

SUNDAY ARTICLE

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The author's family – the Edgingtons

Why We Go to Church on Holidays

Melissa Edgington

Today I found myself sitting down to make a list of all of the things that I'll need to pack for our family of five for our upcoming holiday.

We try to escape for a few days every summer, a chance for my pastor husband to get away, at least physically, from the demands of being everyone's go-to man when things get tough.

I don't think that it's really possible for either of us to leave our dear church behind in our heads or hearts (nor do we want to), but it's so nice and necessary to spend some time focusing on our little family having fun together.

Some years our holiday plans cause us to miss a Sunday at our church, and on those years we all get excited about choosing a church to visit while we're away.

Now, you may wonder why in the world a pastor's family would look forward to going to church when taking a break. Isn't going to any church sort of like going to work?

And the simple answer to that question is no. Church is not work. It's our family, our support system, our place of worship, and our lifeline to the truth of God's word. The church is not just a place we go – it's who we are.

I remember when Chad and I were newlyweds. The first Sunday of our new life together rolled around, and he cheerfully hopped out of bed and informed me that we were going to church.

I had a more lenient view of church attendance – I thought that it was no big deal to skip a Sunday here and there, especially in your first week of marriage.

But Chad set a precedent that morning that we have stuck to through the past twenty years. There is really and truly no place we would rather be than in God's house on Sunday mornings, partly because God has used that faithfulness in worship to bless us in so

many ways through the years that I couldn't even begin to write them all down.

There are a few other reasons that we wouldn't dare miss the opportunity to worship with our fellow believers on a vacation Sunday.

The church is not just a place we go – it's who we are.

1. It's encouraging.

It's an encouragement to visit churches in other parts of the country while we travel. It gives us an opportunity to witness what God is doing in other places, and it reminds us that He is working in so many ways that we don't see.

Walking into a building and knowing that we have a deep connection with a bunch of strangers just because we all love the Lord is really uplifting and reminds us of the sweet fellowship of Heaven.

2. It sends a message to our children.

Something seems very wrong about being blessed beyond belief by a fun holiday and then flouting a chance to worship the One who provided it.

When we make church attendance a priority all the time (even when travelling), we show our kids that worship is not all about a place or certain friends or familiarity. It is about Jesus.

It helps us to focus and to remind our kids that this is a way of life, not just a ritual or routine. Even when it might not be familiar or completely convenient, we are still going to find a church and honour our Saviour on Sundays.

3. It's fun.

We have a great time entering a church as guests and experiencing the way that another church does things. It sparks lively conversations afterward about what they are doing and how they're doing it.

Often it inspires us to come back home to our own church and introduce some great idea that we got from a church on vacation. It's fascinating to see how other awesome churches operate, and we always enjoy trying something different that's out of our normal routine.

4. Where else would we be?

For our kids, it's a no-brainer. If it's Sunday, we're at church, even when we're far away from home.

They would be shocked and dismayed if a Sunday came and went and we spent it sleeping in or even lying on the beach, not because they are trying to be rule-following do-gooders, but because they have learned to love worship, and their very best memories of life have happened right inside church buildings.

They have discovered, like we have, that inside the church we find hope, truth, and love. So, where else would we be on a Sunday?

God provides so many sweet opportunities to worship during our short time on earth, and His people have been such a source of joy and friendship and encouragement through the years.

I'm grateful for that late May day back in 1999 when my brand-new husband declared that on Sundays, we worship. It has made all the difference.

When we travel, we don't want to take a break from being who we are. We're grateful to be God's children, and we enjoy being with our brothers and sisters worshipping

Him, no matter where we may roam.

I thank God for the privilege. May we never take it for granted.

There is really and truly no place we would rather be than in God's house on Sunday mornings...



Melissa Edgington: "I'm a pastor's wife, a former English teacher, and a stay-at-home mother of three pretty great kids. Adelaide is 13, Sawyer is 10, and Emerald is 6.

"I started this blog for them.

Someday when my face is only a memory, I want them to be able to 'read' me... I want them to know how much I love Jesus Christ and living for Him. And, I want them to know how much I love being their mother."

Find Melissa's blog at yourmomhasablog.com.

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