

Give me one reason to go back to Church

ok I will...

But first let me guess why you quit going in the first place. You weren't getting anything out of it. The Christianity you tried wasn't working for you--you tried, but it didn't produce.

I'd estimate that 95 percent of the Orthodox Christians I talk to who stopped going to church did so for just that reason.

"So," you ask, "if that's why I quit, why start again? Has anything changed?"

Probably not, but the point is, if you desire to get through this life successfully--to say nothing of the next--you have to go to church. It's that simple.

And there is one reason above all others why you should go back. Church is the only place where you can receive **Holy Communion**.

Communion? Is it really that important? Absolutely! Faith in Christ will not and cannot work the way it's supposed to for you, or anyone else, without Holy Communion. It is a fact of life that none of us has the strength to fulfill our part in being a Christian without receiving the grace God gives us in Communion.

It is wishful thinking to attempt living successfully as a Christian without Communion. The Body and Blood of Jesus Christ is the indispensable element for a stable Christian life. Jesus Christ never intended you or anyone else to pursue Christian living without being dynamically united to Him.

"But I used to receive Communion, and it didn't do me any good," someone responded recently.

That's at least in part possible. Communion, after all, isn't just a magic formula. And true Christianity is more than an "add water and stir" religion. You must know at least a measure of what is happening in Communion and you must receive it with faith as the Body and Blood of Christ. If you do that, Communion

will certainly have an effect on your life. You will receive strength to live more righteously and know cleansing from sin. And that's just the beginning.

As to not getting anything out of church--okay, I'll admit I've sat through some pretty tedious services myself. Yes, and I also left saying I didn't get anything out of church.

Of course you know the canned answer to the objection, "I didn't get anything out of it." It's "You don't go to church to get, you go to give." There's truth in that, but it tends towards being simplistic. You do, after all, need to get something from worship.

Communion is that something. Granted, you might not get anything out of a bad sermon. But it is totally, completely, and irrevocably impossible to receive the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ in faith and go away with nothing. What could be more life-strengthening than receiving the Son of God who became a human being for our sakes so that we could be energized by Him! That's what happens in Communion. And you can only get that in church.

Take positive action about Communion. Call your priest and tell him you want to make arrangements to start receiving regular Communion again. He will be glad to talk with you! Communion isn't the only reason for going to church. You also need helpful and encouraging Orthodox Christian instruction so that your faith has some muscle to it. And there are other good reasons, such as fellowship with other Christians and the cultivation of a spirit of worship. But even if none of those are fulfilled, there's still one good reason to go back to church - Holy Communion.