



#15

Theme: They are jumping ship!

Scripture: 1 Peter 5:1-2 NIV, *“To the elders among you, I appeal as a fellow elder a witness of Christ’s sufferings and one who also will share in the glory to be revealed: Be shepherds of God’s flock that is under your care, serving as overseers-not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not greedy for money; but eager to serve.”*

A Thought: Recently I was flabbergasted to read that most current unbelievers are actually church dropouts! Or “leavers” as some have stated is the new term. Christianity Today documented the fact that young people are leaving the church and many are not returning. Many church experts believe that this is not unusual and not unlike in past generations - it is just a phase. Others counter this belief with the fact that in past generations the Judeo-Christian culture was in vogue and today’s youth live in a pluralistic, post-Christian America. Drew Dyck is the author of the CT article and recently published book, *Generation Ex-Christian: Why Young Adults Are Leaving the Faith and How to Bring Them Back.* He documented in his book that there are many reasons why young folks leave the church - too many to address in this writing. Though he points out that young people who have a decent relationship with older Christians generally stick around and retain their faith into adulthood. Whoa! Wait a second - does this mean we “men” have a responsibility?

Now....what are your thoughts? Write them down.

Talk to yourself:

- Do you take your spiritual life seriously?
- Do you talk to young people about sports, life and today's culture?
- Do you let young folks know how important they are?

Scriptures to read:

- Romans 15:1-4; Matthew 5:11, 5:16; 1 Peter 3:15; Hebrews 3:12-13;
- 1 Peter 5:1-3; 2 Corinthians 10:5; Ephesians 6:10-15; Proverbs 22:6

Quote:

David Kinsman, President, Barna Group

“Imagine a group photo of all the students who come to your church (or live within your community of believers) in a typical year. Take a big fat marker and cross out three out of every four faces. That’s the probable toll of spiritual disengagement as students navigate through their faith during the next two decades.”

Bottom Line:

Recently I attended a family gathering to celebrate the Fourth of July. As I was sitting at the kitchen counter I was listening to a conversation similar to today's subject matter. One mother mentioned that her children for various reasons stopped attending church during their high school years. Her oldest son is attending a very prestigious university and is studying to be a scientist. She stated that he has no interest in religion or attending church. The young man sitting next to me is married - has a good marriage and a good job. He related that he believes in a “higher power” and it doesn't matter what your belief is as long as you are a good person. Okay. I must say I was astonished - years earlier they were all attending church! We have to be careful as a church that we do not confuse entertainment with discipleship and catechism. Our youngsters depend on us to provide them with the best religious education and spiritual growth. Dyck ended his writing with a profound statement that we have to take to heart.....*“Two thousand years ago Jesus promised to build His church. Not even the gates of hell, He promised, would be able to stand against it.”* 1 Peter 5:2 NIV, *“Be shepherds of God's flock that is under your care, serving as overseers.....”*

NOW.....THAT'S THE BOTTOM LINE.

Spiritual Dabbler, Your bro, Ray

Please click: www.Missionebenezer.org/thebottomline#!the-bottom-line/cmX0

