

**PRIORITIZE THE PRIORITIES.***God and the Weekend...*

1) Living for the Weekend

“Sunday night, after you finish watching your favorite show, you enter a mild depression. Monday morning, your alarm rings and you are filled with dread. Wednesday is a struggle. Thursday is made more bearable by the upcoming weekend. By mid-afternoon on Friday, you can’t focus on work because you’re ready to run out of the office. If the above sounds like you, then “your *life* is broken.”¹ – Gary Vaynerchuk, VaynerMedia cofounder and CEO

“It never ceases to amaze me how many people live their life for the weekend. In doing so, not only do they miss out on the here and now throughout the week, but they put so much pressure on themselves (and those around them) to have an unforgettable Friday and Saturday night. Today is only Tuesday, but do you find your own mind already inching towards the weekend?”² – Andy Puddicombe, co-founder of the social enterprise, *Headspace*

Disclaimer: We’re not talking about LEGALISM here or how to try and earn God’s love but rather how to maximize our joy and His glory. Christ is our righteousness; not our church attendance. We’re looking at how to become all that God has created us to be. #MaximumImpact.

What are the top 2 or 3 causes you’ve observed or experienced that contribute to sporadic church attendance?

- Having to go to work. More people are required to work on weekends now more than ever.
- God taking second place to other things.
- Major staffing and pastoral transitions.
- Lack of vibrancy, conviction, and originality to preaching and communication.
- Lack of connectedness to meaningful relationships at church.
- Not connected to a small group that keeps them accountable and can share life with.
- Affluence/success.
- Idolatry.
- Prioritizing other things before church (prepping for the week, sleeping in, etc.).
- Church hopping.
- Recreational activities.
- Illness. Stomach flu. Sick kids.
- Travelling.
- Getting out of the habit.
- Excuses.
- Zero knowledge of the value of being active in a church.

- church outside of church that would make one feel like they can't go back to church until they fix the issue.
- Kids sports & hunting.
- People attend church based on how well they performed in life throughout the week. If they sinned more so during the week in their eyes they might be less likely to attend that week.
- People just don't feel a need for it, except in rare moments.
- "I can worship God outdoors as well as I can at church."

Creation is a *general* revelation of God whereas the clearest worship focuses on Jesus Christ. Don Whitney, "Creation reveals God as Creator, but not as Savior."³

2) Cultural trends of church attendance

"While church attendance is projected to increase from 50 million in 1990 to 60 million in 2050, because the U.S. Census estimates that America will grow from 248 million in 1990 to 520 million in 2050, the church can't keep up with population growth if it stays on its current course." – Kelly Shattuck, "7 Startling Facts: An Up Close Look at Church Attendance in America," *Church Leaders*.⁴

3) Jesus on the weekend

- Jesus' custom: attending corporate worship.

"And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up. And as was his custom, he went to the synagogue on the Sabbath day..." Luke 4:16

- The Apostle Paul's custom: attending corporate worship.

"And Paul went in, as was his custom," Acts 17:2a

Hebrews 10:23-25

Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful. ²⁴ *And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works,* ²⁵ *not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.*

Am I embracing the **essentials** of Christian hope? – 10:23a *Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering,*

Does my church involvement reflect the faithfulness of Christ? – 10:23b *for he who promised is faithful.*

When others watch me are they **motivated** to serve God? – 10:24 *And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works,*

Be **present** – 10:25a *not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some,*

Be **encouraging** – 10:25b *but encouraging one another,*

Be **aware** – 10:25c *and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.*

4) Next steps to maximize your weekend

- ⇒ Put first things first: Except for emergencies, carve out time to weekly be under the teaching of God's Word with your faith family.
- ⇒ Develop the art of saying "No."
 - Subject distractions to discipline: exchange the smaller yes for the Greater Yes.
 - Your kids aren't underprivileged if they're not at a sporting event every weekend.
 - Parents: Don't allow the weight of the "New Normal" of continual activities to crush your family life.
- ⇒ Join and support a Gospel-centered local church.
- ⇒ Which has more of my loyalty? My sports team or the local church for which Christ died?
- ⇒ Be intentional about involvement in your local church:
 - Three to thrive: small group, worship, serve.
 - Serve 1, Sit 1.
 - Get ready for church on Saturday rather than Sunday morning.
 - Be on time.
- ⇒ Remember the persecuted church.

¹ Richard Feloni, "The CEO of a multimillion-dollar company explains the problem with living for the weekend — and how to stop," *Business Insider*, May 6, 2016, <http://www.businessinsider.com/gary-vaynerchuk-stop-living-for-the-weekend-2016-5>.

² Andy Puddicombe, "Living for the Weekend: Do you find your mind inching towards the weekend?" *Psychology Today*, October 15, 2013, <https://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/get-some-head-space/201310/living-the-weekend>.

³ Donald S. Whitney, *Spiritual Disciplines Within the Church: Participating Fully in the Body of Christ* (Chicago: Moody, 1996), 77.

⁴ Kelly Shattuck, "7 Startling Facts: An Up Close Look at Church Attendance in America," *Church Leaders*, December 14, 2017, <https://churchleaders.com/pastors/pastor-articles/139575-7-startling-facts-an-up-close-look-at-church-attendance-in-america.html/5>.