

THE
WHY SHOULD I
SERIES

TAPE NUMBER SMX-475 JANUARY 26, 2003

THE TITLE OF THE MESSAGE:

**“WHY SHOULD I
COME BACK TO CHURCH?”**

SERMON SUBJECT TOPICALLY REFERENCED KEYWORD:

CALVARY CHAPEL, CHRISTIANITY, CHURCH, FELLOWSHIP

INTRODUCTION

to the text

Acts 2:41-47

THE **“WHY SHOULD I”** SERIES

OF THE LIFE, MINISTRY AND INFLUENCE OF THE LOCAL CHURCH

Twelve Reason Why

You Should Seriously Consider Being Involved in Your Local Church

Acts 2:41-47

Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them. ⁴² And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers. ⁴³ Then fear came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were done through the apostles. ⁴⁴ Now all who believed were together, and had all things in common, ⁴⁵ and sold their possessions and goods, and divided them among all, as anyone had need.

⁴⁶ So continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart, ⁴⁷ praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved.

My Personal Desire Today
It's Called "Body English"

It's when we are so concentrated on getting it just right,
That we put everything that we have into it...

- The Tongue Sticks Out a Little
- A Nervous Jitter
- Pacing

like a Golfer, Batter
or Champion Weightlifter

Like the Golfer, I Need to place this message just right,
Like the Batter, I need to hit just so
Like the Weightlifter, it's a heavy load...

Because You Once Started Out With Him,
But things happened along the way.

**It's for One Reason Only
That's to Get you Hooked Up with Jesus Again!**

Acts 2:41-42

Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them. ⁴² And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine (Biblical teaching) and fellowship (Our super bowl get together) , in the breaking of bread (In & Out burger), and in prayers.
(Pray for a Tampa Bay victory)

WHY SHOULD I COME BACK...?

1.) Because it's "Gods desire" - that you come back

1a.) He "wants" what's best for us

When God created you,
He wanted you to experience His best in this life

Good, Good, Very Good

Genesis 1:27-28a

So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. ²⁸ Then God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply" ...

Then Came Adam's Sin

Genesis 3:8-9

And they heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden. ⁹ Then the LORD God called to Adam and said to him, "Where are you?"

Show Em The Bible Again

We live in a strange world
(God is Good - The World is Bad)
(God is Holy - The World is Unholy)

Yet He Wants What's Best for You

So Why
Would Someone Walk Away from God
And the Fellowship of His Church?

1a.) He "wants" what's best for us

I Want What's Best for My Life to God
And Here is the Conflict - we think we know what's best for us

I Admit;
I Think Banana splits are Great
(Once in a while)

I Think Going 165 miles an hour is a fun
(On the German Autobahn)

But I Cannot Live Like That Because
I'll either get so fat that I'll die
Or
I'll go so fast that I'll crash

We Are Excessive People About the Wrong Things
(IS CONTROL)

But He Wants His Best *in* This Life *for Us*
(Is that possible?)

**LOOK AT HISTORY
AND GOD'S RECORD OF FAITHFULNESS**

Because it's "Gods desire" - that you come back

1b.) He "knows" what's best for us

He Tells us that He is our
"Father"

Because it's "Gods desire" - that you come back

That we *continue* on

Acts 2:42

And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship,
in the breaking of bread, and in prayers.

Webster's 1828

Continue: to determine to press forward, to stay at or to persevere upon a course or task until success is had. To keep on going usually in the face of opposition or difficulty.

Acts 1:14

These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication...

V1 - V2

To Continue = just stay on the throttle!!!

2 Peter 3:11-12a

Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved, what manner of persons ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, ¹² looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God

Because it's "Gods desire" - that you come back

1c.) He "gives" what's best for us

It's Obvious but Overlooked

Is the fact that God has given us Three Main Things

1. His Own Son - *upon the cross!*
2. His Holy Spirit – *the moment we believe!*
3. His Loving Heart – *He has given forever!*

God has Tried Over and Over again
To give you His very best...

But our side journey's
off the road has put that on hold.

Joel 2:25-26

"So I will restore to you the years that the swarming locust has eaten, the crawling locust, the consuming locust, and the chewing locust, my great army which I sent among you. ²⁶ You shall eat in plenty and be satisfied, and praise the name of the LORD your God, who has dealt wondrously with you; and My people shall never be put to shame.

1 Timothy 2:5-6

For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus, ⁶ who gave Himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time,

The Church's Job - Loving you Towards;

Know more about God

Giving you the opportunity to Practice what you Know

Challenging you to Color Outside the lines of Your Life

WHY SHOULD I COME BACK...?

2.) Because it's "God's Business" – that you belong to

Upfront; Just let me say
that there are blessed subtractions in the church.

Jack You're a Little Harsh Aren't You?

Those who come to church but are not interested in following Christ or being obedient to Christ.

1 John 2:18-19

Little children, it is the last hour; and as you have heard that the Antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have come, by which we know that it is the last hour. ¹⁹ They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us; but they went out that they might be made manifest, that none of them were of us.

Because it's "God's Business" – that you belong to

2a.) I was hurt by another Christian

In A Barna Group Poll...

4 reasons were given for why someone no longer attends church

The Problem with Christianity is
Christians are people Too...
But You're Valuable to Christ

Matthew 18:12-15

What do you think? If a man has a hundred sheep, and one of them goes astray, does he not leave the ninety-nine and go to the mountains to seek the one that is straying? ¹³ And if he should find it, assuredly, I say to you, he rejoices more over that sheep than over the ninety-nine that did not go astray. ¹⁴ Even so it is not the will of your Father who is in heaven that one of these little ones should perish. ¹⁵ Moreover if your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault between you and him alone. If he hears you, you have gained your brother.

The Point – *best seen by illustration*

A wayward little lamb had to “look again” at his shepherd if a rescue is going to take place.

**Not looking at his shepherd
was how he got lost in the first place.**

People will hurt us. Christians will offend us
But Jesus Never Will

I'm not here for People. I'm not here for Christians
Jesus Christ - the one who loves me unconditionally!

1 Peter 4:7-8

But the end of all things is at hand; therefore be serious and watchful in your prayers.
⁸ And above all things have fervent love for one another, for "love will cover a multitude of sins."

But You're Valuable to Christ

2a.) *I was hurt by another Christian – this ones reaching out to you*

James 5:20

let him know that he who turns a sinner from the error of his way will save a soul from death and cover a multitude of sins.

Because it's "God's Business" – that you belong to

2b.) I was disappointed by the leadership

As I read my Bible

I see that the church leadership in Jerusalem
Rejected Paul.

As I read my Bible

I see that Paul Rebuked Peter to his face
In front of a group of people

As I read my Bible

I see that the disciples of Jesus
doubted Jesus more than believed him

As I read my Bible

I see that the Church offending Jesus Christ

Each one of these moments - Painful
Each one being used by God to better the believer in faith

!!! Difficulty is in the Line Up !!!

!!! Difficulty is in the Line Up !!!

Acts 14:21-22

And when they had preached the gospel to that city and made many disciples, they returned to Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch, ²² strengthening the souls of the disciples, exhorting them to continue in the faith, and saying, "We must through many tribulations enter the kingdom of God."

!!! But so is Assurance !!!

Romans 8:35-39

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? ³⁶ As it is written: "For Your sake we are killed all day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter." ³⁷ Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. ³⁸ For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, ³⁹ nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

"A Real True Church

*Is being led by the Holy Spirit, to Exalt the Lord Jesus Christ, Obedient to the Bible,
Faithful to God alone..."*

All This With Human Leadership

Because it's "God's Business" – that you belong to

2c.) I disagreed with a church action

Hey – sometimes *I* disagree with a church action,
And I'm the senior pastor...

It's because after prayer and seeking the Bible that an action is taken that I may not like
– but it is biblical!!!

Could it be that;

There was "more to the situation" then what you knew?
The church was assisting in a "crash containment" mode for someone?

Because it's "God's Business" – that you belong to

2d.) I wanted church a certain way

"The Church Doesn't Belong to Any of Us"

If you didn't like a certain church, then find the one God wants you at. But do not stop
going to church - **there is a Danger Zone**

Matthew 13:19-23

When anyone hears the word of the kingdom, and does not understand it, then the wicked one comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart. This is he who received seed by the wayside. ²⁰ But he who received the seed on stony places, this is he who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy; ²¹ yet he has no root in himself, but endures only for a while. For when tribulation or persecution arises because of the word, immediately he stumbles. ²² Now he who received seed among the thorns is he who hears the word, and the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and he becomes unfruitful. ²³ But he who received seed on the good ground is he who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and produces: some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty."

2d.) I wanted church a certain way

Danger Zone

John 6:65-69

And He said, "Therefore I have said to you that no one can come to Me unless it has been granted to him by My Father." ⁶⁶ From that time many of His disciples went back and walked with Him no more. ⁶⁷ Then Jesus said to the twelve, "Do you also want to go away?" ⁶⁸ But Simon Peter answered Him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. ⁶⁹ Also we have come to believe and know that You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."

An Extra Bonus Complaint

"I didn't like the pastor"

Why?

WHY SHOULD I COME BACK...?

3.) Because it's "God's Offer" – to you personally

3a.) He offers you – the power to forgive (freedom)

Mark 11:25-26

"And whenever you stand praying, if you have anything against anyone, forgive him, that your Father in heaven may also forgive you your trespasses. ²⁶ "But if you do not forgive, neither will your Father in heaven forgive your trespasses."

Bumper Stickers

"Teach Peace" - "Love One Another"

THE POWER TO FORGIVE

John 14:27

"Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.

John 15:12

"This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you.

FORGIVENESS = PEACE AND LOVE

Ephesians 4:31-32

Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice. ³² And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God in Christ forgave you.

Because it's "God's Offer" – to you personally

3b.) He offers you – forgiveness (fellowship)

Our Personal Forgiveness – of our own sin!

Hurt, Disappointment, Failure,
RESULTS IN A CRITICAL HEART AND JUDGMENTAL WORDS

Isaiah 1:18-19

"Come now, and let us reason together," says the LORD, "Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall be as wool. ¹⁹ If you are willing and obedient, you shall eat the good of the land;

- The sin of having not followed Jesus
- The sin of having not trusting Him only
- The sin of having not helping grow the church up
 - The sin of having not loving God first

Because it's "God's Offer" – to you personally

3c.) He offers you – the real you – again (future)

He offers you the opportunity again to discover why you were created and who you really are as a human being.

Matthew 10:39

"He who **finds** his life will **lose** it,
and he who **loses** his life for My sake will **find** it.

(Controls with his own hands vs. hands over the controls)

**Can You Remember
When it was you and Jesus and that was enough...**

God did not make a mistake in creating you
God Brought You into this World
with a Purpose and a Plan.

Meet the real in Jesus only

You and I must Seek Him for the Blueprints

Because it's "God's Offer" – to you personally

3d.) He offers you – His face (Everyday & forever)

Will You Receive His Offer
To come back home – to live for Him now?

His Face? – *His Face* !

Yah Know - Body English
Like When a Parent gets that Parent Love Thing going on.

“Put The Squeeze On”

when you're loving on em' and just want to eat em'

Grab em by the face, face to face to face

Matthew 9:36a

But when He saw the multitudes,
He was moved with compassion for them

((PUT THE SQUEEZE ON EM'))

Mark 2:14-16

As He passed by, He saw Levi the son of Alphaeus sitting at the tax office. And He said to him, "Follow Me." So he arose and followed Him. ¹⁵ Now it happened, as He was dining in Levi's house, that many tax collectors and sinners also sat together with Jesus and His disciples; for there were many, and they followed Him. ¹⁶ And when the scribes and Pharisees saw Him eating with the tax collectors and sinners, they said to His disciples, "How is it that He eats and drinks with tax collectors and sinners?"

((PUT THE SQUEEZE ON EM'))

The Story of the Squeeze

Luke 15:11-24

Then He said: "A certain man had two sons. ¹² And the younger of them said to his father, 'Father, give me the portion of goods that falls to me.' So he divided to them his livelihood. ¹³ And not many days after, the younger son gathered all together, journeyed to a far country, and there wasted his possessions with prodigal living. ¹⁴ But when he had spent all, there arose a severe famine in that land, and he began to be

in want. ¹⁵ Then he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country, and he sent him into his fields to feed swine. ¹⁶ And he would gladly have filled his stomach with the pods that the swine ate, and no one gave him anything. ¹⁷ But when he came to himself, he said, 'How many of my father's hired servants have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger! ¹⁸ I will arise and go to my father, and will say to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you, ¹⁹ and I am no longer worthy to be called your son. Make me like one of your hired servants.'" ²⁰ " And he arose and came to his father. But when he was still a great way off, his father saw him and had compassion, and ran and fell on his neck and kissed him. ²¹ And the son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and in your sight, and am no longer worthy to be called your son.' " ²² But the father said to his servants, 'Bring out the best robe and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand and sandals on his feet. ²³ And bring the fatted calf here and kill it, and let us eat and be merry; ²⁴ for this my son was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.' And they began

“Put The Squeeze On”

Hebrews 12:1-2a

Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, ² looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith...

Revelation 3:14-22

"And to the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write, 'These things says the Amen, the Faithful and True Witness, the Beginning of the creation of God: ¹⁵ "I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I could wish you were cold or hot. ¹⁶ So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of My mouth. ¹⁷ Because you say, 'I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing'-- and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked -- ¹⁸ I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich; and white garments, that you may be clothed, that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and anoint your eyes with eye salve, that you may see. ¹⁹ As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Therefore be zealous and repent. ²⁰ Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me. ²¹ To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne. ²² "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches." "

Revelation 3:20

Clearly Apparent is Your Heart – *being knocked on!*

"Behold, I stand at the door and knock (heart). If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine (eat face to face the evening meal) with him, and he with Me.

1 John 1:3-4

that which we have seen and heard we declare to you, **that you also may have fellowship with us**; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ. ⁴ And these things we write to you that your joy may be full.

If I have failed you today – I ask your forgiveness today.

If ushers have failed you today – I ask your forgiveness today.

If Children's Ministry has failed you today – I ask your forgiveness today.

If the worship band wasn't to your liking – I ask your forgiveness today.

But Friend - Jesus Never Did Failed You.

So, ask for His forgiveness Today

An Alter Call of Recommitment

Revelation 2:4-5

"Nevertheless I have this against you, that you have left your first love. ⁵ "Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent and do the first works, or else I will come to you quickly and remove your lampstand from its place-- unless you repent.