

6 Things Young Christians Need To Know Before Leaving Home *Pleasant Plains 8-9-2015AM* **NICK ANGEL**

- A couple months back we discussed the importance of keeping our young people in the way of the Lord. We emphasized the importance of making God the priority, avoiding hypocrisy, and focusing on the kids. I want to, again, focus on our young people this morning by speaking about things that young Christians need to know before leaving home.
- Studies tell us that between 60-80% of young people leave their faith and the church after leaving home. This should mean a couple things to us. First, we should acknowledge the fact that our young people are having their faiths challenged upon leaving the comforts and protection of their families' homes. Secondly, we need to then recognize that we as parents and churches have an awesome responsibility of building up and equipping our young Christians in such a way that they are able to continue to grow and thrive in their faiths after leaving home instead of being beat up, broken, and emptied of their faith in Jesus Christ.
- This morning, I would like for us, all of us, regardless of if we have kids at home, if we don't have kids, or if we are empty nesters, to consider 6 things that young Christians need to be taught before they leave home and are confronted by the attacks of Satan.

I. Why they believe and behave the way they do.

- A. It is a natural thing to ask "Why?" in regards to what we believe and what we do.
 1. Some have a very negative reaction to others asking "Why?" when it comes to matters of belief or behavior.
 2. My assumption is that they see questions as a lack of faith or doubt, so if young people are asking "Why?" then they think that they are being rebellious and doubting God and faith.
 3. However, I just don't think that is always the case. There are times when young Christians ask "Why?" and they legitimately, want to know "Why?" No games, no doubt...they just want to grow stronger by knowing the answer to why.
- B. We need to take the time to explain why it is that we believe and behave the way we do.
 1. Just saying "because I said so" or "because the Bible says so" doesn't help to strengthen faith. Instead, it just leads to more and more questions.
 2. Along the same line, responding to the question of "Why?" by saying "because that's just how we've always done it" doesn't solidify the faith of anyone much less young Christians.
 3. As parents, teachers, and church leaders, we need to be willing to sit down and open up the Bible and show from it why we do what we do. **(II Tim. 3:16,17)**
 4. We need to be willing to put in the work with our young Christians because they are important and valuable.
 5. Our young Christians who are about to leave home are smart enough to understand the 'whys'. They are smart enough to understand that faith has an answer to why, and if they truly love the Lord, then they will accept the why and they will keep the commandments of God. **(John 14:15)**
 6. They need to have solid answers about why they do what they do because people are going to be questioning them as much as they can. They must be prepared.

II. How to defend the existence of God, the creation account, and Biblical inerrancy.

- A. Those young Christians who go on to higher education are going to be bombarded with questions concerning the existence of God, creation, and the Bible's accuracy.
 1. The Barna Group has stated that 52% of church going 13-17 year olds want to go into some kind of science based career field. These individuals will often be walking into the snake pit of others who want nothing more than to destroy their faith and break them in regards to their religion.
 2. Science classes at the colleges and universities will elevate secularism and evolution as the only viable option, while philosophers will mock the thought of the Bible being anything more than a book of fairy tales.
 3. If we have never put in the effort to solidify the foundations of our children's young faiths, then how can we expect for them to be able to withstand the persistent attacks on their faiths?
- B. We must put in the effort to make sure that our young Christians are able to defend these key areas of their faiths.
 1. The Christians of the first century were being attacked for their faith (although in a much more literal way), and Peter encouraged them to stand strong and be ready to defend their faith that was under attack. **(I Pet. 3:13-15)**
 2. Our young Christians need to be ready to answer why they believe that God is real. They need to know why we believe in an intelligent designer and not evolution. They need to know why they believe the Bible is from God. If they are taught at home and in the church before they leave home, then they will have a much greater chance of remaining faithful once the attacks come their way.

III. How to connect with their church family.

- A. For some, their first experience in an "adult" Bible class setting is at a completely new church to them.
 1. Young Christians are in their "High School" class up until they leave home for college and then they are thrust into the big auditorium class where they can begin to feel disconnected if they are not accustomed to that type of an environment.
 2. Often, a disconnected Christian can quickly become a weak Christian because they feel out of place.
 3. Or worse yet, a young Christian away from home might compromise their beliefs or doctrine in order to go to a congregation where there are more young people and they feel more comfortable.
- B. God desires for His people, young and older, to work together to accomplish good within the church. In doing so, younger Christians are made to feel much more comfortable among the older Christians.

1. Paul's writings to Titus seem to indicate that he expected for all the Christians to have close associate with one another in the hopes of all being built up and encouraged. **(Titus 2:2-8)**
2. Many churches have really hurt themselves by creating great segregations between age groups. Doing so only creates an awkwardness between the younger and older generations.
3. We can strive to not allow that to be a problem by having others into our homes and spending time with our brothers and sisters of all ages.
4. In doing so, we help our young Christians to become comfortable with all of their brothers and sisters and that will greatly help them as they move on into the next stage of their lives.

IV. How to study for themselves.

- A. We often send our kids off to college with lots of memory verses and information about the Bible, but much like our first point, they don't really know why those verses matter or what the info means to them or how they came by it.
 1. I think that we sometimes sell our young people short when it comes to their ability to understand some of the meat of the Bible.
 2. We can easily dumb it down to a degree where the young Christian can only handle spoon feeding and milk in regards to the Bible and its teachings.
 3. If this is all we give our young Christians before they leave home then they are in for a world of hurt when they are questioned or when they have their own questions because their faith isn't legitimate, its really someone else's.
- B. We must instill in our young Christians the ability to study for themselves so that they can come to their own conclusions of faith.
 1. It is important for us to help young Christians learn how to break down a text and learn from it.
 2. All Christians, young and old, need to know how to examine the context and learn the who, what, when, where & how of Bible study.
 3. If we do not teach them how to study and com to conclusions then they are not going to be able to rightly divide God's Word and differentiate between that which is good and that which is evil. **(II Tim. 2:15)**

V. How to teach others.

- A. It is the responsibility of Christians to share the Gospel with others.
 1. The Gospel is meant to be spread to all peoples. **(Matt. 28:18-20)**
 2. The early Christians recognized the importance of sharing the Gospel with others. **(Acts 5:42)**
- B. Young Christians are now getting out into the world and they will have tremendous opportunities to teach others about Jesus and His Grace.
 1. These young Christians know what it takes to obey the Gospel and have their sins forgiven.
 2. It is then our responsibility to help equip them with the ability to share that knowledge with others.
 3. We need to instill within them confidence that they can share the Gospel. We need to encourage them to get past disappointments because there will be disappointments.
 4. We can also teach them more than just the basics of faith. We wouldn't want for them to fall into the same group as the Hebrews who were rebuked for not being able to teach others. **(Heb. 5:12-14)**
 5. We must do our part to encourage them to be active in evangelism and teaching before they get out on their own.

VI. Their role and sense of purpose in the work of the church.

- A. Every member of the church has a purpose and role to fulfill. **(Eph. 4:11-16)**
 1. Today, some will be evangelists, preachers, teachers, shepherds, and deacons.
 2. All of these different positions of leadership and all members are vitally important to the growth and maturation of the church.
 3. Without everyone finding and fulfilling their role, the growth of the church will be stunted in its growth.
 4. This means that young Christians need to be encouraged to grow in their talents and fulfill the roles that they have the ability to fill.
- B. The process of figuring out a person's role isn't something that happens overnight, but we can help start the process for young Christians before they leave home and get lost trying to find their place, purpose, or role.
 1. Parents can talk with their kids and find out what their strengths are.
 2. Church leaders can help young Christians grow by teaching and training them and allowing them to exercise their talents in a comfortable environment so they will become comfortable and desire to continue serving once they have left home.
 3. The last thing we want is for our young Christians into digress to pew warmers who never help strengthen and grow the church. It is a great responsibility to help set up the church for success by training and equipping young Christians with a sense of purpose and role within the church.

Parents have an awesome responsibility in the raising of a child in the discipline and instruction of the Lord. We are not only training them to do right while they are in the home, but we are training them to do be productive citizens of the Kingdom after they have moved away from home and have gotten them out on their own. May God help us to use wisdom in the raising of our children so that they might seek His Will and glorify Him in all that they do.