

THE BELLEVILLE MESSENGER

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Why Are We Losing Our Young People?

Have you noticed that there are less and less young people today who are faithfully serving the Lord? You see, sadly there are more and more young people today who are choosing not to faithfully serve the Lord. So, in hopes of reversing this unfortunate trend, let's consider some possible reasons for why we are losing our young people. Starting with...

1) A Lack of Proper Teaching.

Ladies and gentleman, we need to be busy teaching our young people the importance of loving and obeying God. You see, parents, Bible class teachers, and preachers all need to be diligent in reminding our young people to remember their Creator in the days of their youth (Ecclesiastes 12:1). Why? Well, notice what the wise man informed, "*Train up a child in the way he should go, And when he is old he will not depart from it*" (Proverbs 22:6). So, you see, my friends, we need to do our very best to make sure that our young people are being properly taught to love, to obey, and to serve the Lord. For by doing so, we will help eliminate the problem of losing our young people.

2) Hypocritical Parents.

Another possible reason for why we are losing some of our young people is due to some parents who are playing the hypocrite (Mat-

thew 23:28). You see, my friends, we may be able to fool some people, but we are not going to fool our children. For, our children see and know whether or not we are the same people through out the week that we profess to be on Sunday. Folks, when children see the difference between practice and profession, they soon begin to lose respect for their parents, and for the religion which they profess. Which then (although it is not an excuse) leads some to go astray, and to say, "At least I'm not a hypocrite." Friends, don't be a hypocrite, but rather sincerely love the Lord with your all, and teach your children to do the same (Deuteronomy 6:5-7).

3) Too Many Worldly Companions.

We are also losing some of our young people today, because some of them are spending too much time with worldly companions, rather than fellow peers who love the Lord. You see, many of our young people become deceived and get into trouble by running with the wrong crowd. Therefore, we need to be continually reminding our young people of these words of Paul, "*Do not be deceived: Evil company corrupts good habits*" (1 Corinthians 15:33). How true, right? So, let's be diligent in informing our young people to avoid the path of the wicked (Proverbs 4:14-15) and let's share these words of wisdom from Proverbs 12:26 with them, "*The righteous should choose his friends carefully, For the way of the wicked leads them astray.*"

4) Too Much Exposure To Evil Influences.

Have you ever considered that we are losing some of our young people due to over exposure to evil influences? You see, we live in a time where multiple tv sets are in the home, along with multiple computers, and almost everyone in the family has a smart phone. Now, I'm not saying that it is wrong to have a tv, computer, or smart phone, but what I am saying is we need to carefully monitor what our young people are being exposed to from these devices. So, pay attention to what your children are being exposed to, and instruct them not to become conformed to the world (Romans 12:2) and to abhor what is evil and to cling to what is good (Romans 12:9).

5) They Count The Cost of Discipleship As Being Too High.

Sadly, the main reason for why we are probably losing so many of our young people is because of the fact that many young people today consider the cost of discipleship (Luke 9:23) as being too high. Now, although it is heart-breaking to know that many young people are choosing not to follow Jesus, the fact of the matter is, it is their choice to make. For, we all (including our young people) are free moral agents, and we must all choose between being a slave of sin or a slave of righteousness (Romans 6:16). However, we all need to understand, and likewise teach others that our souls are our most valuable possessions, and that there is nothing worth losing our souls for (Matthew 16:26). So, let's all hold on to and teach others these words of Jesus, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me" (John 14:6).

Ladies and gentleman, losing our young people is no joke. Therefore, we need to spend quality time with our young people, we need to love them, diligently teach them God's word, be a good example to them, and fervently pray that they will choose to faithfully serve the Lord.

✍ Brad Phillips



"WHAT AM I LIVING FOR?"

The story has been told of an early Christian who was about to be put to death because he would not deny his Lord. His executioner was unable to understand his apparent lack of fear in the face of death. In fact, there was a manifestation of joy on the part of the Christian. Finally, the executioner could contain himself no longer. He exclaimed, "I am about to kill you! How can you remain so calm and happy?" To which the Christian replied, "Kill me, and you take from me that which I cannot keep, and you give me that which I cannot lose."

This Christian had learned a very important lesson that we all

need to learn. He had not only learned how to live, he had learned how to face death. We hear so much talk about how we should live and how we can give meaning to our life, however I am convinced that many have not even come close to learning the real secret to happy and meaningful living.

Most people seem to have the idea that to be happy in this life we must have something "worth living for." With this thought in mind many turn to money, pleasure or other things of this world, hoping to find that which is worth "living for." All such attempts to find happiness end in failure.

The faithful Christian has learned that the things of this life are very empty when it comes to giving meaning and purpose to one's life. The only thing really important is so living now that we may gain eternal life when this life is over. The Christian is willing to die rather than deny his Lord. This is the thing that is of real value. Someone has truly said, "If we have nothing worth dying for then we really have very little worth living for." Jesus said, "What shall a man profit, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" (Matthew 16:26).

✍ James Hahn

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Schedule of Services

Sunday Bible Study	9:30 a.m.
Sunday Morning Worship	10:30 a.m.
Sunday Evening Worship	5:00 p.m.
Wednesday Bible Study	7:00 p.m.

Evangelist

James Hahn (317) 745-1507