

Where are the kids?

This question has been asked by an incredible amount of adults as they stare at empty pews where all the young people used to sit. Within the church we are facing a crisis. Our children are leaving, and they are not returning. What can we do?

Many of the statistics and reasons for leaving that are quoted in this lesson were taken from two books. “Revolutionary Parenting” by George Barna and “Already Gone” by Ken Ham & Britt Beemer.

Reasons for leaving.

The reasons listed below are reasons that were given by teens in several surveys who no longer attend the services of the church.

- Feel as though they don't fit in.
- View the Bible to be a flawed document.
- Confused by creation/evolution teachings.
- Hypocrites in the church.
- Worship gatherings are dull and boring.
- Are not allowed to ask questions about their doubt.



Statistics

Depending on where you look the percentage of youth who leave the church are staggering! Some researchers say we are losing a little over 50% while others say that number is upwards of 80%. Regardless of which number you go with, one thing is certain, we have a problem.

- Percent of dropouts who attended Bible class regularly at an early age- 94.6%
- Percent of dropouts who struggle with what they are taught in school affecting their faith- 70.96%
- Percent of dropouts whose parents attended worship regularly- 71.7%
- Percent of dropouts who believe the Biblical accounts to be true – 38.3%
- Percent of dropouts who believe they will go to heaven – 65.6%
- Percent of dropouts who do NOT view themselves as “anti-church”- 60.8%
- Percent of dropouts who feel the church is not meeting their needs in one way or another- 76%



Families of Faith

What can we do about it?

One thing that is clear while looking at the research is that our children have been struggling to connect with God. They struggle to develop a faith that is real, and a faith that is their own. Just because the parents attend worship that does not mean the kids will. We need to do a better job of teaching our children how to apply the Word in their everyday lives. It is time to go beneath the surface.

- Model an active faith. Show our children that every decision we make, we spend time in prayer, and are in the Word.
- Teach Bible accounts, not “stories.”
- Stop hiding from difficult questions.
- Make sure that we are not “going through the motions”
- Clearly define who is responsible for keeping our children faithful. (Deuteronomy 6:4-9)



Discussion!

1. How many of you know someone who has left the church at an early age?
2. What are some things you think we might do to “stop the bleeding?”
3. Have you found the drop out percentages to be accurate with the young people that you know?
4. What are some difficult questions that we need to do a better job addressing?
5. How would developing a strong/active faith within our own lives help our children develop their own?

“The righteous man walks in his integrity, blessed are his children after him!”- Proverbs 20:7