

The Sentinel-August 2018



Quit Church!

Hopefully the title caught your attention. It caught my attention when I first saw it headlining the news. Maybe you've seen it too. If so, then you know it is the title of a book recently authored by a Christian pastor.

When Pastor Chris Sonksen, the author, was interviewed, he said in jest that he is not advocating that a person quit going to church, he'd be "crucified." What he is advocating is that we quit the casual approach to attending church. Because we do not make attending worship and serving our congregations intentionally, is it any wonder why the church seems rather anemic these days?

Pastor Sonksen stated that the average attendance of individuals, who call themselves "faithful," was 19 out of 52 Sundays a year. Another disturbing tidbit he shared was that of those who called themselves "faithful," just 36% attended worship "regularly" according to a study that dates back to 2014.

I agree with him that now is the time to be genuine; to be generous; to be intentional. Times have changed. We know that. We see it. He said that in the 1950's it was unheard of to schedule little league games that conflicted with church worship and activities schedules. His call is to be all in, block out all the "noise" because of the blessings one receives from being "all in." When one is all in, God goes all out!

He gives some examples of this idea to be "all in/God goes all out." It makes sense. If you want to earn a college degree then you have to quit watching so much T.V. If you want to grow your savings, you have to quit spending so much money on things you don't really need. You follow his reasoning, don't you? It is time to quit the modern approach to church and become more active - listening, participating; in sharing.

Let me offer some of my own suggestions. If I want to quit feeling so anxious about life, I need to quit being so distracted with social media and commune with God more often. If I want to see my children in heaven, I have to quit making excuses and bring them to church that they may grow in their relationship with Jesus. If I want my kids to be upstanding individuals, I need to quit ignoring the Ten Commandments. If I am tired of the way things are going in society, at my workplace, in my family, I need to quit keeping my mouth closed and share the life transforming message of Jesus and what His life, death and resurrection mean for us on a daily basis.

Yes, it is time to "Quit Church." I agree. I don't know if the Disciples could have ever imagined Christianity 2018 style. Now is the time to make church a priority! What a powerful evangelical message that would send to our busy, confused and misguided society. To this end, may God grant us His Spirit.

In His Service,
Pastor Szczesny