whether in renaissance or catastrophe, our decadence might ultimately end.



<https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/50053432-the-decadent-society>

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<https://www.vox.com/policy-and-politics/2020/2/28/21137971/the-decadent-society-ross-douthat-book>

<https://quillette.com/2020/02/17/the-decadent-society-a-review/>

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<https://www.christianitytoday.com/scot-mcknight/2020/march/douthats-decadent-society.html>

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<https://www.insidehighered.com/blogs/learning-innovation/%E2%80%98-decadent-society%E2%80%99-during-pandemic>

<https://www.c-span.org/video/?469651-1/the-decadent-society>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9x7zpu9OEeI> New York Times columnist Ross Douthat on his new book, “The Decadent Society” - YouTube

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MR5qzmsDF50> The Realignment Ep. 28: Ross Douthat, The Decadent Society – YouTube

Images for Decadent Society - YouTube

<https://www.city-journal.org/the-decadent-society-ross-douthat>

<https://bookmarks.reviews/reviews/the-decadent-society-how-we-became-the-victims-of-our-own-success/>

<https://thefederalist.com/2020/03/13/stopping-americas-slide-into-decadence-and-decline/>

<https://www.nationalreview.com/magazine/2020/03/23/our-comfortable-decadence/>

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<http://leighbureau.com/speakers/rdouthat>

[https://twitter.com/DouthatNYT?ref\\_src=twsrc%5Egoogle%7Ctwcamp%5Eserp%7Ctwgr%5Eauthor](https://twitter.com/DouthatNYT?ref_src=twsrc%5Egoogle%7Ctwcamp%5Eserp%7Ctwgr%5Eauthor)

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[https://www.goodreads.com/author/show/3501244.Ross\\_Douthat](https://www.goodreads.com/author/show/3501244.Ross_Douthat)

Images for Ross Douthat

Images for The Decadent Society: How We Became the Victims of Our Own Success by Ross Douthat

## 24) Creature comforts

C.S. Lewis’ *The Screwtape Letters* portrays a Junior Tempter - Wormwood, debating with his uncle - the Senior Demon Screwtape in Lucifer’s service, on how best to cause the damnation of a British man - a new Christian known as “Patient”. Wormwood argues for making life as difficult as possible. Screwtape contends for making life as comfortable as possible so that “Patient” in an association with a “materialist” friend will feel no need for God.

### The Screwtape Letters by C. S. Lewis (Author)

Wormwood, a demon apprentice, must secure the damnation of a young man who's just become a Christian. He seeks the advice of an experienced devil, his uncle Screwtape. Their correspondence offers invaluable—and often humorous—insights on temptation, pride, and the ultimate victory of faith over evil forces.

*The Screwtape Letters* by C.S. Lewis is a classic masterpiece of religious satire that entertains readers with its sly and ironic portrayal of human life and foibles from the vantage point of Screwtape, a highly placed assistant to "Our Father Below." At once wildly comic, deadly serious, and strikingly original, C.S. Lewis's *The Screwtape Letters* is the most engaging account of temptation—and triumph over it—ever written.

In this humorous and perceptive exchange between two devils, C. S. Lewis delves into moral questions about good vs. evil, temptation, repentance, and grace. Through this wonderful tale, the reader emerges with a better understanding of what it means to live a faithful life.

<https://www.amazon.com/Screwtape-Letters-C-S-Lewis/dp/0060652934>

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<https://www.christianbook.com/the-screwtape-letters-c-s-lewis/9780060652937/pd/52934>

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<https://fpatheatre.com/production/the-screwtape-letters/>

Images for theatre production screwtape letters

<https://blogs.thegospelcoalition.org/scottysmith/2008/07/13/quotes-from-c-s-lewis-screwtape-letters/>

<http://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-screwtape-letters/characters/wormwood>

<http://www.lifeway.com/Product/the-screwtape-letters-P001062882>

<http://www.screwtape.com/>

<http://mentalfloss.com/article/64351/12-things-you-might-not-know-about-screwtape-letters>

<http://www.newyorker.com/books/page-turner/the-devil-you-know>

[http://www.truechristianity.info/en/the\\_screwtape\\_letters\\_download.php](http://www.truechristianity.info/en/the_screwtape_letters_download.php)

[http://www.cslewisinstitute.org/Screwtape\\_Letters\\_Seminar\\_Jerry\\_Root](http://www.cslewisinstitute.org/Screwtape_Letters_Seminar_Jerry_Root)

<http://jimdaly.focusonthefamily.com/three-things-might-not-know-c-s-lewis-screwtape-letters/>

[http://tolkiengateway.net/wiki/The\\_Screwtape\\_Letters](http://tolkiengateway.net/wiki/The_Screwtape_Letters)

<https://www.pinterest.com/cslewisofficial/the-screwtape-letters-by-c-s-lewis/>

Images for pinterest/the-screwtape-letters-by-c-s-lewis

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BffWo0s5rIs> C. S Lewis - The Screwtape Letters Audiobook - YouTube

<http://www.cslewis.com/us/>

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/C.\\_S.\\_Lewis](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/C._S._Lewis)

<http://www.biography.com/people/cs-lewis-9380969>

<http://www.christianitytoday.com/history/people/musiciansartistsandwriters/cs-lewis.html>

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<http://www.cslewis.org/resource/chronocsl/>

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[http://www.goodreads.com/author/show/1069006.C\\_S\\_Lewis](http://www.goodreads.com/author/show/1069006.C_S_Lewis)

Images for C. S. Lewis (Author)

Images for The Screwtape Letters by C. S. Lewis

## 25) Inconvenient

If convenience is the critical determining factor, then attending services of worship on Sunday morning for many people becomes inconvenient. Some churches have responded to this response by scheduling services at other times to make service schedules more convenient. For some people, no matter what the schedule, attending services of worship will still prove to be inconvenient.

### Resources

#### Going to church is inconvenient | The Christian Century

If you haven't noticed, a lot of people are finding that worship doesn't fit their schedule.

<https://www.christiancentury.org/article/publisher/going-church-inconvenient>

Images for Going to church is inconvenient | The Christian Century

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/religion/11250990/Sunday-morning-inconvenient-for-church-services-...-says-Church-of-England.html>

<https://www.theaquilareport.com/sunday-morning-inconvenient-for-church-services-says-church-of-england/>

#### When Jesus Is Inconvenient! - Legana Christian Church

And as inconvenient as Jesus is, no-one was ever more inconvenienced than He! He came from eternal and infinite bliss and laid aside His divine privileges and inconveniently became a human.

<https://legana.org/2016/pastors-desk/truth-about-inconvenience/>

Images for Jesus Is Inconvenient

<https://www.umcdiscipleship.org/blog/article/ants-or-elephants-part-1-following-jesus-is-inconvenient>

[Images for following-jesus-is-inconvenient](https://www.intouch.org/read/magazine/features/inconvenient-worship)  
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<http://geelongcrc.org.au/2016/09/15/wow-the-inconvenience-of-worship/>  
Images for inconvenience-of-worship  
<https://emanuelworc.org/2016/09/06/uncomfortable-and-inconvenient-faith/>  
Images for uncomfortable-and-inconvenient-faith

## 26) Self-absorption or divine adoration?

Which direction is life pointed? Inward or upward?

### Resources

**Best 25+ Self absorbed quotes ideas on Pinterest**

<https://www.pinterest.com/explore/self-absorbed-quotes/>  
Images for Self absorbed quotes Pinterest  
<https://www.pinterest.com/explore/self-absorbed-people/>  
<https://www.pinterest.com/laureenmulholla/self-absorbed-quotes/>

**95 best Adoration images on Pinterest**

<https://www.pinterest.com/pattikudlak/adoration/>  
Images for Adoration Pinterest  
<https://www.pinterest.com/drrn3/adoration/>  
<https://www.pinterest.com/drrn3/adoration/>  
<https://www.pinterest.com/wildflower/adoration-to-god/>  
<https://www.pinterest.com/pin/8585055517138607/> Words of Adoration to God from A to Z | Bible Studies - Pinterest

Bellah and Madsen in their book

**Habits of the Heart, With a New Preface: Individualism and Commitment in America Life by Robert N. Bellah (Author), Richard Madsen (Author), William M. Sullivan (Author), Ann Swidler (Author), Steven M. Tipton (Author)**

First published in 1985, *Habits of the Heart* continues to be one of the most discussed interpretations of modern American society, a quest for a democratic community that draws on our diverse civic and religious traditions. In a new preface the authors relate the arguments of the book both to the current realities of American society and to the growing debate about the country's future. With this new edition one of the most influential books of recent times takes on a new immediacy. Meanwhile, the authors' antidote to the American sickness—a quest for democratic community that draws on our diverse civic and religious traditions—has contributed to a vigorous scholarly and popular debate. Attention has been focused on forms of social organization, be it civil society, democratic communitarianism, or associative democracy, that can humanize the market and the administrative state. In their new Introduction the authors relate the argument of their book both to the current realities of American society and to the growing debate about the country's future. With this new edition one of the most influential books of recent times takes on a new immediacy.

<https://www.amazon.com/Habits-Heart-Individualism-Commitment-American-Life/dp/0520254198>  
[https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/260357.Habits\\_of\\_the\\_Heart](https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/260357.Habits_of_the_Heart)  
[https://www.christianbook.com/habits-heart-individualism-commitment-american-life/robert-bellah/9780520254190/pd/254190?kw=47259373575&mt=b&dv=c&event=PPCSRC&p=1186432&qclid=CjwKCAjwkenqBRBgEiwA-bZVtkvJ\\_zkdeHdchWb8djhC8iOzspIStBjs0ehsUA6uYhT-clqeYmE7kxoc3UIQAvD\\_BwE](https://www.christianbook.com/habits-heart-individualism-commitment-american-life/robert-bellah/9780520254190/pd/254190?kw=47259373575&mt=b&dv=c&event=PPCSRC&p=1186432&qclid=CjwKCAjwkenqBRBgEiwA-bZVtkvJ_zkdeHdchWb8djhC8iOzspIStBjs0ehsUA6uYhT-clqeYmE7kxoc3UIQAvD_BwE)  
[https://books.google.com/books/about/Habits\\_of\\_the\\_Heart.html?id=5DQHmykT6u4C](https://books.google.com/books/about/Habits_of_the_Heart.html?id=5DQHmykT6u4C)  
[https://books.google.com/books/about/Habits\\_of\\_the\\_Heart\\_With\\_a\\_New\\_Preface.html?id=XsUojihVZQcC](https://books.google.com/books/about/Habits_of_the_Heart_With_a_New_Preface.html?id=XsUojihVZQcC)  
<http://www.robertbellah.com/Center%20for%20the%20Study%20of%20Democratic%20Institutions%201986%20Dialogue%20on%20Habits%20of%20the%20Heart.pdf>  
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<https://www.latimes.com/archives/la-xpm-1985-05-19-bk-9151-story.html>  
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[https://www.goodreads.com/author/show/4627398.Robert\\_N\\_Bellah](https://www.goodreads.com/author/show/4627398.Robert_N_Bellah)  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Robert\\_N.\\_Bellah](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Robert_N._Bellah)  
<https://www.amazon.com/Richard-Madsen/e/B000AQW0Y8>  
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<https://www.amazon.com/Ann-Swidler/e/B001HCRW4W>  
[https://www.goodreads.com/author/show/152193.Ann\\_Swidler](https://www.goodreads.com/author/show/152193.Ann_Swidler)  
[https://www.amazon.com/s?i=stripbooks&rh=p\\_27%3ASteven+M.+Tipton&s=relevancerank&text=Steven+M.+Tipton&ref=dp\\_byline\\_sr\\_book\\_5](https://www.amazon.com/s?i=stripbooks&rh=p_27%3ASteven+M.+Tipton&s=relevancerank&text=Steven+M.+Tipton&ref=dp_byline_sr_book_5)  
[https://www.goodreads.com/author/show/152194.Steven\\_M\\_Tipton](https://www.goodreads.com/author/show/152194.Steven_M_Tipton)  
[Images for Robert N. Bellah \(Author\)](#)  
[Images for Habits of the Heart: Individualism and Commitment in America Life by Robert N. Bellah \(Author\)](#)

propose the term Sheilaism to describe religious belief for many as highly individualized. They identify a character they call Sheila Larson who tries to make sense of her life by mixing together various tenets and ideas and by listening to the voice in her head. This characterization has since become a sociological term called Sheilaism.

### Sheilaism - Wikipedia

Sheilaism is a shorthand term for an individual's system of religious belief which co-opts strands of multiple religions chosen by the individual usually without much theological consideration. The term derives from a woman named Sheila Larson, who is quoted by Robert N. Bellah et al. in their book *Habits of the Heart* as following her own "little voice" in a faith she calls "Sheilaism".<sup>[1]</sup>

In chapter 9 of their 1985 book *Habits of the Heart*, Robert N. Bellah, Richard Madsen, William M. Sullivan, Ann Swidler, and Steven M. Tipton discuss how religion in America has moved from being highly public and unified, as it was in colonial New England, to extremely private and diverse. To demonstrate the shift, they quote a young nurse, to whom they gave the name Sheila Larson:

I believe in God. I'm not a religious fanatic. I can't remember the last time I went to church. My faith has carried me a long way. It's Sheilaism. Just my own little voice ... It's just try to love yourself and be gentle with yourself. You know, I guess, take care of each other. I think He would want us to take care of each other.

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sheilaism>

<https://wikivisually.com/wiki/Sheilaism>

[Images for Sheilaism](#)

Liturgy lifts the worshiper beyond oneself to God and the neighbor.

### Beyond Smells and Bells: The Wonder and Power of Christian Liturgy by Mark Galli (Author)

Fortunately, God loves us so much he has made it a "spiritual law" that Sheilaism or Markism become boring after awhile. The gift of the liturgy – and it precisely why I need the liturgy – is that it helps me hear not so much "my little voice" but instead the still, small voice (Psalm 46). It leads away from the self and points me toward the community of God.

<https://books.google.com/books?isbn=1557257221> Chapter 3 LIFE TOGETHER How the Liturgy Draws Us Into Community

<https://books.google.com/books?isbn=0520934539>

[https://www.goodreads.com/author/quotes/414405.Mark\\_Galli](https://www.goodreads.com/author/quotes/414405.Mark_Galli)

<https://www.goodreads.com/quotes/search?commit=Search&page=6&q=wicca&utf8=%E2%9C%93>

Liturgy lures us through our senses, grounds us in a great tradition, and plants us in the midst of a diverse community, present and past.

Are you attracted to liturgy but don't know why? Are you considering changing to liturgical tradition? Are you already immersed in liturgical worship but want to grasp its deeper significance? *Beyond Smells and Bells* addresses the lure and relevance of liturgy for your life today.

Thousands of Christians become interested in liturgy each year for the first time, as they turn to orthodoxy, tradition, and the lasting rituals of the Christian faith. In a culture that values spontaneity, liturgy grounds us in something enduring. In a culture that assumes truth is a product of the mind, liturgy helps us experience truth in mind, body, and spirit. In Mark Galli's able telling, liturgy is an intriguing story, full of mystery, that transforms us.

<https://www.amazon.com/Beyond-Smells-Bells-Christian-Liturgy/dp/1557255210>

<https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/2891792-beyond-smells-and-bells>

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[https://books.google.com/books/about/Beyond\\_Smells\\_Bells.html?id=xmR2PgAACAAJ](https://books.google.com/books/about/Beyond_Smells_Bells.html?id=xmR2PgAACAAJ)

[Beyond Smells and Bells: The Wonder and Power of Christian Liturgy](#)

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[http://www.prayerfoundation.org/books/book\\_review\\_beyond\\_smells\\_and\\_bells.htm](http://www.prayerfoundation.org/books/book_review_beyond_smells_and_bells.htm)

<https://internetmonk.com/archive/recommendation-beyond-smells-and-bells>

<https://www.yaledivinitybookstore.com/category/worship/worship-liturgy>

<https://www.publishersweekly.com/978-1-55725-521-1> Nonfiction Book Review

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mark\\_Galli](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mark_Galli)  
<https://www.amazon.com/Mark-Galli/e/B001HCYRFE>  
[https://www.goodreads.com/author/show/414405.Mark\\_Galli](https://www.goodreads.com/author/show/414405.Mark_Galli)  
Images for Mark Galli (Author)  
Images for The Wonder and Power of Christian Liturgy by Mark Galli (Author)

## 27) By whose authority?

Jesus is asked a question about authority.

Jesus' authority

<sup>27</sup> Again they came to Jerusalem. As he was walking in the temple, the chief priests, the scribes, and the elders came to him <sup>28</sup> and said, 'By what authority are you doing these things? Who gave you this authority to do them?'

oremus Bible Browser: [Mark 11:27-28 - Oremus.org](http://bible.oremus.org/?passage=Mark+11:27-28)  
<http://bible.oremus.org/?passage=Mark+11:27-28>  
Images for Jesus' authority

The old Adam says, "I am my own highest authority," while the new Adam heeds the words of Jesus:

Jesus' temptation

<sup>10</sup> Jesus said to him, "Away with you, Satan! for it is written, 'Worship the Lord your God, and serve only him.'"

oremus Bible Browser: [Matthew 4:10](http://bible.oremus.org/?ql=320989833)  
<http://bible.oremus.org/?ql=320989833>  
Images for Jesus' temptation  
Images for 'Worship the Lord your God, and serve only him.'"

## Resources

### Bible Authority | God, The Ultimate Source of Authority

There must be an ultimate, final authority. There has to exist a person or place beyond which there can be no higher source. There has to be a person or place in whom resides inherent authority. That ultimate authority is the source of all authority.

<http://www.centervilleoad.com/articles/authority-3.html>  
Images for Bible Authority | God, The Ultimate Source of Authority

### Why Is God the Ultimate Authority? | Answers in Genesis

Because God is our authority in every area, we need to make sure that we know what His Word says and strive to make it our authority in every area of life. We need to recognize when the beliefs and philosophies of men are contrary to God's Word ([Colossians 2:8](#); [Ephesians 4:14](#)), bring "every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ," ([2 Corinthians 10:5](#)), and respond by "speaking the truth in love" ([Ephesians 4:15](#)) to a world that has tried to deny the authority of the Father.

<https://answersingenesis.org/answers/biblical-authority-devotional/why-is-god-the-ultimate-authority/>  
Images for God the Ultimate Authority

## 28) True happiness

**Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness** – Wikipedia states that "Life, Liberty and the **pursuit of Happiness**" is a well-known phrase in the [United States Declaration of Independence](#).<sup>[1]</sup> The phrase gives three examples of the "**unalienable rights**" which the Declaration says have been given to all humans by their creator, and which governments are created to protect. The humanist Aldous Huxley gave a different take on how happiness comes about?

### Quotes by Aldous Huxley (Author of Brave New World)

"**Happiness is not achieved by the conscious pursuit of happiness**; it is generally the by-product of other activities."  
— Aldous Huxley

[https://www.goodreads.com/author/quotes/3487.Aldous\\_Huxley](https://www.goodreads.com/author/quotes/3487.Aldous_Huxley)  
Images for "Happiness is not achieved by the conscious pursuit of happiness; it is generally the by-product of other activities."  
— Aldous Huxley

What does the bible have to say about happiness?

### What Does the Bible Say About Happiness? - OpenBible.info

<https://www.openbible.info/topics/happiness>  
[https://www.openbible.info/topics/true\\_happiness](https://www.openbible.info/topics/true_happiness)  
Images for Bible and Happiness  
<https://www.biblestudytools.com/topical-verses/bible-verses-about-happiness/>  
<https://www.womansday.com/life/inspirational-stories/g29249196/bible-verses-about-happiness/>  
<https://www.davidjeremiah.org/happiness/34-bible-verses-about-happiness>  
<https://applygodsword.com/what-does-the-bible-say-about-happiness/>  
<https://www.beliefnet.com/inspiration/what-does-the-bible-say-about-happiness.aspx>  
<https://biblereasons.com/happiness/>  
<https://www.exploregod.com/articles/a-deeper-look-at-what-the-bible-says-about-happiness>

<https://www.betterhelp.com/advice/happiness/most-helpful-bible-verses-about-happiness/>  
<https://www.crosswalk.com/faith/bible-study/bible-verses-about-happiness.html>  
<https://www.quora.com/What-does-the-Bible-say-about-happiness>  
<https://tifwe.org/biblical-definition-of-happiness/>

## 29) Cosmic Therapist or Jesus Is Lord?

An increasing number of people view God as a “divine butler” and “cosmic therapist”,

### Resources

Developing leaders among young people

Our culture has adopted a watered down belief system of Christianity, where the goal of life is to be happy and **God is a benign backdrop who only gets involved in our life when we need something** (The National Study of Youth and Religion).

Download - Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

[http://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/Seeds\\_For\\_The\\_Parish\\_Summer\\_2014.pdf](http://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/Seeds_For_The_Parish_Summer_2014.pdf)

Page 2

Images for God is a benign backdrop who only gets involved in our life when we need something

### Moralistic therapeutic deism - Wikipedia

Author's analysis

The authors say the system is “moralistic” because it “is about inculcating a moralistic approach to life. It teaches that central to living a good and happy life is being a good, moral person.”<sup>[5]</sup> The authors describe the system as being “about providing therapeutic benefits to its adherent” as opposed to being about things like “repentance from sin, of keeping the Sabbath, of living as a servant of a sovereign divine, of steadfastly saying one’s prayers, of faithfully observing high holy days, of building character through suffering...”<sup>[6]</sup> and further as “belief in a particular kind of God: one who exists, created the world, and defines our general moral order, but not one who is particularly personally involved in one’s affairs—especially affairs in which one would prefer not to have God involved.”<sup>[7]</sup>

The remoteness of God in this kind of theism explains the choice of the term “Deism”, even though “the Deism here is revised from its classical eighteenth-century version by the therapeutic qualifier, making the distant God selectively available for taking care of needs.” It views God as “something like a combination **Divine Butler and Cosmic Therapist**; he’s always on call, takes care of any problems that arise, professionally helps his people to feel better about themselves, and does not become too personally involved in the process.”<sup>[8]</sup>

The authors believe that “a significant part of Christianity in the United States is actually only tenuously Christian in any sense that is seriously connected to the actual historical Christian tradition, but has rather substantially morphed into Christianity’s misbegotten step-cousin, Christian Moralistic Therapeutic Deism.”<sup>[9]</sup>

CNN online featured an article, “More Teens Becoming Fake Christians” on Kenda Creasy Dean’s 2010 book *Almost Christian: What the Faith of Our Teenagers is Telling the American Church*. (Oxford University Press, 2010). She writes, “The problem does not seem to be that churches are teaching young people badly, but that we are doing an exceedingly good job of teaching youth what we really believe, namely, that Christianity is not a big deal, that God requires little, and the church is a helpful social institution filled with nice people...” She goes on to say that “if churches practice MTD in the name of Christianity, then getting teenagers to church more often is not the solution (conceivably it could make things worse). A more faithful church is the solution.... Maybe the issue is simply that the emperor has no clothes.”<sup>[10]</sup>

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Moralistic\\_therapeutic\\_deism](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Moralistic_therapeutic_deism)

Images for Moralistic therapeutic deism

while fewer follow Jesus as Lord and Savior.

Christ hymn

<sup>5</sup>Let the same mind be in you that was<sup>\*</sup> in Christ Jesus,

<sup>6</sup>who, though he was in the form of God,

did not regard equality with God

as something to be exploited,

<sup>7</sup>but emptied himself,

taking the form of a slave,

being born in human likeness.

And being found in human form,

<sup>8</sup>he humbled himself

and became obedient to the point of death—

even death on a cross.

<sup>9</sup>Therefore God also highly exalted him

and gave him the name

that is above every name,

<sup>10</sup>so that at the name of Jesus

every knee should bend,

in heaven and on earth and under the earth,

<sup>11</sup>and every tongue should confess

that Jesus Christ is Lord,

to the glory of God the Father.

oremus Bible Browser: [Philippians 2:5-11](http://bible.oremus.org/?passage=Philippians+2:5-11)  
<http://bible.oremus.org/?passage=Philippians+2:5-11>  
Images for christ hymn philippians

#### Jew and Gentile Called

Moses writes concerning the righteousness that comes from the law, that “the person who does these things will live by them.” But the righteousness that comes from faith says, “Do not say in your heart, ‘Who will ascend into heaven?’” (that is, to bring Christ down) “or ‘Who will descend into the abyss?’” (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead). But what does it say? “The word is near you, on your lips and in your heart” (that is, the word of faith that we proclaim); because if you confess with your lips that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For one believes with the heart and so is justified, and one confesses with the mouth and so is saved. The scripture says, “No one who believes in him will be put to shame.”

For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; the same Lord is Lord of all and is generous to all who call on him. For, “Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.” But how are they to call on one in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in one of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone to proclaim him? And how are they to proclaim him unless they are sent? As it is written, “How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!”

oremus Bible Browser: [Romans 10:5-15](http://bible.oremus.org/?q=174215282)  
<http://bible.oremus.org/?q=174215282>  
Images for confess with your lips that Jesus is Lord

#### Jesus is Lord - Wikipedia

“Jesus is Lord” (Greek: *Kurios Iesous*) is the shortest [creedal affirmation](#) found in the New Testament, one of several slightly more elaborate variations. ([Kelly](#):13) It serves as a statement of faith for the majority of [Christians](#) who regard [Jesus](#) as both fully [man and God](#). It is the [motto](#) of the [World Council of Churches](#).

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jesus\\_is\\_Lord](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jesus_is_Lord)  
Images for Jesus is Lord

### 30) Bars and churches

Patrons could purchase alcohol at 5 different locations in the village with a population of 486. Attendees at services of worship at the only church in the village received a sip of wine at Holy Communion. Cars lined the streets on Saturday evening, while fewer cars came right before the start of the Sunday morning service of worship and left soon after the end of the service. Beer and banter at the bars. Wafer and wine, mutual conversation and consolation at the church.

[Where Are America's Corner Pubs? Wisconsin. - The Atlantic](#)  
Nearly every town in this state has more bars than churches.  
<https://www.theatlantic.com/daily-dish/archive/2010/12/where-are-americas-corner-pubs-wisconsin/178942/>  
Images for Nearly every town in Wisconsin has more bars than churches.

### 31) Golden arches or church steeples?



File:McDonald's Golden Arches.svg - [Wikimedia Commons](#)  
[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:McDonald%27s\\_Golden\\_Arches.svg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:McDonald%27s_Golden_Arches.svg)  
Images for McDonald's Golden Arches



Steeple - [Wikipedia](#)  
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Steeple>  
Images for Steeple

I was walking from my downtown apartment above one of the main street stores to the church on a Sunday at 5:45am when I noticed 6 cars in the drive-thru lane of the fast food restaurant with the golden arches waiting either to place or to pick up their order. Some 8 years later, I picked up the 2/8-14/2017 edition of [City Pages: Latest Minneapolis & St. Paul News and Events](#) to read their movie review – Nine-Tenths of the Law: The American Dream gets supersized in the timely, troubling *The Founder*. I went online to read how NPR and other sources told the story of the golden arches.

#### Resources

'The Founder' Follows Salesman's Genius Idea to Franchise McDonald's - NPR  
ROBERT SIEGEL #1, HOST:



The new film "The Founder" tells the story of Ray Kroc, played by Michael Keaton. Kroc was a hard-luck salesman when he saw a hamburger stand in California and eventually pitched Dick and Mac McDonald on letting him franchise it. He tells them at one point that their golden arches can become as common as crosses on church steeples in every town in America.

(SOUNDBITE OF FILM, "THE FOUNDER")

MICHAEL KEATON: (As Ray Kroc) It could be said that that beautiful building flanked by those arches signifies more or less the same thing. It doesn't just say, delicious hamburgers inside. They signify family. It signifies community. It's a place where Americans come together to break bread. I am telling you, McDonald's can be the new American church, feeding bodies and feeding souls. And it ain't just open on Sundays, boys. It's open seven days a week.

<http://www.npr.org/2017/01/25/511655874/the-founder-follows-salesmans-genius-idea-to-franchise-mcdonalds>

Images for 'The Founder' Follows Salesman's Genius Idea to Franchise McDonald's

<http://www.npr.org/2017/01/23/511215010/founder-serves-up-a-profile-of-the-man-behind-mcdonalds>

Images for /founder-serves-up-a-profile-of-the-man-behind-mcdonalds

### The Founder - Wikipedia

*The Founder* is a 2016 American biographical drama film directed by John Lee Hancock and written by Robert Siegel. The film stars Michael Keaton as Ray Kroc and portrays the story of his creation of the McDonald's fast food chain. Nick Offerman and John Carroll Lynch co-star as McDonald's founders Richard and Maurice McDonald.

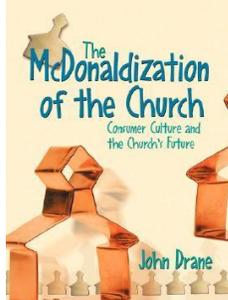
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The\\_Founder](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Founder)

Images for Founder

The Golden Arches have become a metaphor for consumer culture. Will the church abdicate or differentiate?

### The McDonaldization of the Church: Consumer Culture and the Church's Future [John Drane]

"A theology which comes pre-packaged, and in which there are no loose ends, is not true to life nor can it adequately reflect the richness of the Gospel." Why are churches struggling to maintain credibility in a culture in which there are more spiritual seekers than at any time in living memory? John Drane believes that churches have become stereotyped structures, offering uninventive formulaic worship to a dwindling minority. But there are exciting opportunities for growth, he argues, if only churches will rediscover their own creativity and flexibility. If only they will offer something more nourishing for post-modern spiritual appetites than the equivalent of fast food. John Drane is Head of Practical Theology in the Department of Divinity at the University of Aberdeen. He is the author of *What is the New Age Still Saying to the Church?* and *Biblical Faith and Cultural Change*.



<http://www.amazon.com/The-McDonaldization-Church-Consumer-Culture/dp/1573123749>

[https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/606727.The\\_McDonaldization\\_of\\_the\\_Church](https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/606727.The_McDonaldization_of_the_Church)

<https://books.google.com/books?isbn=1573123749>

[https://books.google.com/books/about/The\\_McDonaldization\\_of\\_the\\_Church.html?id=oJ-yq7b5SIkC](https://books.google.com/books/about/The_McDonaldization_of_the_Church.html?id=oJ-yq7b5SIkC)

<http://www.patheos.com/blogs/slowchurch/2011/10/04/book-recommendation-the-mcdonaldization-of-the-church/>

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John\\_Drane](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Drane)

[https://www.goodreads.com/author/list/158970.John\\_Drane](https://www.goodreads.com/author/list/158970.John_Drane)

<http://fortresspress.com/author/john-drane>

Images for John Drane, author

Images for The McDonaldization of the Church: Consumer Culture and the Church's Future [John Drane]

### 32) Eating out

People alerted me to the farmstead turned into a lodge down the road from the church, which offered events for every type: lodging, weddings and rehearsal dinners, family gatherings and reunions, birthdays and anniversary parties, banquets and fund raisers, youth and adult dances, class reunions, and last, but not least, pizza on Wednesdays 5pm – 9pm during the summer. I decided to check out the place and ordered a cheese pizza with lettuce, tomatoes, pickles, and onions. It is a good thing I got there shortly after 5pm because the rehabbed machine shed with a new concrete floor filled up by 6pm. I stood on the rock patio where the cow yard had once been to hear the special music after eating. I drove out the lane and saw the church steeple through the trees.

Two weeks after I came to the church, the Congregation Council convened a special meeting to find ways to meet the budget deficit and decided on a pie social among various ideas. The Sunday after the pizza Wednesday, 22 people came to the service of worship. More people than ever are eating out,

### Americans are eating out more than ever, Nielsen finds | Food Dive

- Americans eat out more than ever before, but they're not just eating in traditional restaurants, explains Nielsen. In its report, "Merging Tables and Aisles," the global data analytics and measurement company examined the shift from eating in to eating out.

<https://www.fooddive.com/news/grocery--americans-are-eating-out-more-than-ever-nielsen-finds/515308/>

[Images for Americans are eating out more than ever, Nielsen finds | Food Dive](#)

while fewer people are eating the bread and wine of the meal called the Lord's Supper.

The Bread from Heaven

<sup>35</sup>Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty.

[oremus Bible Browser : John 6:35-51](#)

<http://bible.oremus.org/?q=117991627>

[Images for Bread from Heaven](#)

### 33) Who's minding the store?

The Glories of God's Law

How can **young people** keep their way pure?

By guarding it according to your word.

[Psalm 119:9-16 - oremus Bible Browser](#)

<http://bible.oremus.org/?q=388033393>

[Images for How can young people keep their way pure?](#)

Often times, I hear the complaints of older people who wonder where the post-confirmation high school youth are on Sunday mornings because most of them are not present at the services of worship. When I engage people in conversation on this matter, I inquire if they go out to eat following the services of worship and whether they go shopping that day. Look around. Many of the workers in the fields of hospitality and retail are youth and young adults. For this reason, in particular, and to keep the Sabbath, in general, I seek to restrain myself from eating out or shopping on Sundays.

Child Labor Rules for Employing Youth in Restaurants and Quick-Service Establishments Under the Fair Labor Standards Act

This fact sheet provides general information concerning the application of the federal child labor provisions to restaurants and quick-service establishments that employ workers who are less than 18 years of age.

[\[PDF\]Fact Sheet #2A - United States Department of Labor](#)

<https://www.dol.gov/whd/regs/compliance/whdfs2a.pdf>

[Images for Youth Employed in Restaurants and Quick-Service Establishments](#)

### 34) Attitude of accommodation

I was first told at a new assignment that Rally Day began on the Sunday after Labor Day. On the day before the submission's deadline for the September newsletter, I was told that the Sunday School superintendent postponed the start of Sunday School 2 weeks because of a large community fundraiser in a neighboring village one weekend and that neighboring village's festival the next weekend. At that same assignment, the parish council once was looking at when to host an activity after a service of worship. The first thing some of the council members did was to get out their smartphones to find out when the Green Bay Packers played at a time other than noon.

### 35) Golden Calf or God Almighty?

Aaron makes a golden calf

When the people saw that Moses delayed to come down from the mountain, the people gathered around Aaron, and said to him, "Come, make gods for us, who shall go before us; as for this Moses, the man who brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him." <sup>2</sup>Aaron said to them, "Take off the gold rings that are on the ears of your wives, your sons, and your daughters, and bring them to me." <sup>3</sup>So all the people took off the gold rings from their ears, and brought them to Aaron. <sup>4</sup>He took the gold from them, formed it in a mold, and cast an image of a calf; and they said, "These are your gods, O Israel, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt!" <sup>5</sup>When Aaron saw this, he built an altar before it; and Aaron made proclamation and said, "Tomorrow shall be a festival to the LORD." <sup>6</sup>They rose early the next day, and offered burnt offerings and brought sacrifices of well-being; and the people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to revel.

[oremus Bible Browser: Exodus 32:1-6](#)

<http://bible.oremus.org/?passage=Exodus+32%3A1-6&version=nrsv>

[Images for Aaron makes a golden calf](#)

[Best 25+ Golden calf ideas on Pinterest](#)

<https://www.pinterest.com/explore/golden-calf/>

[Images for golden calf pinterest](#)

<https://www.pinterest.com/jennyj8/moses-the-golden-calf/>

<https://www.pinterest.com/meldore1/moses-golden-calf/>

<https://www.pinterest.com/afayelulamae/golden-calf/>  
<https://www.pinterest.com/edwinavanster/golden-calf/>

### Golden calf - Wikipedia

According to the [Bible](#), the golden calf (עֶגְלָת הַזָּהָב 'ēggel hazāhāv) was an [idol](#) (a [cult image](#)) made by the [Israelites](#) during [Moses'](#) absence, when he went up to [Mount Sinai](#). In [Hebrew](#), the incident is known as *ḥēṯ ha'ēggel* (חַטַּת הָעֶגְלָה) or "The Sin of the Calf". It is first mentioned in [Exodus 32:4](#).



*The Adoration of the Golden Calf* by [Nicolas Poussin](#)

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Golden\\_calf](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Golden_calf)

Images for golden calf

Whatever most captivates the heart, soul, and might, that is one's god.

The great commandment

<sup>5</sup>You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might.

oremus Bible Browser: Deut. 6:5

<http://bible.oremus.org/?passage=Deut.%206:5&version=nrsv>

Images for You shall love the LORD your God

### Great Commandment - Wikipedia

The Great Commandment (or Greatest Commandment)<sup>[u]</sup> is a name used in the [New Testament](#) to describe the first of two commandments cited by [Jesus](#) in [Matthew 22:35–40](#) and [Mark 12:28–34](#). These two commandments are [paraphrases](#) taken from the [Old Testament](#) and are commonly seen as important to [Jewish](#) and [Christian ethics](#).

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Great\\_Commandment](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Great_Commandment)

Images for great commandment

### Resources

[Beyond Idol Worship! - Page xxvii - Google Books Result](#)

whatever takes precedence over God in your life is an idol.

<https://books.google.com/books?isbn=1602664765>

Images for Beyond Idol Worship!

Images for whatever takes precedence over God in your life is an idol

This book is part autobiography and part inspirational journey. The reader is invited to join Dr. Fumi in taking a blow at satan's kingdom. To experience a victorious life, we must rid ourselves of demonic influences, which are often in disguise, wearing masks to cloak their intent. To many, witchcraft is about "voodoo," and while this is sometimes true, witchcraft can also be manifested in different ways. If you are experiencing oppression, depression, spirit of heaviness; if you are at a crossroad where perverse spirits have beaten you down; if the spirit of jealousy has literally destroyed your life; if familiar spirits have set up their banners in your home; if fear has taken over your life and you don't know how to shake it loose; if you are experiencing bondage and addiction of any kind; you are at the right spot for deliverance! **There is life beyond idol worship!**

<https://www.amazon.com/Beyond-Worship-Stephanie-Ogunleye-Hancock/dp/1602664765>

<https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/5627584-beyond-idol-worship>

[https://www.goodreads.com/author/show/6543487.Fumi\\_Hancock](https://www.goodreads.com/author/show/6543487.Fumi_Hancock)

Images for There is life beyond idol worship!

### Modern Golden Calves | Preaching Today

Legitimate things become illegitimate things when they turn into idols. What makes something an idol? When does it cross the line from being something good to something consuming? Four things.

<http://www.preachingtoday.com/sermons/sermons/2010/july/moderngoldencalves.html>

Images for Modern Golden Calves | Preaching Today

<https://www.christianpost.com/news/modern-day-golden-calves-81404/>

<https://ericwfsmire.wordpress.com/tag/modern-day-golden-calves/>

### The God-First Life: Uncomplicate Your Life, God's Way by Stovall Weems (Author), Judah Smith (Foreword)

In *The God-First Life*, Pastor Stovall Weems offers a practical, high impact answer to what following Christ is all about. By unpacking what it really means to live a God-first life, he gives you a simple and sustainable path to a deep and satisfying walk with Christ. In this uncomplicated, fresh view of discipleship, **you will truly discover how to live your life ... God's way.**

<https://www.barnesandnoble.com/w/the-god-first-life-stovall-weems/1113827356>

<https://www.amazon.com/God-First-Life-Uncomplicate-Your-Gods/dp/0310320097>

<https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/18476452-the-god-first-life>

<https://www.goodreads.com/work/quotes/26144662-the-god-first-life-uncomplicate-your-life-god-s-way>

<http://www.christianbookstore.net/god-first-life-by-weems-stovall/catalog-4902046/>

<https://books.google.com/books?isbn=0310320844>

<http://www.crosswalk.com/faith/spiritual-life/how-to-make-your-relationship-with-god-first-in-your-life.html>

<http://www.celebration.org/people/stovallweems/>

<https://www.amazon.com/Stovall-Weems/e/B004AOF7PI>

[https://www.goodreads.com/author/quotes/4410548.Stovall\\_Weems](https://www.goodreads.com/author/quotes/4410548.Stovall_Weems)

Images for Stovall Weems

[https://www.goodreads.com/author/show/558400.Judah\\_Smith](https://www.goodreads.com/author/show/558400.Judah_Smith)

Images for Judah Smith, author

[Images for The God-First Life: Uncomplicate Your Life, God's Way by Stovall Weems \(Author\), Judah Smith \(Foreword\)](#)

### 36) Profit/loss statement

Jesus asks a question about profit and loss.

On discipleship

He called the crowd with his disciples, and said to them, 'If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For those who want to save their life will **lose** it, and those who lose their life for my sake, and for the sake of the gospel, will save it. For what will it **profit** them to gain the whole world and forfeit their life? Indeed, what can they give in return for their life?

oremus Bible Browser: Mark 8:34-37

<http://bible.oremus.org/?ql=326707290>

[Images for For what will it profit them to gain the whole world and forfeit their life?](#)

The person of faith looks at the eternal profit/loss statement

### Sideswiped by Eternity: Sermons from Ebenezer Baptist Church

**Profit or Loss?** (Part 1)

<https://books.google.com/books?isbn=0664229700>

Page 83

[Images for Profit or Loss?](#)

Joseph L. Roberts was, for over thirty years, the pastor of the historic Ebenezer Baptist Church in Atlanta, Georgia, the former pulpit of the Reverends Martin Luther King Senior and Junior. The sermons in this collection demonstrate Roberts's commitment to the legacy of Martin Luther King Jr., the mission of his church, the lives of his parishioners, and the message of Jesus Christ. Roberts addresses such topics as the need for prophetic voices in today's world, the challenges of living individualistically and in community, burden sharing as a key to a meaningful life, the relevance of grace and faith today, and the importance of renewal through relationship with God and our fellow human beings.

<https://www.amazon.com/Sideswiped-Eternity-Sermons-Ebenezer-Baptist/dp/0664229700>

[Images for Sideswiped by Eternity: Sermons from Ebenezer Baptist Church by Rev. Joseph L. Roberts](#)

and not just the temporal profit/loss statement.

### How to read a Profit and Loss Statement - YouTube

Your P & L statement is your business scoreboard, if you don't know the score then why are you playing the game. In this video Brad takes you through how to read a profit and loss and what the key elements of the statement represent.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NCL-kB7k30Q>

[Images for How to read a Profit and Loss Statement - YouTube](#)

### 37) What's it worth?

If worship means "worth-ship,"

#### Worship - Wikipedia

The word is derived from the Old English *weorþscape*, meaning to venerate "worship, honour shown to an object, which has been etymologised as "**worthiness or worth-ship**"—to give, at its simplest, worth to something.

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Worship>

[Images for worship "worthiness or worth-ship"](#)

it seems that, for an increasing number of people in this country, participating in services of worship is not worth their time.

### Why Americans go to religious and church services - Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life

In recent years, the percentage of U.S. adults who say they regularly attend religious services has been declining, while the share of Americans who attend only a few times a year, seldom or never has been growing.

<http://www.pewforum.org/2018/08/01/why-americans-go-to-religious-services/>  
Images for Why Americans Go (and Don't Go) to Religious Services

In a culture increasingly given over to getting needs met, more and more people are going to be offended by “worth-ship.”

### 7 Things We Regularly Get Wrong about Worship - Crosswalk.com

1. You are Not Supposed to 'Get Anything Out of the Service'

Worship is not about you and me. Not about "getting our needs met." Not about a performance from the pastor and singer and choir and musicians. Not in the least.

<https://www.crosswalk.com/church/worship/7-things-we-regularly-get-wrong-about-worship.html>  
Images for Worship is not about "getting our needs met."

### 38) Diminished expectations

Many an older person has said to me, “When I was growing up, it was just understood that we went to church.” Not anymore.

#### Why is church attendance declining – even among committed Christians?

I'm not here to argue whether a faithful Christian must go to church every Sunday. But I am curious how churchgoing changed from being foundational to optional in the minds of many Christians. Let me offer nine possible reasons:

1. Social expectation and pressures have lightened. People used to live their lives according to social convention.

Those who strayed from accepted norms were ostracized and shamed. Churches used this power to “guilt” people into a variety of behaviors, including weekly church attendance. Obviously, this doesn't work anymore.

<http://www.patheos.com/blogs/churchformen/2016/03/why-is-church-attendance-declining-even-among-christians/>  
Images for Why is church attendance declining – even among committed Christians?  
Images for Social expectations and pressures have lightened for church attendance

### 39) From center to periphery

A grandson sat at the bedside of his dying grandmother. In the course of conversation after she died, he stated, “Church was the center of her life.” On the other hand, though he was considered a member of the congregation, the funeral for his grandmother was the first time I witnessed him attend a service of worship.

#### Resources

##### Evangelicals, Culture, and Post-Christian America | The Exchange

Engaging from the Edge and not the Center

American evangelicalism must learn how to engage culture from the edges instead of the center. Why? The church is no longer the epicenter of political and social circles.

<https://www.christianitytoday.com/edstetzer/2015/may/evangelicals-politics-and-post-christian-america.html>  
Images for church no longer the epicenter of political and social circles

##### Why Attending Church No Longer Makes Sense - CareyNieuwhof.com

Generations ago, the church was a social and cultural hub as well as a missional hub. In addition to faith reasons, people loved going to church because it was one of a handful of options available in a community as well as the main way (other than personal devotions) you connect with God.

We now live in a culture that's drowning in options and has 24/7 access to anything Christian.

In fact, I can think of only two compelling reasons to go to church anymore.

YOU DON'T ATTEND CHURCH. YOU ARE THE CHURCH.

AN EXPERIENCE FOR THE SAKE OF THOSE NOT YET IN THE ROOM

<https://careynieuwhof.com/why-attending-church-no-longer-makes-sense/>  
Images for Generations ago, the church was a social and cultural hub as well as a missional hub

### 40) Universalism undermines urgency

An older woman came up to me at one church and asked, “Why don't we hear anything about hell anymore?” I did not have a ready answer. At the next assignment, a retired pastor reflected on the difference between the full parking lot at the local independent Baptist church and the empty pews at the Lutheran church, “The Baptists possess a clear mission. They want to save people from hell.”

##### You Shall Worship the Lord Your God | Desiring God

Worship Must Be Priority Number One

That is the number one priority of Bethlehem Baptist Church and should be the number one priority of your heart. The reason I say that it's number one is that everything else we do is a means to this end. When all other goals serve one goal, that goal is NUMBER ONE.

<https://www.desiringgod.org/messages/you-shall-worship-the-lord-your-god>  
Images for Worship Must Be Priority Number One

#### 41) Philosophical question for the Universalists

Should those who show no interest in personal or corporate worship of God during this short period of time here on earth,

##### Resources

###### Do atheists believe in heaven and hell? - Quora

While there is a lot of enlightenment in the rabbinical tradition, **the Hebrew bible taken without commentary is a pretty parochial, tribal, and vindictive sort of document, if you ask me.** The Jesus of the gospels, if you cut out all the metaphysical gobbledygook, is quite the inspirational character, though. (But then again, so is Harry Potter.)

<https://www.quora.com/Do-atheists-believe-in-heaven-and-hell>

Images for atheists heaven and hell

###### Famous people who don't believe in God - YouTube

Religion and common sense don't go together. Celebrities lead the way to atheism. Don't be afraid to consider yourself...one of us!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m220QalOhKo>

Images for Famous People Who Don't Believe in God - YouTube

###### George Clooney, Uncowed: washingtonpost.com

**"I don't believe in Heaven and Hell,"** he says. "I don't know if I believe in God. All I know is that as an individual, I won't allow this life - the only thing I know to exist -- to be wasted."

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/style/longterm/movies/review97/fgeorgeclooney.htm>

Images for George Clooney does not believe in Heaven and Hell

###### Katharine Hepburn - Quotes - IMDb

I'm what is known as gradually disintegrating. I don't fear the next world, or anything. **I don't fear hell, and I don't look forward to heaven.**

<http://m.imdb.com/name/nm0000031/quotes>

Images for Katharine Hepburn - I don't fear hell, and I don't look forward to heaven.

be told that they will be compelled to spend all of eternity engaged in personal and corporate worship of God?

##### Resources

###### A Great Multitude from Every Nation

<sup>9</sup> After this I looked, and behold, <sup>b</sup>a great multitude that no one could number, <sup>c</sup>from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, <sup>d</sup>clothed in white robes, with <sup>e</sup>palm branches in their hands, <sup>10</sup> and crying out with a loud voice, <sup>f</sup>"Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!" <sup>11</sup> And all the angels were standing around the throne and around the elders and <sup>g</sup>the four living creatures, **and they <sup>h</sup>fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God,** <sup>12</sup> saying, "Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might be to our God forever and ever! Amen."

###### Revelation 7:9–12 - Biblia.com

<http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Rev%207.9-12>

Images for Great Multitude from Every Nation

###### [PDF] Apostles' Creed - Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead.\* On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and **he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

*\*Or, "he descended into hell," another translation of this text in widespread use.*

[http://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/Apostles\\_Creed\\_Evangelical\\_Lutheran\\_Worship.pdf](http://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/Apostles_Creed_Evangelical_Lutheran_Worship.pdf)

Images for Apostles' Creed

Images for he will come to judge the living and the dead

###### By the light of Grace - Living Lutheran

How does the ELCA understand **heaven and hell?**

<https://www.livinglutheran.org/2018/10/by-the-light-of-grace/>

<https://www.livinglutheran.org/2018/09/study-guide-by-the-light-of-grace/>

Images for By the light of Grace - Living Lutheran

<https://chicago.suntimes.com/news/elizabeth-eaton-presiding-bishop-evangelical-lutheran-church-in-america-chicago-if-hell-exists-i-think-its-empty-face-to-faith-podcast/>

<https://www.livinglutheran.org/contact-us/>

<https://www.livinglutheran.org/issues/>

### Christian views on Hell - Wikipedia

In Christian theology, Hell is the place or state into which, by God's definitive judgment, unrepentant sinners and atheists pass in the general judgment, or, as some Christians believe, immediately after death (particular judgment).<sup>[1][2]</sup> Its character is inferred from teaching in the biblical texts, some of which, interpreted literally, have given rise to the popular idea of Hell.<sup>[1]</sup> Theologians today generally see Hell as the logical consequence of using free will to reject union with God and, because God will not force conformity, not incompatible with God's justice and mercy.<sup>[1]</sup>

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian\\_views\\_on\\_Hell](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_views_on_Hell)

[Images for Christian views on Hell](#)

### Christ's second coming

In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and in view of his appearing and his kingdom, I solemnly urge you: proclaim the message; be persistent whether the time is favorable or unfavorable; convince, rebuke, and encourage, with the utmost patience in teaching. For the time is coming when people will not put up with sound doctrine, but having itching ears, they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own desires and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander away to myths. As for you, always be sober, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, carry out your ministry fully.

oremus Bible Browser: 2 Timothy 4:1-5

<http://bible.oremus.org/?ql=100527249>

[Images for christ's second coming](#)

[Images for do the work of an evangelist](#)

### Eternal sin - Wikipedia

In Christian hamartiology, eternal sins, unforgivable sins, or unpardonable sins are sins which will not be forgiven by God. One eternal or unforgivable sin is specified in several passages of the synoptic gospels. Mark 3:28-29, Matthew 12:31-32, and Luke 12:10 state that there is one sin considered eternal and that is "blasphemy against the Holy Spirit".

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eternal\\_sin](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eternal_sin)

[Images for eternal sin](#)

### 403 best Unitarian Universalism images on Pinterest

<https://www.pinterest.com/uukady/unitarian-universalism/>

[Images for Unitarian Universalism Pinterest](#)

<https://www.pinterest.com/gmuuc/unitarian-universalism/>

<https://www.pinterest.com/cathywright5454/unitarian-universalist/>

[https://www.pinterest.com/sarah\\_k\\_osborne/unitarian-universalism/](https://www.pinterest.com/sarah_k_osborne/unitarian-universalism/)

<https://www.pinterest.com/dnisan/unitarian-universalism/>

<https://www.pinterest.com/iliketoknit/unitarian-universalism/>

<https://www.pinterest.com/sideoflove/unitarian-universalism/>

<https://www.pinterest.com/mtmcintosh/unitarian-universalist/>

<https://www.pinterest.com/neighborhooduu/unitarian-universalism/>

<https://www.pinterest.com/uuca/unitarian-universalism/>

<https://www.pinterest.com/uulaqunabeach/unitarian-universalism/>

[https://www.pinterest.com/susan\\_richter/unitarian-universalist/](https://www.pinterest.com/susan_richter/unitarian-universalist/)

### Heaven and Hell - Pinterest

<https://www.pinterest.com/fearlessfoe/heaven-and-hell/>

[Images for Heaven and Hell - Pinterest](#)

<https://www.pinterest.com/amwisforgiven/heaven-and-hell/>

<https://www.pinterest.com/goodpreaching/heaven-or-hell/>

<https://www.pinterest.com/jaydq/of-heaven-hell/>

<https://www.pinterest.com/ojarman/heaven-or-hell/>

<https://www.pinterest.com/mshanzon/heaven-or-hell/>

[Images for Heaven or Hell - Pinterest](#)

### Is universalism / universal salvation biblical? - Got Questions

Answer: Universalism is the belief that everyone will be saved. There are many people today who hold to universal salvation and believe that all people eventually end up in heaven. Perhaps it is the thought of men and women living a life of eternal torment in hell that causes some to reject the teaching of Scripture on this issue. For some it is an over-emphasis on the love and compassion of God—and the neglect of the righteousness and justice of God—that leads them to believe God will have mercy on every living soul. But the Scriptures do teach that some people will spend eternity in hell.

<https://www.gotquestions.org/universalism.html>

[Images for everyone will be saved](#)

[Images for spend eternity in hell](#)

<http://www.desiringgod.org/messages/universalism-and-the-reality-of-eternal-punishment-the-biblical-basis-of-the-doctrine-of-eternal-punishment>

<https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/blogs/justin-taylor/the-biblical-basis-for-the-doctrine-of-eternal-punishment/>

<https://www.ligonier.org/learn/devotionals/eternal-punishment/>

<http://www.bible-researcher.com/hell.html>  
<https://bible.org/seriespage/7-eternal-punishment-lost>  
[http://www.instonebrewer.com/visualSermons/BibleHell/\\_Sermon.htm](http://www.instonebrewer.com/visualSermons/BibleHell/_Sermon.htm)  
<http://metrocitychurch.tv/resources/grow-resources/6-questions-on-hell/>  
<http://slj.institute.net/eternal-punishment/doctrine-of-eternal-punishment-i/>  
<https://www.christiancourier.com/articles/95-doctrine-of-eternal-punishment-the>

#### Jesus being tempted in the wilderness by the devil - Pinterest

<https://www.pinterest.com/pin/130041507965276056/>  
Images for Jesus being tempted in the wilderness by the devil - Pinterest  
<https://www.pinterest.com/maxfeltz/temptation-of-jesus/>  
<https://www.pinterest.com/lampbiblepix/jesus-temptation/>  
<https://www.pinterest.com/pamriche/bible-temptation-of-jesus/>  
<https://www.pinterest.com/normacook/temptation-of-jesus/>  
<https://www.pinterest.com/lasan0215/temptations-of-jesus/>  
Images for the temptation of jesus pinterest  
<https://in.pinterest.com/barbara7579/temptation-of-christ/>  
Images for temptation of christ pinterest

Jesus claims to mediate God's will

32 'Everyone therefore who acknowledges me before others, I also will acknowledge before my Father in heaven; <sup>33</sup>but whoever denies me before others, I also will deny before my Father in heaven.

#### oremus Bible Browser: Matthew 10:32-33

<http://bible.oremus.org/?passage=Matthew%2010:26-33>  
Images for Jesus claims to mediate God's will

#### Rebuttals Against Universal Salvation - Tentmaker

[UNIVERSALISM: FORMS AND FALLACIES](#) by James A. Fowler  
[ETERNAL PUNISHMENT](#) by A. W. Pink  
[Universalism](#) by CARM  
[The Reasons Why Universalism Is False](#) Don Hewey

<http://www.tentmaker.org/URrebuttals/index.htm>  
Images for Rebuttals Against Universal Salvation

#### The Great Divorce Quotes by C.S. Lewis - Goodreads

"There are only two kinds of people in the end: those who say to God, "Thy will be done," and those to whom God says, in the end, "Thy will be done." **All that are in Hell, choose it. Without that self-choice there could be no Hell.** No soul that seriously and constantly desires joy will ever miss it. Those who seek find. Those who knock it is opened."  
— C.S. Lewis, *The Great Divorce*

<https://www.goodreads.com/work/quotes/1215780-the-great-divorce>  
Images for Great Divorce Quotes by C.S. Lewis  
<https://www.amazon.com/Great-Divorce-C-S-Lewis/dp/0060652950>  
[https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/17267.The\\_Great\\_Divorce](https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/17267.The_Great_Divorce)  
<http://www.cslewis.org/resources/studyguides/Study%20Guide%20-%20The%20Great%20Divorce.pdf>  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The\\_Great\\_Divorce](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Great_Divorce)  
<https://www.pinterest.com/cslewisofficial/the-great-divorce-by-c-s-lewis/>

The Temptation of Jesus

<sup>5</sup>Then the devil led him up and showed him in an instant all the kingdoms of the world. <sup>6</sup>And the devil said to him, "To you I will give their glory and all this authority; for it has been given over to me, and I give it to anyone I please. <sup>7</sup>If you, then, will worship me, it will all be yours." <sup>8</sup>Jesus answered him, "It is written, **Worship the Lord your God, and serve only him.**"

#### oremus Bible Browser: Luke 4:5-8

<http://bible.oremus.org/?version=nrsv&passage=Luke%204:1-13>  
Images for Worship the Lord your God, and serve only him.

#### "Unforgiven" - I'll See You In Hell HD - YouTube

"Unforgiven" is a 1992 American Western film produced and directed by "Clint Eastwood". It stars "Clint Eastwood" in the lead role, with "Gene Hackman, Morgan Freeman & Richard Harris".

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zwuJBF12Tuk>  
Images for "Unforgiven" - I'll See You In Hell HD - YouTube  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Mjkt4UgcTmg> Unforgiven (10/10) Movie CLIP - I'll See You in Hell (1992) HD  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KmhGYB4NdYc> "Unforgiven" - Shootout Scene HD - YouTube  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dpDkYZWveVg> Clint Eastwood - Unforgiven - YouTube  
Images for Clint Eastwood - Unforgiven - YouTube  
<https://en.wikiquote.org/wiki/Unforgiven>  
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Unforgiven>



Images for unforgiven movie

<http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0105695/quotes> Unforgiven (1992) Quotes

[https://www.rottentomatoes.com/m/1041911\\_unforgiven/quotes](https://www.rottentomatoes.com/m/1041911_unforgiven/quotes)

<http://noisepie.com/seeuinhell/HellQuotes.htm> UNFORGIVEN QUOTES

There is one exchange in the movie that has long stayed with me. After he is fatally wounded, Little Bill says, "I don't deserve this. To die like this. I was building a house." And Munny says, "Deserve's got nothin' to do with it." Actually, deserve has everything to do with it, and although Ned Logan and Delilah do not get what they deserve, William Munny sees that the others do. That **implacable moral balance, in which good eventually silences evil**, is at the heart of the Western, and Eastwood is not shy about saying so.

<https://www.rogerebert.com/reviews/great-movie-unforgiven-1992>

Images for implacable moral balance, in which good eventually silences evil

**Universal Salvation?: The Current Debate** by Robin A. Parry (Editor), Christopher H. Partridge (Editor) Foreword by Gabriel Fackre

Will God one day save all people through Christ's atoning work? That is the question at the heart of the debate in this volume - a debate sure to challenge readers, whatever their current perspective.

Featuring evangelical writers of exceptional insight and sensitivity, *Universal Salvation?* offers a conversation worth everyone's attention. The volume opens with a rigorous three-part defense of Christian universalism by philosopher Thomas Talbott, who argues that Scripture teaches the ultimate salvation of all people, including those in hell. Gabriel Fackre in his foreword calls Talbott's work "the most thoughtfully wrought argument for universalism to date from within the contemporary evangelical community." The rest of the book gathers incisive responses to Talbott by Christian scholars from different disciplines, who evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of Talbott's arguments, take his thought in new directions, or explain why they think he is mistaken. Talbott then responds to his critics.

The aim of this volume is not to persuade people that universalism is true but to open up a fairer debate on a controversial subject of continuing importance to theologians and non-theologians alike. By exploring universal salvation from biblical, philosophical, theological, and historical perspectives, the book helps readers think through the issues more carefully than has been possible with resources previously available.

<https://www.amazon.com/Universal-Salvation-Current-Debate-Parry/dp/0802827640>

[https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/922535.Universal\\_Salvation](https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/922535.Universal_Salvation)

<https://www.barnesandnoble.com/w/universal-salvation-robin-a-parry/1112142659>

<https://books.google.com/books?isbn=0802827640>

[https://books.google.com/books/about/Universal\\_Salvation.html?id=jvYShr7hAjcC](https://books.google.com/books/about/Universal_Salvation.html?id=jvYShr7hAjcC)

<http://outdoorchurch.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/Parry-Universal-Salvation-pxv-xxvii-3-54.pdf>

<http://themelios.thegospelcoalition.org/article/will-all-be-saved>

<https://www.revolvy.com/main/index.php?s=Trinitarian%20Universalism>

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Robin\\_Parry](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Robin_Parry)

[https://www.goodreads.com/author/show/476319.Robin\\_Allinson\\_Parry](https://www.goodreads.com/author/show/476319.Robin_Allinson_Parry)

Images for robin a parry author universalism

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christopher\\_Partridge](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christopher_Partridge)

[https://www.goodreads.com/author/show/6738.Christopher\\_H\\_Partridge](https://www.goodreads.com/author/show/6738.Christopher_H_Partridge)

Images for Christopher H. Partridge, author

Images for **Universal Salvation?: The Current Debate** by Robin A. Parry (Editor), Christopher H. Partridge (Editor)

**Universalism - Wikipedia**

In **Christianity**, **universal reconciliation** is the doctrine that all **sinful** and alienated human **souls**—because of **divine love and mercy**—will ultimately be reconciled to **God**.<sup>[2]</sup>

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Universalism>

Images for universalism

**What Does the Bible Say About Heaven And Hell? - OpenBible.info**

[https://www.openbible.info/topics/heaven\\_and\\_hell](https://www.openbible.info/topics/heaven_and_hell)

Images for Bible Say About Heaven And Hell

<http://www.beliefnet.com/faiths/christianity/what-jesus-said-about-heaven-and-hell.aspx>

<https://www.kingjamesbibleonline.org/Bible-Verses-About-Heaven-And-Hell/>

<https://www.cru.org/us/en/train-and-grow/spiritual-growth/core-christian-beliefs/heaven-and-hell.html>

<https://discovertheword.org/2008/09/16/what-jesus-says-about-heaven-and-hell-and-what-that-means-for-us/>

<https://www.tomorrowworld.org/magazines/2009/july-august/heaven-hell-and-the-resurrection>

<https://www.ucg.org/bible-study-tools/booklets/heaven-and-hell-what-does-the-bible-really-teach>

<http://www.bibleinfo.com/en/questions/where-is-heaven>

<https://unlockingthebible.org/2015/03/bible-verses-heaven/>

<https://www.epm.org/resources/2010/Feb/4/what-does-bible-say-about-heaven/>

<https://bible.org/article/what-bible-says-about-hell>

<https://www.biblestudytools.com/topical-verses/hell-bible-verses/>

<https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/7-truths-about-hell/>

<https://www.quora.com/What-does-the-Bible-say-about-Hell>

<https://www.whatchristianswanttoknow.com/where-is-heaven-where-is-hell-what-does-the-bible-say/>

[https://www.explorethegod.com/hell?qclid=CjwKCAjw4PHZBRA-EiwAAas4Zkde6LL1cQ2m2tJCapNS5RGKSWu\\_wlwTWHo1\\_PwzEOe9yOnjP0DksxoCr1oQAvD\\_BwE](https://www.explorethegod.com/hell?qclid=CjwKCAjw4PHZBRA-EiwAAas4Zkde6LL1cQ2m2tJCapNS5RGKSWu_wlwTWHo1_PwzEOe9yOnjP0DksxoCr1oQAvD_BwE)  
[http://www.christianbiblereference.org/faq\\_eternal.htm](http://www.christianbiblereference.org/faq_eternal.htm)  
<https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/blogs/justin-taylor/ten-foundational-verses-for-eternal-punishment-in-hell/>  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian\\_views\\_on\\_Hell](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_views_on_Hell)  
Images for Christian\_views\_on\_Hell

#### 42) Diminishment of eschatological and enhancement of political

Some in mainline Protestant denominations are moving toward a position in which the Christian faith story is simply one among many that gives meaning and purpose in life and in which a preoccupation with ultimate destiny is considered outmoded,

##### Can evangelism be redeemed? - Living Lutheran

Despite Christ's Great Commission to "go and make disciples of all nations," evangelism is a task I have most often avoided.

I usually associate evangelism with an effort to convert nonbelievers to Christianity, something that makes me very uncomfortable. Too often the desire to bring about conversions grows out of a belief that nonbelievers need to be "saved" from eternal damnation by adopting the Christian faith.

To the extent that evangelism is about "saving souls," I want nothing to do with it.

I approach matters of faith and belief with humility, unwilling to assert the superiority of my own religious beliefs over those of others.

The most I am willing to say is that it is the Christian story that has claimed me and helps me to make meaning of my own life. I recognize that other stories have claimed other people in a similar way, and I want to respect that.

<https://www.livinglutheran.org/2011/03/can-evangelism-redeemed/>

Images for Can evangelism be redeemed? – Living Lutheran

<https://www.livinglutheran.org/contact-us/>

<https://www.livinglutheran.org/issues/>

while some in mainline Protestant denominations are pursuing their vision of what they believe God's kingdom should look like on earth.

##### So heavy a focus on this earthly life - Lutheran Confessions

What's up with the progressive spiritual tradition's almost dogmatic focus on this earthly life?

<https://www.patheos.com/blogs/clintschneklath/2019/08/so-heavy-a-focus-on-this-earthly-life/>

Images for progressive spiritual tradition's dogmatic focus on this earthly life

#### 43) Make a difference

For those clergy in mainline Protestant congregations who seek to lead the people to be the equivalent of social action organizations and political action committees, the question can be asked, "Why should people belong to a congregation that expects?"

[DOC]Model Constitution for Congregations 2019 - ELCA Resource Repository

##### Chapter 8.

##### MEMBERSHIP

\*C8.02. Members shall be classified as follows:

- c. **Voting** members are confirmed members. Such confirmed members, during the current or preceding calendar year, shall have communed in this congregation and shall have made a contribution of record to this congregation. Members of this congregation who have satisfied these basic standards shall have the privilege of voice and vote at every regular and special meeting of the congregation as well as the other rights and privileges ascribed to voting members by the provisions of this constitution and its bylaws.

<https://www.elca.org/constitution> 2019 Model Constitution for Congregations

<https://download.elca.org> > ELCA Resource Repository > Model Constitution

<http://www.elca.org/Resources/Office-of-the-Secretary>

Images for Model Constitution for Congregations 2019 - ELCA Chapter 8. MEMBERSHIP Voting members

when they can pick and choose with more options in other organizations?

After all, the church in relation to society is not held in high regard by many younger people.

##### 59 Percent of Millennials Raised in a Church Have Dropped Out—And They're Trying To Tell Us Why

●35 percent of millennials have an *anti-church* stance, believing the church does more harm than good.

<https://faithit.com/12-reasons-millennials-over-church-sam-eaton/>

Images for 59 Percent of Millennials Raised in a Church Have Dropped Out—And They're Trying To Tell Us Why

Images for 35 percent of millennials believe the church does more harm than good

<https://www.barna.com/research/americans-divided-on-the-importance-of-church/#.V-hxhLVy6FD>

Images for americans-divided-on-the-importance-of-church

<https://www.amazon.com/Sacred-Roots-Church-Matters-Frames/dp/0310433231>

Images for Sacred-Roots-Church-Matters-Frames