

3 Reasons the Holy Spirit Wants You to Go to Your Class Reunion

My wife and I just returned from driving over 20 hours round-trip to Cleveland, Ohio for my high school's 50th class reunion. We spent money on a rental car, gas, motel room for two nights and two \$50 tickets.

"Worth it?"

Absolutely!

With summer, millions get invitations to high school and college reunions. The majority decline. Why?

No. 1: we're all aging, and many are uncomfortable in the presence of those we haven't seen in awhile.

You can tell you're getting up there when:

- Lawn care is something you start to enjoy.
- You tune in to easy listening stations... deliberately.
- Your doctor, not the police, is telling you to slow down.
- Conversations with friends drift to ailment updates.
- You videotape game shows and secretly enjoy Lawrence Welk reruns.

Rationalizations and Reasons

Common excuses for people declining reunions: "It's not worth the time." "Why spend time with people you haven't seen in ages?" "I've put on weight, plus I'm balding." "I was promiscuous and don't want to risk running into someone."

To prod us, people say:

- “You’ll see our quarterback and cheerleaders don’t look like they used to!”
- “Come for the golden oldies—the real music you can actually dance to.”
- “If you don’t show, folks may assume you’re fat or dead!”
- “You’ll see your old crush is not a fresh-faced goddess but like some of the gals at checkout counters!”
- “Your family is tired of your stories, so you can relive them with old buddies!”

Flimsy excuses and reasons abound but there are selfless motivations worth considering as “salt” and “light” ambassadors of Jesus. Remember: Many opportunities for sharing Christ come disguised as unwelcome interruptions.

The ABCs

1. Advancing Through Reevaluation

Car travel affords opportunities for meaningful conversation and needful reevaluation with a spouse. If single, it affords quality time for reflection. All of us need unhurried times to take inventory to finish well and remain fruitful.

After hours of discovering at a reunion whatever happened to... and interacting with people, we should get serious to avoid regrets on life’s journey. Mingling with people and hearing experiences remind us of life’s challenges and can bring fresh motivation for change.

Not long ago, *USA Today* published a national survey on life’s regrets revealing people wished they had: 1. Saved more money, 2. Taken better care of their health, 3. Made better investments, 4. Maintained legal documents and 5. Stayed closer with family.

When someone tells you, as we heard, that a 52-year-old suddenly dropped dead, it can jolt you to get that long-needed

physical. Or when a man relays that his wife was killed in an accident, it causes you to reevaluate if you're drifting or drawing closer as a couple.

2. **B**eing a Difference Maker

I live by a mantra: ∴ Helping Other People Every day.

In my study is a plaque: "I shall pass through this world but once, therefore any good that I can do, any kindness I can show, let me do it now, let me not defer or neglect it, for I shall not pass this way again."

Reunions provide a wonderful opportunity to impact people's lives for eternity. Taking a genuine interest in people's lives demonstrates Christ's love, opening doors for the gospel.

A friend shared he had leukemia. In the conversation, he confided, "I have no one to talk to."

Knowing that friends are God's way of taking care of us, I told him to call me as often as he wants. Later, I was able to share the gospel with him. Without hesitation, he prayed with my wife and me. Instantly, the whole trip was worth it!

I was able to hand out 30 of my personal testimony tracts. Not one person refused as I told each one this would help them understand my spiritual journey. What will come from these "seeds" that were planted?

Imagine the squandered opportunity if I had simply socialized. "Larry Tomczak? Nice guy! I enjoyed chatting with him."

Our highlight was when the "rock star" at our reunion, Jim Rattay, star football player, father of an NFL quarterback and the second winningest high school coach in Arizona history, told me a reason he came.

Decades ago I had led Jim to Jesus. He told me his conversion

has touched the lives of thousands of youth he's reached along with his entire family.

We did a Facebook video together to reach others with the gospel. Never underestimate how one life can alter the destiny of multitudes!

3. Cultivating a Grateful Heart

Someone once said, "Always remember to forget the troubles that paved your way but never forget the blessings that come each day."

Jesus healed 10 lepers who came to Him but only one returned to say thanks.

It's easy to lose sight of the blessings we enjoy as Christians and Americans. I love hearing, "I'm blessed and highly favored!" when someone's asked, "How ya' doing?"

At a reunion, someone can come up to you like J., once a cross-country superstar, now struggling to speak and walk due to a debilitating stroke.

B, who lamented his separation from his wife due to alcoholism and weekly volunteers at Alcoholics Anonymous.

A Cuban lady praised Trump's decisions regarding the island where she escaped oppression.

An alumnus shared with me about premature deaths, bankruptcies, shattered marriages, unexpected calamities, wayward children and spousal abuse.

The evening concluded, and we exited the gymnasium where the Class of '67 had celebrated and reminisced for four hours. My wife and I were elated that we hadn't discarded our invitation. We thanked God for allowing us to extend His kingdom through this unrepeatable experience of my 50th high school reunion.

Your turn may be next!

“So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts
to wisdom” (). {eoa}