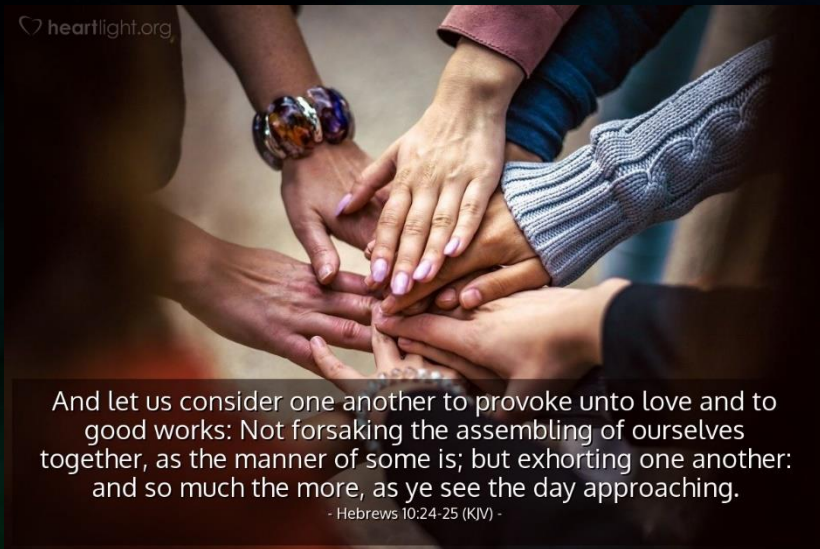


Why Church?



And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.

- Hebrews 10:24-25 (KJV) -

APRIL 24, 2022

**SCOTT SWEETLAND,
ASSOCIATE PASTOR, NHCC**

**Just because you go to church
doesn't mean you're a Christian.
I can go sit in the garage all day
and it doesn't make me a car.**

Joyce Meyer

© 2020 Joy.org

Interactive option

2

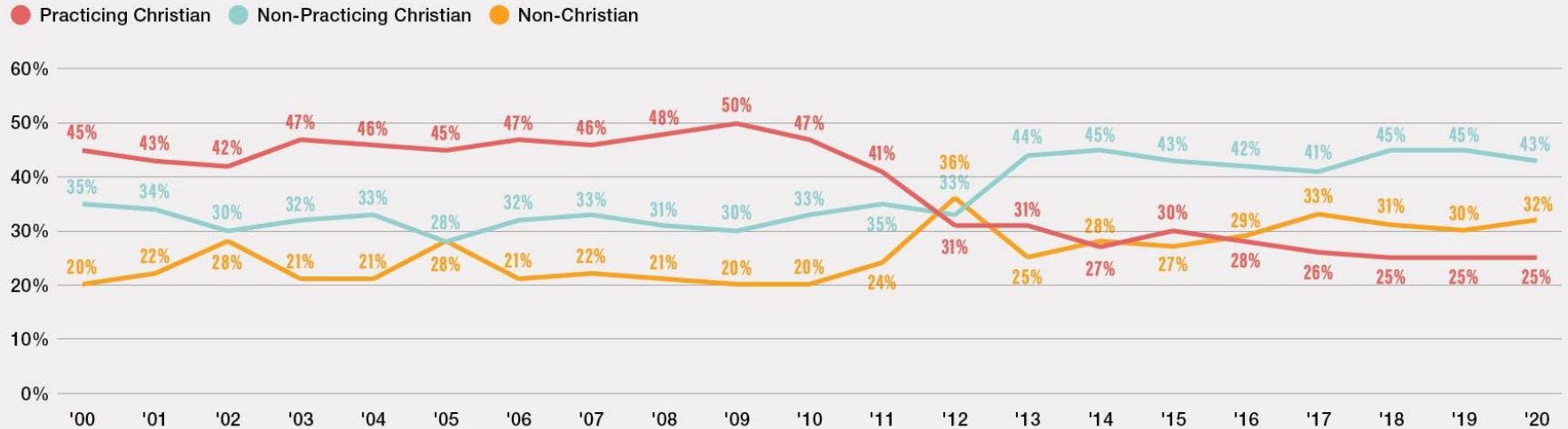
Questions?

scott.sweetland@newhamptoncc.org

**I will attempt to answer a few
questions at the end of today's
service
or email me why you go to Church**

HOW AMERICANS RELATE TO CHRISTIANITY IS CHANGING: 2000-2020

Barna STATE OF THE CHURCH



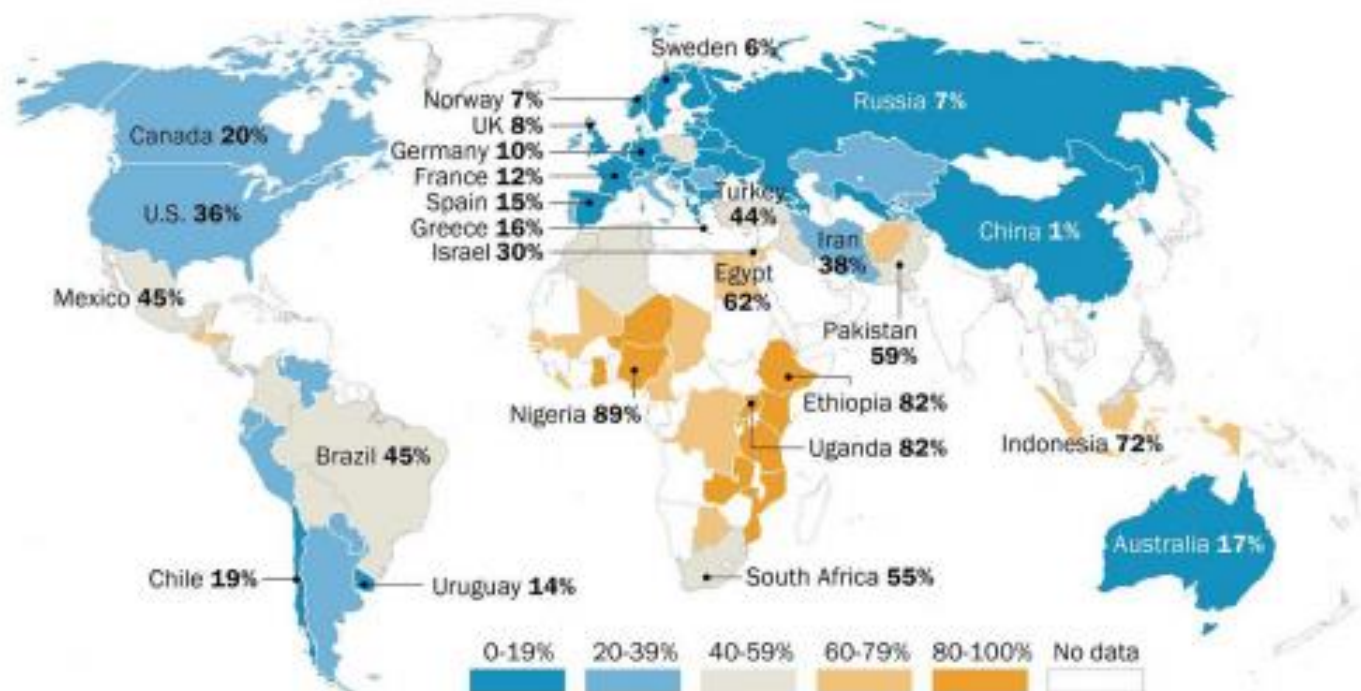
WEEKLY CHURCH ATTENDANCE: 1993-2020



● All U.S. adults



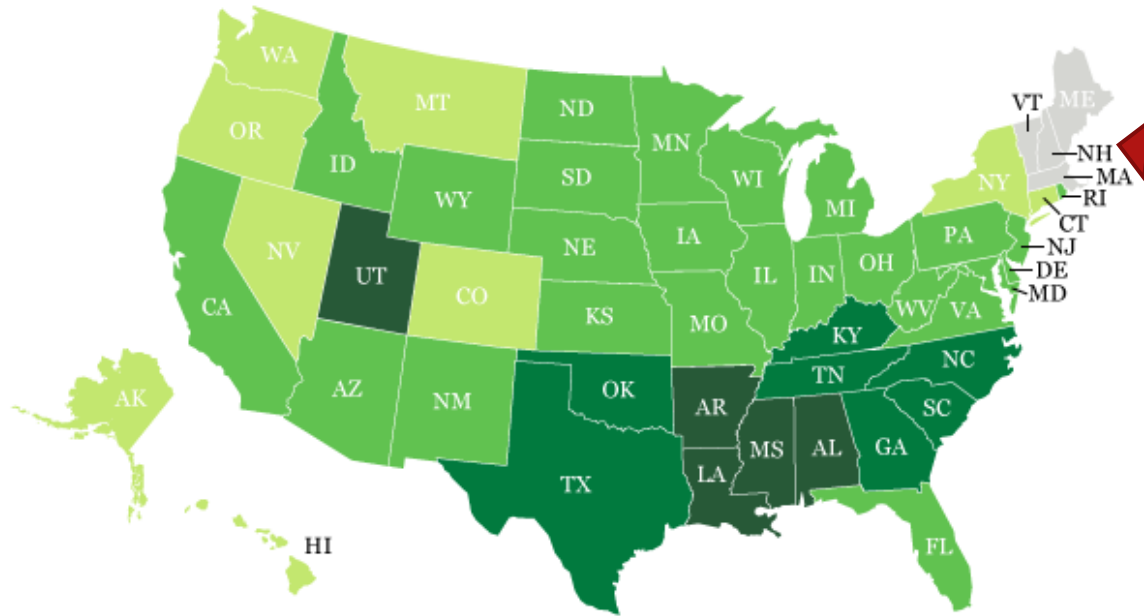
Weekly Church Attendance Worldwide 2008-2017



Source: Pew Research Center, "The Age Gap in Religion Around the World" 2018

Weekly Religious Service Attendance, 2014

■ Highest attendance ■ Above average attendance ■ Average attendance
■ Below average attendance ■ Lowest attendance



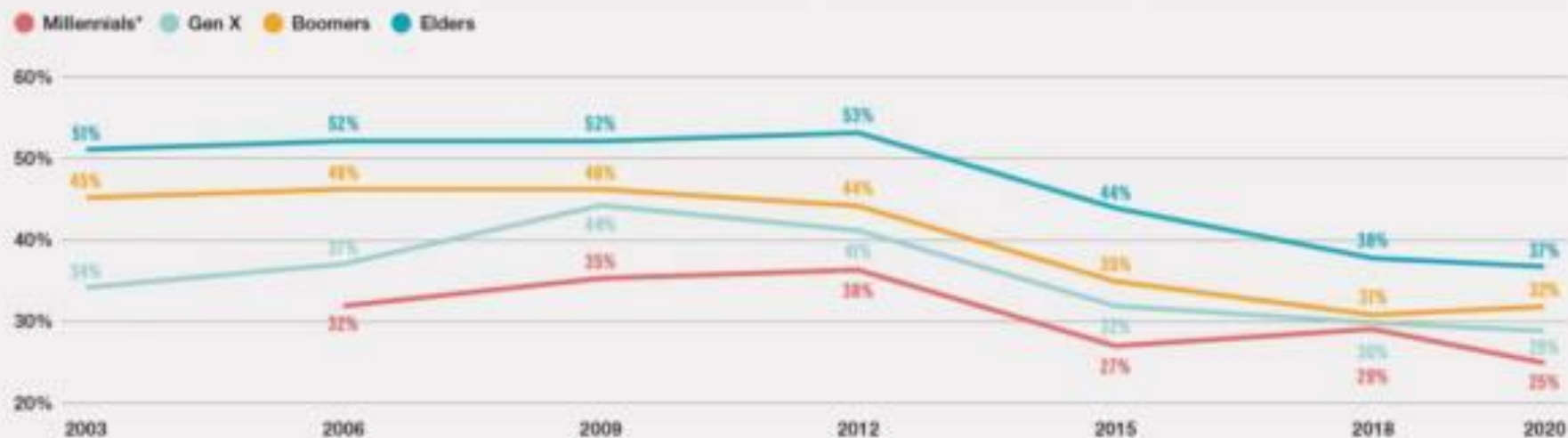
GALLUP®

6

**New England States
have the lowest
Church attendance
in the USA**

WEEKLY CHURCH ATTENDANCE, BY GENERATION: 2003-2020

Barna STATE OF THE CHURCH



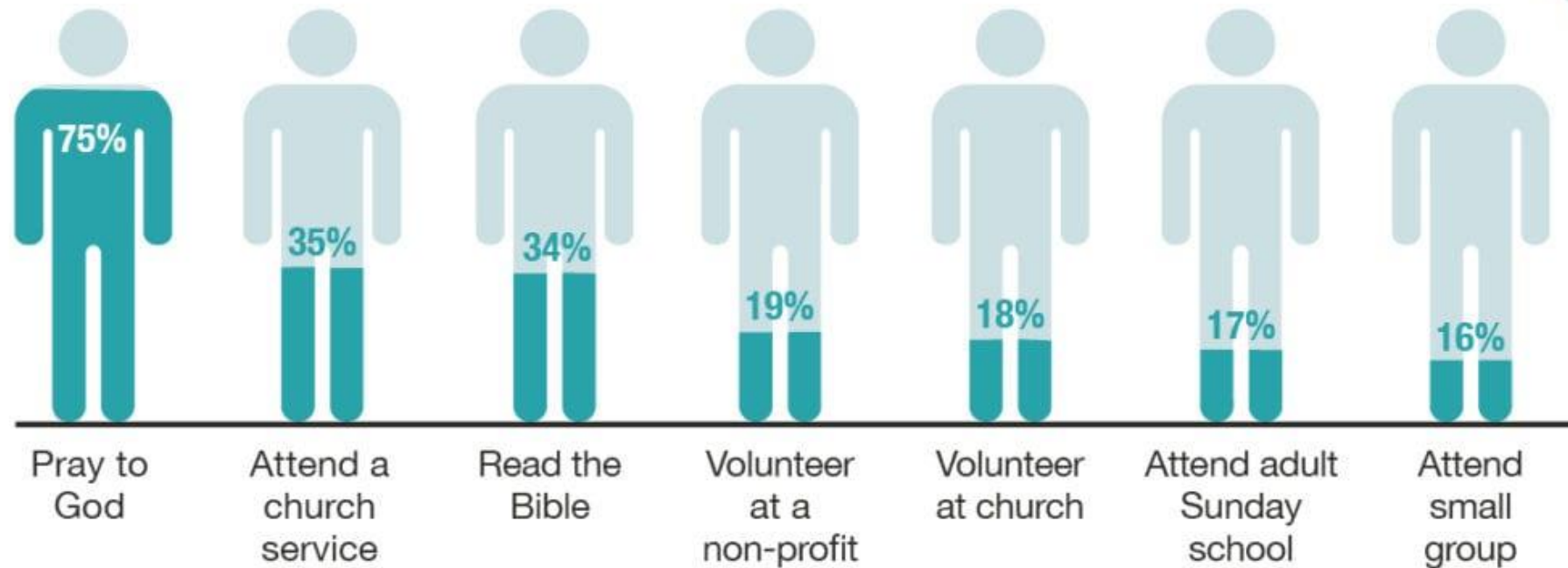
n = 96,171 U.S. adults | 2000-2020

*Due to low sample size, the 2003 attendance rate for Millennials was not included in this chart.

© 2020 | barna.com



HOW AMERICANS EXPERIENCE AND EXPRESS THEIR FAITH



10 REASONS WHY A PASTOR QUIT ATTENDING SPORTS EVENTS

9

1. The coach never came to visit me.
2. Every time I went they asked me for money.
3. The people sitting in my row didn't seem very friendly.
4. The seats were very hard.
5. The referees made a decision I didn't agree with.
6. I was sitting with hypocrites—they only really care during playoffs!
7. Some games went into overtime and I was late getting home.
8. The band played some songs I had never heard before.
9. The games are scheduled on my only day to sleep in and run errands.
10. Since I read a book on sports, I feel that I know more than the coaches, anyway.

First, reasons/excuses to not go to Church

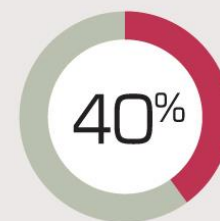
10

- **I can find God elsewhere, Connection to God**
- **Church irrelevant**
- Too busy or too tired
- **The Church is full of hypocrites**
- Don't like/trust the pastor, etc.
- I have to work or I have to (insert _____)
- I can listen to a sermon online or Study the Bible myself
- Church is boring or lasts too long
- I've been hurt in the Church
- **Church only wants your money**
- I'm not comfortable there
- **Does very little for their community**
- I don't feel my needs are being met
- **Church has become too political**

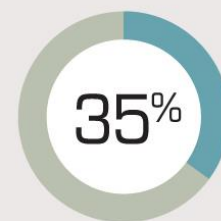


Why don't you **ATTEND CHURCH?**

Across age and denomination, the top two reasons
unchurched Americans said they didn't think attending
church was important were always the same:



"I find God elsewhere"



*"Church is not relevant
to me personally"*

The reality: Most people do feel connected to God at Church

I can find God elsewhere?

11

U.S. ADULTS ON FEELINGS PROMPTED BY CHURCH ATTENDANCE—CONNECTED WITH GOD

Barna

*Thinking about the worship services you attend at your church, how often do you leave the worship services feeling you **connected with God** or personally experienced the presence of God?*

● Every time ● Most of the time ● About half of the time ● Sometimes, but not often ● Almost never

Practicing Christians



Churched adults



n=794 U.S. practicing Christians; December 5-18, 2019.
n=408 U.S. churched adults; December 5-18, 2019. | Source: Barna Group

© 2021 | Barna.com



Benjamin Watson

4h · 🌐

You can say that again! ¹⁰⁰



Tony Evans

@drtonyevans

I hear people say, "I don't have to go to church to be a Christian," and they are absolutely right. Salvation is through faith alone in Christ alone. But you don't have to go home to be married, but stay away long enough & your relationship will be affected.

👍❤️ 2.7K

91 Comments 560 Shares

👍 Like

💬 Comment

➦ Share

Does very little for Community?

The reality: NHCC Mission Work/Giving this year

12

- ▶ Bristol Community Services – Supporting local families in need
- ▶ Meredith Emergency Food Pantry - Supporting local families in need
- ▶ Isaiah 61 Café – helping feed/shelter the homeless
- ▶ Bethel Missions (Nicaragua) – feeding and helping educate poor children and families
- ▶ NH Tilton Vets Home
- ▶ Rise Again Outreach
- ▶ NH Alliance
- ▶ Cornerstone
- ▶ Haven Pregnancy Center – supporting pregnant woman and life
- ▶ ABC – AFC
- ▶ Camp Sentinel
- ▶ Gospel Radio
- ▶ NJ Children's' Mission Trip (Summer)

The Reality: The Church is Full of Hypocrites?

13

- ▶ This is 100% True!!
- ▶ So, you'll fit right in with the rest of us!!



Hypocrite: A person whose behavior contradicts what he or she claims to believe

The Church only wants your money?

14

The
Reality



The Church is too political?

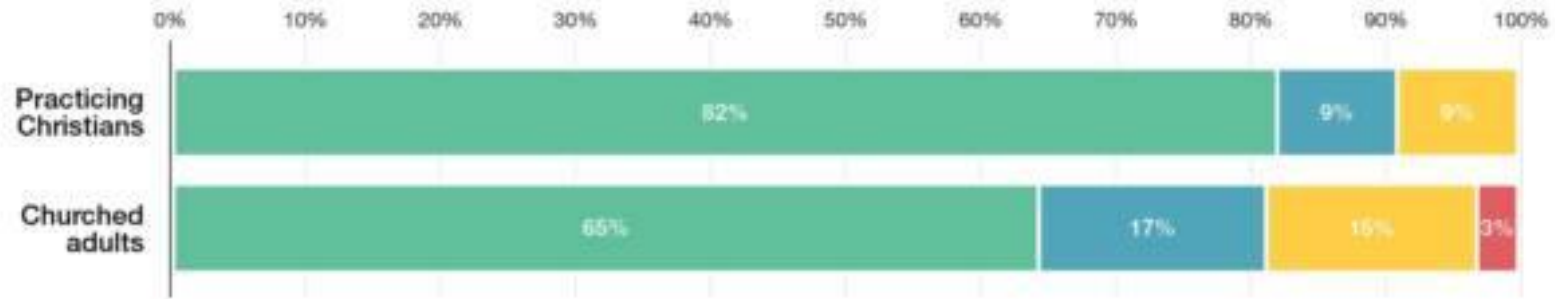
15

- ▶ Reality – Partially true.
- ▶ Talked about this in Toxic Churchianity Sermon
- ▶ Solution
 - ▶ Find a church that puts Jesus at the center
 - ▶ Let your faith drive your politics not the other way around
 - ▶ Hold both parties accountable to your (Christian) values
 - ▶ Respect your fellow Christians even if you disagree politically

MOTIVATIONS FOR CHURCH ATTENDANCE

Do you usually attend church because you enjoy doing it, because you feel you have to do it, or you do it out of habit?

◆ Enjoyment ◆ Have to ◆ Habit ◆ Don't do this



Reality: Most people enjoy going to Church (that actually go)

n = 931 U.S. churched adults | December 5-18, 2019

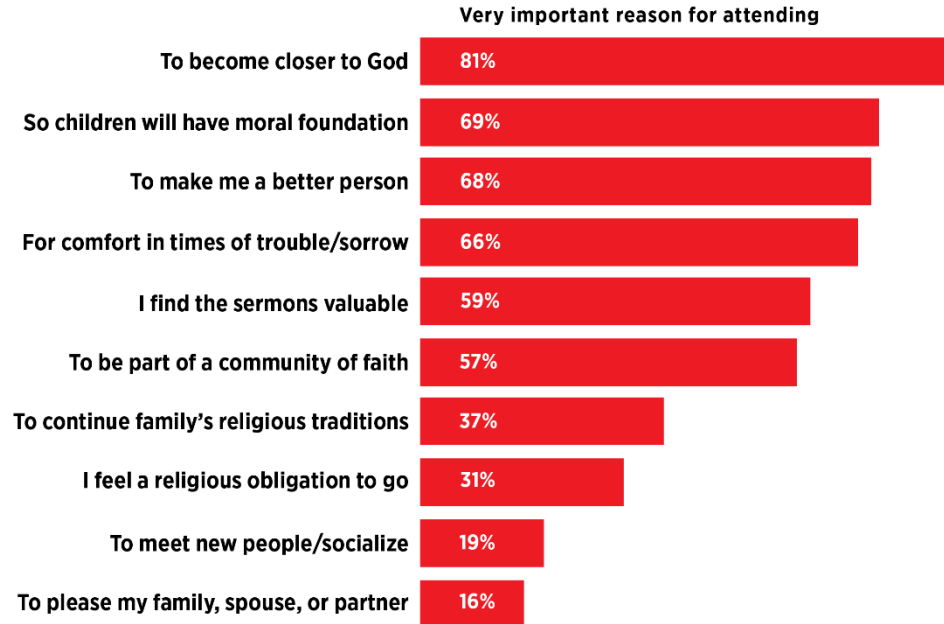
© 2020 | barna.com

- **Practicing Christians** – A subset of all churched adults, are those who attend at least monthly and who say their faith is very important in their life today. This more committed group comprises about 25 percent and 63.5 million adults.
- **Churched adults** – Those Americans who have attended a Christian church at least once in the last six months. This represents the broadest group of adults who have experienced a church service in recent months, representing about 49 percent or 124.4 million adults.

Reasons why Americans go to Church

17

WHY AMERICANS GO TO CHURCH (or other religious services)



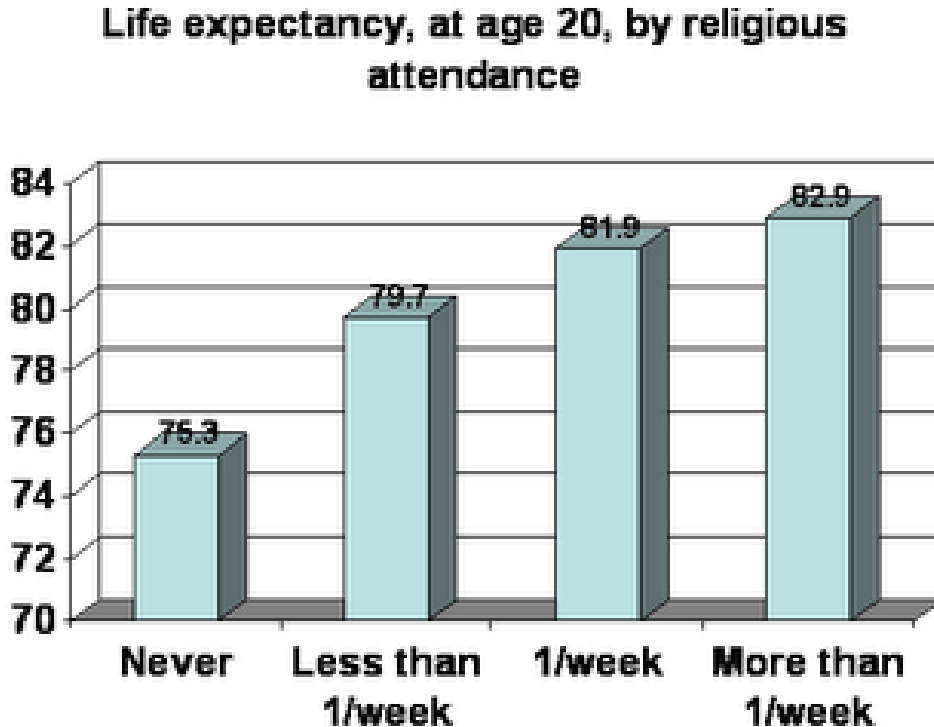
* Based on US adults who attend religious services monthly or more.

Source: Pew Research Center

CT

**“I feel closer to
God in HIS house
than in MY house”
– NHCC Member**

People who go to Church regularly live longer 18

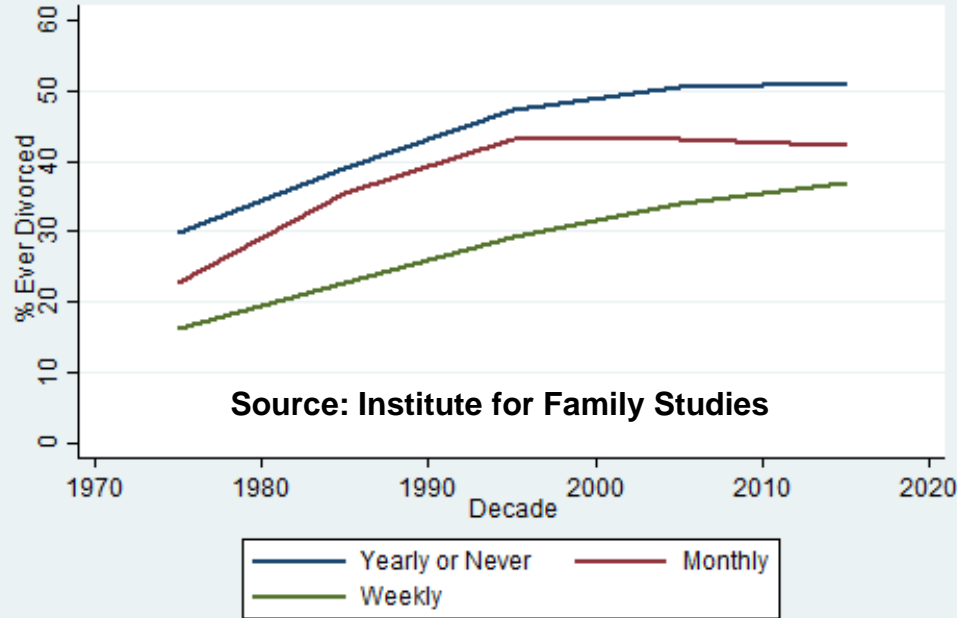


Source: Data from a study by Hummer et al. (*Demography*, May 1999). They examined data from 21,000 individuals over an eight year period and observed death rates as a function of various personal characteristics, one of which was religious attendance

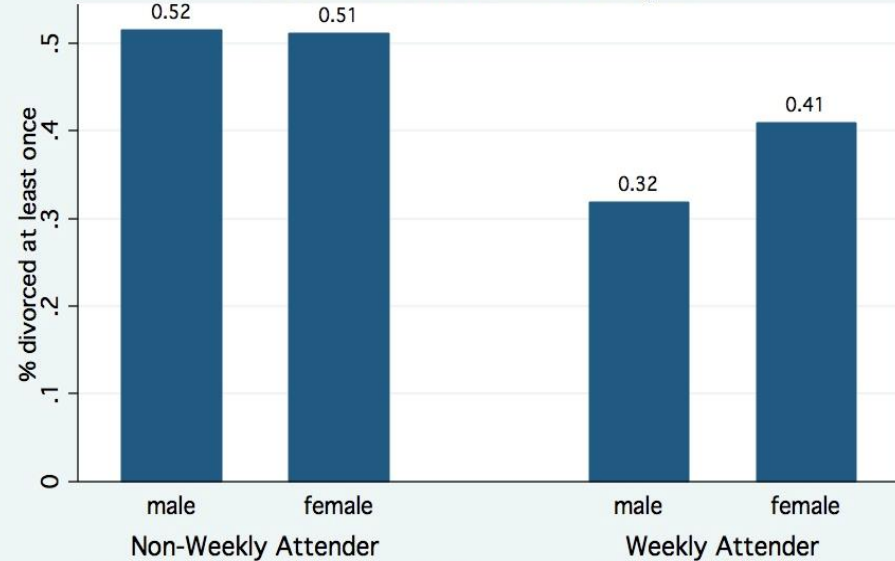
Regular church goers divorce less

19

Figure 4: Ever Divorced? by Religious Service Attendance



Divorce Rates of Americans Who Have Married based on church attendance and gender



SOURCE: General Social Survey, 2006. Based on responses from 1,464 males and 1,960 females.

What does the Bible tell us about attendance? 20

- ▶ And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, 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 (Hebrews 10:24-25 ESV).
- ▶ Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. (Ephesians 4:2 NIV)
- ▶ Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms. (1 Peter 4:10 NIV)
- ▶ Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing. (1 Thessalonians 5:11 NIV)
- ▶ "He went to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, and on the Sabbath day he went into the synagogue, as was his custom." (Luke 4:16 NIV)

NHCC Membership Basics

21

- ▶ Our Mission: “Lead people to a growing relationship with Jesus Christ!”
- ▶ The BASICS:
 - ▶ The Church is A FAMILY
 - ▶ God expects you to be A MEMBER of a church family
 - ▶ A Christian without a church family is an ORPHAN

“..you are a member of God’s very own family...and you belong in God’s household with every other Christian” Eph 2:19 (LB)



What Are the 5 Purposes of Church

22

► Worship

- *And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, 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* **Hebrews 10:24-25.**

► Fellowship

- *“And they devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers”* **Acts 2:42**

► Discipleship

- *“The student is not above the teacher, but everyone who is fully trained will be like their teacher.”* **Luke 6:40**

► Service

- *“Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God’s grace in its various forms.”* **1 Peter 4:10**

► Evangelism

- *“Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”* **Matthew 28:19-20**

Why Church by Bob Hostetler

23

- ▶ Explore
- ▶ Focus
- ▶ Discover
- ▶ Belong
- ▶ Connect
- ▶ Improve
- ▶ Impact
- ▶ Prepare
- ▶ Recover
- ▶ Express
- ▶ Flourish
- ▶ Start

Why is going to Church Good for You?

24

- ▶ Reduces stress
- ▶ Companionship
- ▶ Corporate worship
- ▶ Opportunities to use your gift
- ▶ A chance to introduce children to God
- ▶ For encouragement
- ▶ Gives opportunities to serve your community
- ▶ Introduces people to their Savior

Anything else?

25

My personal reflections

What next?

26

- ▶ Take that first baby step
- ▶ Talk to someone you trust
- ▶ Commit to give a Church a try
- ▶ What do you have to lose? You might just THRIVE!

Questions?

scott.sweetland@newhamptoncc.org