

Why do the young leave the church?

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Two thirds of young evangelicals leave the church when they enter their 20s. And it's not just the evangelicals. Why do they do that? Twenty thousand phone calls and detailed surveys of 1,000 20 to 29 year olds, who used to attend evangelical churches regularly, revealed the shocking news that children who had attended Sunday School faithfully were even more likely to question the authority of Scripture. These Sunday school kids were more likely to 1. leave the church, 2. believe that the Bible is less true, 3. defend abortion and "gay" marriage, 4. defend premarital sex.

Ken Ham, who commissioned the study, zeros in on one particular teaching that commonly opens the door to this flight of the young: children are taught that it does not matter if the earth was created in six literal days as Moses reveals in Genesis 1. The common attitude is that if you believe in the resurrection of Jesus, it does not matter what you believe regarding evolution. The children tend to believe that what they are taught in the school is reality, but the church teaches stories, morality and relationships. To these children, Bible teaching is not real in the sense of real history.

Apparently many young people conclude that the Bible's account of our origins is doubtful so the Bible's claim to authority over our lives is also doubtful. By the time they get to college, their faith is already compromised and they are easily intimidated by the arrogant professors who ridicule the faith of their fathers along with the Bible they live by.

Brethren, many of us are making gods of our children, going crazy trying to keep them happy at church, looking for ways to keep their interest in spiritual things with youthful ministers, gearing the worship to appeal to youthful tastes, standing on our heads and acting goofy in the hopes that they will not abandon the Lord. They don't leave because they are bored. They leave because they don't believe! They don't have any convictions! They don't love the Lord! They don't fear the judgment of a Righteous God!

No man or woman can long endure being treated as if he is a god. Our children need the same thing that we do: they need to believe in the truths of the Bible and they need to trust that this is the best way to live, the only way to live! You and I need to believe that Jesus is Lord to the glory of the Father who is in heaven. tp