

CSA News

The Creation Science Association for Mid-America

"It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in man." Psalm 118:8

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94% of Youth Leave the Church – Part II

By Tom Willis

You should read, and/or re-read the October issue of CSA News, either the printed version or the one on the web at www.csama.org, filed with back issues of CSA News. We made essentially these key point in Part I:

- 80% - 94% of youth leave the Church, at least by the time they go to college, many earlier.

Then we concentrated on these causes for the youth exodus:

- They were never truly "In the Church," merely attended with their parents.
- They were taught lots of games and had good things to eat. If they learned anything, it was that a church leader feels he knows what Paul really, really means in Romans 319:748.
- They were virtually never given an in-depth lesson on anything, especially on the topic that "The Bible is True History and True Doctrine." Much less were they ever taught how they could defend this position against a naysayer.

We need to agree that one is **not** a Christian as a result of knowledge, logic or proof. Christianity is a choice one makes in the heart. But, it is at least as silly to believe that people can, will, or even ought to make a heart decision to follow a person or creed that he does not have a solid conviction is honest and true. In fact this is virtually a keystone to understanding why youth leave the Church. They have never seen **Christianity defended as a truth proposition, much less have they seen it defended well, or learned it well.** I am convinced this is the key reason they so easily leave. **They have no personal conviction that Christianity is true!** Why endure the taunts of "friends," some of whom claim to be able to defend their position *scientifically*.

A few years ago, Focus on the Family released "The Truth Project," a well done start, but far from comprehensive.

In a recent survey, some of the relevant findings are:

- As youth become more distant from their parents, due to age, college, friends, etc., they find themselves among people who hate Christianity. They even encounter a few who can "prove" Christianity is mythology. Now, I would not be a Christian if I believed people could truly prove Christianity = mythology, but my study of evolutionary myths has convinced me that they tell their "proofs" with far more conviction, and they are far more committed to knowing, telling and defending their myths than are Christians to even knowing their history, much less defending it.
- Those who faithfully attended Sunday school are more likely to leave the church than those who did not.
- Those who regularly attended Sunday school are more likely to believe that the Bible is less true.
- Over half of those who faithfully attended church feel that church is not relevant to real life today.

This supports my theory that the major Church error is not defending the Bible as True, never focusing their teaching (Unlike



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Dec 5 (Sat) - 9AM - 4PM **Squaw Creek Game Refuge**
Dec 13 (Friday) - 7:15 - 9:15PM - **Astronomy Safari**

The Lord willing, 2010 Safaris will begin in mid-Spring and be announced in February.

CSA and other apologetic ministries) on apologetics, ,, Young Earth Creation. How does it support that? Particularly in the more conservative churches, in the Sanctuary, they tend to treat Christianity more seriously than they do in children's church and youth group, where the mission is much more oriented to entertainment or Bible Study. But "the Bible is true" is not defended at all in these same churches, including especially, but not restricted to, Young Earth Creationism. The Bible is "taught" but it is virtually never taught as, much less defended as, "Truth!"

This Church practice exposes youth to the World's favorite attack, *proving* evolution and old earth are *facts of science!* Worse than not teaching Young Earth Creationism is teaching the sordid old earth versions of Genesis. Any child can easily see old earth and evolution are not what the Bible teaches, so ignoring or disagreeing with the bible on these topics plays right into the hands of the enemy.

Ken Ham, Answers in Genesis, recently said:

T.A. McMahon, executive director of The Berean Call, believes the failure to keep evangelical youth interested in and excited about the Bible is a consequence of abandoning teaching them in favor of trying to entertain them.

"I think it's the result for the most part of the consumer, seeker-friendly approach to church growth, which I believe has really done more to wean the church off the Bible than any trend in this century and the last one," he contends. He agrees with the survey conclusion that "on the whole, the Sunday school programs of today are statistical failures."

"What you see in the Bible is that when there is compromise in one generation, and it is not dealt with, you usually notice it to a greater extent in the next generation," Ham told World Net Daily. "In previous generations, young people could live with this incon-

sistency,” he said, “but with an increasingly secular and atheistic public education system – where some 90 percent of church-going youth are trained – today’s youth find it hard to see a connection between what they are taught in church and what they learn at school.”

“Because of the way in which they’ve been educated,” Ham said, teens come to believe “that what they are taught in school is reality, but the church teaches stories and morality and relationship. Bible teaching is not real in the sense of real history.” [My position is that most students conclude that the school position, which is taught as *science* (= knowledge) is true. The Church must be teaching myth. Thus school reinforces the human penchant for sin, and convinces youth that this teaching is “science.” Since the Church seldom or never defends Christianity or Christian History as Truth, youth accept the schools claims that they teach science and history. Church is Bible Stories. Worldly gain and sex are associated with school, it is hardly surprising that many youth choose school.

I cannot overemphasize that, what and how, they are taught in Church clearly helps, rather than hinders what they are taught in school and by their friends.

James Davis, New Leaf Press, recently said:

- The study found that we are losing our kids in elementary, middle school, and high school rather than college, and the “Sunday school syndrome” is contributing to the epidemic, rather than helping alleviate it.
- The study report summarized the views of 1,000 twenty-somethings, solidly raised in the church but no longer attending, and their reasons why.
- The results may unnerve you but these results need to be taken seriously by the church.
- “Already Gone” [Ken Ham’s recent book] reveals why America’s churches have lost an entire generation of believers. [I learned of Ham’s book, the study, and Davis’ thoughts when I was half finished with this article. As daddy used to say, “Great minds think along the same lines.” :-)]
- This is an alarming wake-up call for the church, showing how our programs and our approaches to Christian education are failing...and our children are paying the price. Though the statistics reveal a huge disconnect taking place between our children and their church experience “Already Gone” shows how to fight back for our families, our churches, and our world. We can make a difference today that will affect the statistics of tomorrow in a positive and Christ-focused way!
- Now, as parents and leaders tell youth they can “...believe in evolution and millions of years,” Ham said, “young people are starting to see, ‘Well, I can then believe what I’m taught at school’ – but school has nothing to do with God.”
- Davis wraps up: “Relevant statistical data effectively teamed with powerful apologetics...” can make a huge difference.

The key issue is that this doubt about the Bible’s account of origins causes youth to doubt the authority of Scripture, Ham said. Ham agrees with my position above, that “Salvation is not conditioned on what you believe about the age of the Earth and the six days of creation.” But the Genesis issue does matter, he contends, “because salvation does rise or fall on the **authority** of Scripture. The message of the Gospel comes from these words of Scripture.” When the truthfulness of Scripture is “refuted” regarding things, perhaps unrelated to salvation, youth (quite reasonably) think, “Why should I believe the rest of Scripture.”

The Church needs thorough, in-depth, apologetics for all age groups, just as Jesus and the Apostles needed miraculous apologetics. It is my position that these ideas are much easier for folks like

me to preach than they are to implement in the Church. Here are some of the reasons:

1. Most Church Leaders have little or no training in science or logic. Therefore, it is a monumental effort for them to prepare a convincing apologetics class related either to evolution or even Josh McDowell style apologetics. I did not say impossible, just monumental. Some, who are committed, can do it. But, most are not interested. Many are not even true believers.
2. Shallow apologetic efforts may do more harm than good. Youth are already at a stage where they are inclined to reject input from their elders. Reinforcing their position with obviously shallow apologetics will cause more harm than good.
3. Leaders have effectively been taught in their formal Christian training, largely by people likely to be even less qualified than they, that they are being taught the essentials that they need.
4. Having received and scored well in this “formal Christian education,” like their teachers, many exhibit scornful pride and disdain regarding any notion that anything other than what they are doing (essentially Bible exegesis and entertainment) is ever needed.
5. This pride is often exacerbated as they realize that they need help doing what they need to be doing. I am convinced that pride plays at least as big a roll as ignorance of the need..

The Church has these youth from 5 to 8 years from age 10. Much of the time spent in youth groups is wasted. For those who are at all interested in Truth, a really good apologetics curriculum would be very helpful. Many youth, of course, would not benefit. But, did Jesus aim his most in-depth teaching at the 5,000, 120 or 12? The Christian leader who serves those who are interested in being saved cannot be soundly accused of letting the rest down.

A grave error that permeates the Church is that “Only youth need apologetics (because the adults are solid?).” My observation is that, any human being can give an informed commentary on any book of fiction. It happens many times daily in college literature and science classes. Therefore, giving a commentary about the Bible and calling it “a sermon,” is not even close to being evidence that you are a Christian who actually believes the Bible, or even believes Jesus ever lived. Discussing words written about Jesus can be honestly done by an atheist.

Many, upon getting to know the adults well, are disappointed to learn they are not very impressive “believers.” Therefore no one should be surprised to learn that they are often a part of the problem rather than the solution. This is not to say adults should not be doing the teaching, but that they should be true believers and well taught before being entrusted with teaching the youth and certainly before giving apologetic training to anyone.

The results of the Church’s failure to present and defend Christianity as Truth are written large. The “Youth Problem” is, I strongly submit, a direct result of the Church’s unwillingness and inability to defend the Truth of Christianity, especially compared to what the World offers. Building a truth fortress requires more knowledge and effort than leading hand clapping and preparing a 30 minute commentary on a couple of Bible paragraphs.

Conversely, a well implemented, life-long Christian apologetic agenda tends to produce solid converts, as did the Miracles of Jesus, simply because it helps many know that Christianity is True! The Church may not completely eliminate these problems, but it typically does not even acknowledge they exist, much less have a committed plan to address them. CSA has been addressing the problem for 26 years. We intend to continue regardless of how much of “the Church” agrees with or adopts our approach. I doubt that many will. The Great Harlot needs members who can clap.

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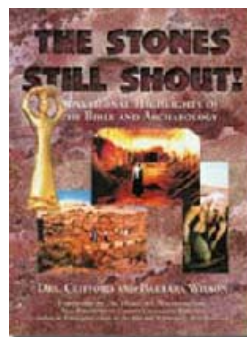


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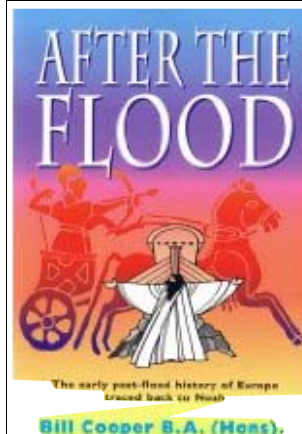
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After The Flood, by Bill Cooper

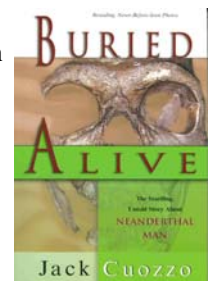
The author shows how the earliest Europeans meticulously recorded their descent from Noah through Japheth, knew all about creation and the Flood, and had encounters with creatures we would call dinosaurs. These records of other nations confirm the accuracy of Genesis in an amazing way. (High School–Adult) 256 pages. Must read.

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**The Creation Science Association
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Fellowship & Book Table: 6:15PM - Meeting: 7:00PM Nursery Available: \$2.50 per child (Reservations required for nursery)

CSA Meeting - Tuesday, Dec 1, 2009

**Implications and Contrasts of Modern Relativity
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David Penny, BS, Physics

A brief review of modern physics (Einstein relativity and quantum physics) will be given with a contrast to Biblical creationism. The nature of matter, energy, time, and space in both modern physics and Biblical creationism are contrasted in greater depth in this second meeting. (See October meeting topic) Origins of matter and energy and the origin of complex order in both life and the universe are examined according to the laws of physics. Special attention will be given to the speed of light and to time frames, for their implications concerning the origin of matter, energy, life and the complex universe. Which: modern physics or Biblical creationism, conforms to the laws of physics and the world of reality best?

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CSA Meeting - Tuesday, Jan 5, 2010

Molecular Evidence for Creation

Dr. David DeWitt

In this illustrated DVD, Dr. DeWitt describes many of the complex, integrated molecular systems in living cells. He rebuts common evolutionary explanations for the origins of these systems and explains why mutation and natural selection are inadequate to account for the amazing molecular machines necessary for life. DeWitt shows that - at the molecular level - we are fearfully and wonderfully made.

David DeWitt earned a Ph.D. in neuroscience from Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland, Ohio. He is a professor of biology and the director of the Center for Creation Studies at Liberty University. His research has focused on Alzheimer's disease, and he has written a number of articles for peer-reviewed journals. He is the author of *Unraveling the Origins Controversy*.

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