

Good, Better, Best

Managing My Religion

Religion, especially organized religion, gets a pretty bad rap. John Lennon tried to imagine a world where there was no religion and postulated that the world would be all the better because of it. And yet, with the downfall of religious beliefs and practices in our culture, we've seen an unprecedented uptick in social dis-ease. Depression is up. Suicide is up. Antipsychotic drug use is up. About the only thing that isn't up is our spirits – even though study after study shows that those who attend weekly worship and other church activities such as small group participation are happier, less depressed, are healthier, and live longer. And they're twice as likely to experience these benefits than those who attend worship only once-a-month. Which begs the question: how are you managing your religion?

Joshua 1:7–9

1. Religion is how you practice your _____.
2. A religion that doesn't affect _____ is not your religion.
3. There is no compartmentalism in _____.

My Count Me In! Commitments

- I'll be here next Sunday
- I'll invite a friend
- I'll decompartmentalize my life
- I will get more involved by _____
- I will spread the word and invite _____

Additional Notes

Digging Deeper, Going Further

Scripture: Joshua 1:1–9

Introduction: The Book of the Law included rules and regulations that covered every area of life. It told you how to worship, where to worship, and how often to worship. It told you how to dress, what to eat, and even who you could and could not marry. There was literally no area in your life that was left alone. Clearly God intended to be a part of every part of the Hebrew's lives. On the other hand, we live in a culture where God is generally relegated to our "church" life, but unless there's a crisis in another part of our life, we tend to keep God in his "place." But is that the way it's supposed to be?

1. When you were a child, how often did your family "go to church"?
2. What are some issues you pray about regularly? What are some things you rarely pray about, or would be uncomfortable praying about?
3. Read Joshua 1:7–9. This is a speech Joshua gave before he led the Israelites out of the wilderness and into the Promised Land. What are some of the promises made to those who kept the commandments of the Book of the Law?
4. Read Deuteronomy 6:6–9. Why do you think there was such an emphasis on learning and meditating on the commandments?
5. Read Hebrews 8:13. Jesus is the new covenant and the Book of the Law is the old covenant. Every aspect of life was covered by the Law. What parts of your life do you think are exempt from the new covenant?
6. Dr. Bill said that your religion is how you live your life. What parts of your life are outside of your Christianity? (Your worship practices? How you treat your customers, clients, coworkers, employer, employees? How much time you spend with your family? Your diet? How much sleep you get? What television programs you watch? How you spend your money?)
7. What would your life be like if you infected all your decisions with your faith?

Who will you invite to worship with you this week?
