

GULF SHORES CHURCH OF CHRIST
Sermon by Ray Reynolds
Why Should You Attend Bible Class?

Introduction: I recently read a blog on the internet that 48 million children will miss Sunday Bible classes in America each Sunday. What an astounding statistic! But even millions more adults miss Bible Class each Sunday. Why? Here are the top ten excuses why people don't attend Bible class:

- #1 - *"I would rather sleep in on Sunday morning." (day off)*
- #2 - *"Attendance is not required." (it's about Jesus - not church or class)*
- #3 - *"I have something else to do." (work/school/shopping/trip/cooking/cleaning/yard work)*
- #4 - *"We have guests visiting for the weekend."*
- #5 - *"I don't like the topics/subjects." and "I don't like the teacher."*
- #6 - *"I don't really know anyone."*
- #7 - *"I used to go but I lost interest." or "It's hard to get into the habit of coming."*
- #8 - *"I can't sit through two hours of church."*
- #9 - *"Classes often cause family tension."*
- #10 - *"I send the children but I don't attend." (don't send them, bring them)*

It is sad to know that so many children who need to know the stories of the Bible and apply principles from those stories to their lives are often not where they need to be on Sunday morning. For many of those children it is because their parents do not go or because no one has offered to bring them to class. For others it is because they do not come to both services in the morning. And many adults feel that Bible class is only for the children when we clearly offer classes to all ages.

I want us to ignore and forget those excuses for the next few minutes while I give you ten reasons why you should consider attending Bible classes....

Discussion:

(1) Relationships. We intend to grow and cement relationships (**John 13:34-35**). Relationships are one of the most important things in life. Go back to the beginning in **Genesis 2:18-25**. Why did God create man? So that He could have a relationship with man. Why did God create Eve? So that Adam would never be alone again? (Relationship) Bible class provides fellowship with other Christians that you cannot receive in many other environments (**Acts 2:42**). God does not intend for us to walk this world alone (**Galatians 6:1-2**).

(2) Attention. Our Bible classes are based on your needs (**Proverbs 22:6**). For instance, our curriculum for the K-6 years is designed to take the children through the entire Bible in four years (**Deuteronomy 6:4-9**). And our teachers, through the guidance of our elders, and many volunteers have customized the education department (church wide) to provide a great foundation (infant to adult). You need motivation for your gifts and abilities (**Ephesians 4:11-16**). In areas of weakness we can provide extra time and help. We offer consistent and loving support to every student.

(3) Wisdom. Besides teaching your children at home, there may be no greater way to make sure that you and your children are learning the Word of God (**Proverbs 1:7, 9:10**). We must be reminded that God's people are often destroyed and destroy themselves with a lack of knowledge (**Hosea 4:6**). Bible classes help you put God's kingdom first and learn how to better apply the message of God (**Matthew 6:33**). It helps you gain knowledge about God that will bless your daily life (**Hosea 6:6**).

(4) Example. Parents serve as the primary role models for all children (**Ephesians 6:4, Colossians 3:21**), but our teachers are wonderful spiritual mentors for you and your children. You can make sure that you and your children are instructed consistently with moral training, sound doctrine, and loving care. And Bible class can help you to influence others for good and be a mentor for others (**I Timothy 4:12, II Timothy 2:2**). When they see you attending they will learn from your example too.

(5) Growth. We all know that spiritual maturity is a building process (**Ephesians 4:16**). You and your children deserve to have an environment where you can spread your spiritual wings. We have to grow in the “*grace and knowledge*” of our Lord (**II Peter 3:18**). It strengthens your faith in Jesus and provides nutrition (food) for your soul. Jesus promises that if we come to Him we will never hunger or thirst (**John 6:35**).

(6) Safety. All parents are concerned about the safety and protection of their children. God also believes in protecting children. How many times do you read about caring for the children in the Bible? The NKJV has more than 40 passages that teach about this. Four times in the Law God requires His people to care for and teach the children (**Deuteronomy 4:9-10, 6:7, 11:9**). Young people need to be trained with a righteous standard free of worldliness and fear. The only fear they should have is a fear of the Lord. **Psalms 34:11** says, “*Come, you children, listen to me; I will teach you the fear of the LORD.*”

(7) Answers. All adult students should feel free to ask questions and openly share comments about the material presented in Bible Class (**Matthew 7:7, John 15:7**). And we might add that all of this is free! It helps you to be ready to give an answer to everyone who asks a reason for your faith (**I Peter 3:15**). We, like Paul, need to be praying for each other as he was praying for the students in Colosse (**Colossians 1:9**). Every person should contribute to the class. We should be prepared when we come, attentive while we are here, and equipped when we leave.

(8) Encouragement. The Bible often speaks of edification (**I Thessalonians 5:11**). Simply put, we need to build one another up and encourage one another. Once, Paul sent Timothy all the way from Ephesus to Thessalonica just to edify some brethren (**I Thessalonians 3:2**). Many people are seeking the approval of people around them. I am here to tell you that if you are walking in the light, God approves of you! We need to be approved by God – by studying (**II Timothy 2:15**).

(9) Evangelism. Many people are truly converted through the Bible class. This is not the intention of Bible classes but it strengthens our resolve to keep them. We are encouraged to evangelize (**Matthew 28:18-20, Mark 16:15-16**). You may find yourself convicted to be more faithful, active, or servant minded because of Bible classes. Our children are equipped with the tools to establish their faith and share it with others. We are all encouraged to bring friends and loved ones to Bible class. Special subjects or series’ may be used for this purpose. We should never be ashamed of the gospel (**Romans 1:16**).

(10) Assurance. In our Bible classes you will be encouraged to stay on the straight and narrow (**Matthew 7:13-14**). It helps you possess the mind of Christ (**Philippians 2:5**), be filled with the spirit (**Ephesians 5:18**), and have a hope of eternal life (**Titus 3:7**). It helps you to prepare for the judgment since we will be judge one day by the book that is in our hands (**John 12:47-48**). We all need to be assured that we are going to heaven . . . that we are saved! Our Bible classes can help you to have that assurance.

Conclusion: I hope you will give this list some thought if you or your children are not attending Bible school. Set your goal and your alarm clock so that you can be with us next Sunday morning. It’s Promotion Day! It is a very important day and an exciting day that you do not want to miss!