

# Why Does the Church Lose Young People?

## Introduction

1. **It is not uncommon for young people to lose interest in spiritual matters, to start “pulling away” and become distant to fellow Christians and even family.**
  - A. **They may start missing some of the worship services, then later quit altogether. They may date and then marry a non-Christian.**
  - B. **They may even reach the point that they are involved in alcohol or drugs. Ultimately they are lost to the world. The Proverb writer said:**

Proverbs 22:6 **Train up a child in the way he should go,** And when he is old he will not depart from it.

2. **Some children don't live right because their parents did not teach them. This is a general statement to which there are exceptions. Thus, it is possible to train children in the way they should go and they still depart from it.**
  - A. **If this is not true, then children are not free moral agents. From this, we must conclude that there could be any number of reasons why young people go astray.**
3. **Let's consider some reasons why the church is losing our young.**

## The Bad Influence Of Their Friends

### 1. The warnings:

**Proverbs 1:10-15**

**Proverbs 12:26**

**Proverbs 22:24-25**

1 Corinthians 15:33 Do not be deceived: "Evil company corrupts good habits."

### 2. These warnings tell us of the power of friendship. They tell us that we may or may not see (at first) the influence others are having on us.

A. Furthermore, we learn where such influence will take us.

### 3. How does this happen?

A. When our young people associate with worldly people, they will not suddenly change. Instead, there is a gradual drifting.

Hebrews 2:1 Therefore we must give the more earnest heed to the things we have heard, lest we drift away.

1) As time goes on, they become desensitized to sin.

**Psalms 1:1-3**

2) Pressure mounts when they are outnumbered by ungodly people, then it becomes easy to be just like those around them.

**Exodus 23:2**

**Romans 12:2**

**Proverbs 23:20-21**

## The Poor Example Of Their Parents

### 1. Young people learn from what they see.

#### A. The Bible teaches us the general principle of the power of example.

**Matthew 5:13-16**

1 Timothy 4:12 Let no one despise your youth, but be an example to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity.

#### 1) This certainly would apply to what children see in their parents. Children often become what they see in their parents.

Ezekiel 16:44 "Indeed everyone who quotes proverbs will use this proverb against you: 'Like mother, like daughter!'

#### 2) Remember "actions always speak louder than words."

### 2. Young people often see parents who:

- Don't go to Bible class.
- Don't go at other service times.
- Miss a lot of services when they don't feel good.
- Miss a lot for work.
- Emphasize material things over the spiritual.
- Stress the importance of school work over spiritual matters.
- Toy with sin.

### 3. It should not ever be surprising when children turn out to be just like they were really trained!

## The Lax Standards At Home

1. **Training young people requires high standards.**
  - A. **God expects parents to train a child in the way he should go (Proverbs 22:6).**
  - B. **Paul wrote that fathers are to see that their children are brought up "in the nurture and admonition of the Lord" (Ephesians 6:4). To do so requires high standards.**
2. **Some common lax standards include:**
  - A. **In some homes, there is little corrective discipline in the younger years.**  
**Proverbs 22:15**  
**Proverbs 19:18**
  - B. **Some parents are careless in watching what their children wear, the music they listen to, the movies or television programs they watch, who they are with and where they go.**
  - C. **Many parents do not make sure their children have their Bible lessons prepared.**
  - D. **Little effort is made to communicate, to bond or to teach.**

Proverbs 29:15 The **rod and rebuke give wisdom**, But a child left to himself brings shame to his mother.

3. **When these things exist, why then do we wonder what has happened to our children?**

## **Little Time Is Spent Together As A Family**

**1. There are many responsibilities that cannot be fulfilled without spending some time together.**

**A. It takes time to be an example.**

- **It takes time to teach our children.**
- **It takes time to help them through problems.**
- **It takes time to understand our children.**
- **It takes time to communicate.**
- **It takes time to build a relationship that lasts.**

**2. We must redeem the time.**

Ephesians 5:15-16 See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, **redeeming the time**, because the days are evil.

**A. That means we need to make wise use of the little time we have.**

- 1) We do not want to look back later and regret that we did not spend more time together as a family.**

**3. Often, families are too busy to really be a family.**

**A. When we are too busy to eat together, to talk about each other's day, to go somewhere as a family, or help a teenager through some problems, **we should not be surprised when we lose our young people.****

## **The Weak Image Of The Church**

- 1. From the time children are old enough to pay attention to what goes on in worship (for example, ten years old), they form an image of the church and Christianity.**
  - A. What image do children form by the time they are twenty years old? This ten-year period is rather short in the history of a local church but leaves a lasting impression on young people.**
- 2. A strong, impressive image of the church is powerful.**
  - A. Think of the powerful influence on our young people when they see a local congregation learning the Bible and understanding it.**
  - B. Think of the impact of seeing that truth in action in those around them.**
  - C. Think of the good done when young people see conviction and strength. What do they learn when they see that sin will not be tolerated?**
  - D. Think of the image they have by seeing people who love and respect the Lord and each other.**

- 3. Unfortunately, too many young people see a weak image of the church.**
  - A. In too many places, the young people hear preaching that is weak and watered down. The message says little of nothing.**
- 4. In other places, the preaching (though it is true to the book) may be hard to follow.**
  - A. Sometimes Bible class teachers are unprepared or may not have a "clue" what the lesson is about.**
    - 1) Add to that the fact that they often see hypocrisy in some of the members.**
  - B. They may hear grumbling from the members about each other.**
- 5. What kind of image would all of this give to a young person?**
- 6. These are just a few of the reasons we lose our young people.**
  - A. Hopefully, listing these few will help parents to assess what may be happening to their children before it is too late!**
- 7. May we all strive to not only follow Jesus, but make sure we are applying all of His examples and teachings to our children.**

Invitation

Place

Date

Handwriting practice lines for the 'Place' column, consisting of 20 horizontal lines.

Handwriting practice lines for the 'Date' column, consisting of 20 horizontal lines.

Why Does the Church Lose Young People.wpd  
Richie Thetford, October 2024 (Based on a lesson by Donnie Rader)