Reasons people give for not going to church:
- No value in attending (74%)
- Too many problems (61%)
- Don’t have time (48%)
- Not interested (42%)
- Ask for money too often (40%)
- Services are boring (36%)
- Not relevant for the way I live (34%)
- Don’t believe in God, or am unsure he exists (12%)
(Source: Rethinking the Church, by James White)

“I go to church because I feel like I have to, not because I want to. To tell you the truth, it’s never really been a positive, meaningful experience.”

“When you look at the conventional church in America and all that it offers, you are left gazing down an old soggy street. It does not compel you to go further down that street. More vision statements, more Christian concerts, and more blueprints for bigger auditoriums aren’t enough. There is something better. There has to be. Surely Jesus didn’t raise from the dead just so we can have better church bulletins and more comfortable pews.” – Neil Cole, Organic Church

The German word “Gestalt” means form or shape. Gestalt Theory says the mind tends to make sense of the world by seeing things as a whole.

What Do You See?

Duck or Rabbit?
To grasp the meaning of Colossians 3:15-17, it’s helpful to step back and make three “big picture” observations.

1. The topic is Jesus
2. “The name of the Lord Jesus” is parallel to “the glory of God.”
   “I am the Lord; that is my name! I will not give my glory to another.” – Isaiah 42:8
3. The context is corporate – it refers to life in the church

I. GET IN (v. 15)

Church membership is a visual aid. It reminds us that the way of salvation glorifies God and not us.

II. HUDDLE UP (v. 15)

We were called to Shalom

III. LIVE THE LIFE (v. 16)

1. The Word-Filled Life = The Spirit-Filled Life
   - Colossians 3:16-17
   - Let Christ’s word dwell in you.
   - Teach and admonish one another. Sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs in your hearts.
   - With gratitude to God
   - Do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus.
   - Ephesians 5:18-20
   - Be filled with the Spirit.
   - Speak to one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. Sing and make music in your heart.
   - Always giving thanks to God
   - For everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.
2. Church Life Matters

ILLUS.: *The Essence of the Church*, by Craig Van Gelder

“The church doesn’t have a social strategy. The church is a social strategy.”
– Stanley Hauerwas, *Resident Aliens*

IV. FILL THE CART (v. 17)

ILLUS.: Ralph Keiper, former professor at the Conservative Baptist Seminary in Denver, Colorado.

CONCLUSION

ILLUS.: Gutzon Borglum

“What’s big enough for you and me? How about living for the glory of Christ by . . .

• Becoming his follower
• Maintaining his body
• Demonstrating his reign
• Doing everything in his name

“You can tell the size of a person by the size of the matters that consume them.”
– Calvin Miller