

Be a Sanctuary Graduate!

Hebrews 3:13-14

Surveys Suggest a Decrease in Youth Commitment!

- A lot of surveys have been done looking at the percentage of high school graduates professing Christianity and the percentage of college graduates professing Christianity
- Fox News reported last year that as many as 50% of students after college graduation have no active faith in Jesus Christ, others say only 30%
- There is also a religious trend among teenagers to shy away from religious organizations in general

Why This Trend Among Millennials?

- Militant Secularism - Having religious faith is an expression of “subjective preference.” “Real truth” has no supernatural context and does not impose moral obligation on human behavior
- Family Structural Breakdown - Having an experience with an earthly father gives significant insight about experiences with our heavenly Father. Many of our youth miss that insight
- College students are challenged to be “thoughtful” in that, “life is about asking questions, not dogmatic answers.” Claiming to have answers is viewed as “impolite.” It is more acceptable socially to “suspend judgment.”
- The Professors of Higher Education - One study suggested that over 70% of professors criticize what you stand for as a Christian, thus challenging why you believe what you believe
- Our new God of “Tolerance” - “Because my truth is **my truth**, no one can question any belief I have.”

Several Factors Common Among Faith Based College Graduates

- Their parents were still married to each other, and both attended church
- At least one adult from the church made a significant investment in them personally and spiritually
- There was exposure to spiritual authenticity among the adults.
- They were exposed to adult role models who knew what they believed, why they believed it, and were committed to living it out. (2Timothy 1:5 says nothing about Timothy's father)
- They said that sermons and local biblical training was relevant to their lives

Why Commit To A Church Body Where You Go?

- To Continuously Learn What You Believe and Why You Believe It,
- If someone asks about your Christian hope, be ready to explain it.

“But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who ask you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear;”

1Peter 3:15

The Sanctuarial Experience is Important for Christians

- Asaph, a Levite priest, was one of the leaders of David's choir (1Chronicles 6:39)
- Psalms 50 and 73-83 are attributed to him
- He was, after he lived, around 1000 B.C., celebrated as a composer and a seer (2Chronicles 29:30; Nehemiah 12:46)
- In Psalms 73 the Psalmist shows how our theology clashes with our reality
- His experiences, recorded in Psalms, show us that human nature hasn't changed much over the centuries

Psalms 73

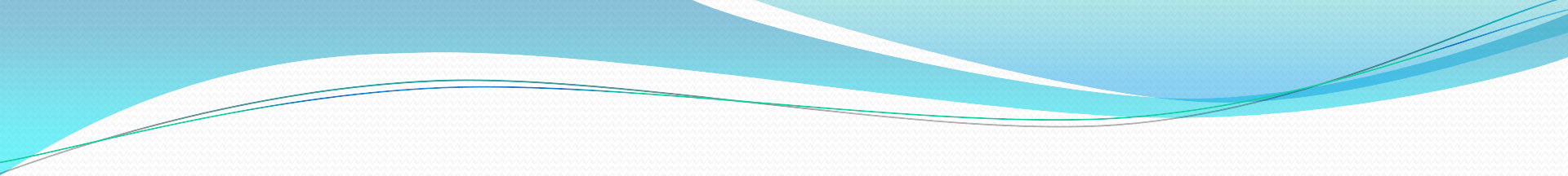
*“Truly God is good to Israel, to those whose hearts
are pure.*

But as for me, I almost lost my footing.

My feet were slipping, and I was almost gone.

For I envied the proud

when I see them prosper despite their wickedness.”



“..... They seem to live such painless lives; their bodies are so healthy and strong. They don't have troubles like other people; they're not plagued with problems like everyone else. They wear pride like a jeweled necklace and clothe themselves with cruelty.

These fat cats have everything their hearts could ever wish for!....

... “They scoff and speak only evil; in their pride they seek to crush others. They boast against the great heavens, and their words strut throughout the earth.

And so people are dismayed and confused, drinking in all their words.

“What does God know?” they ask. “Does the most high even know what is happening?”

Look at these wicked people---enjoying a life of ease while their riches multiply.”

Observations

- The Psalmist's first lesson, young people, is that life is not fair, it is *FALLEN*
- Because the world is a fallen one, Jesus had to come, not to a crown of gold, but a crown of thorns, to be betrayed and crucified, though he did nothing wrong
- The very idea that God would descend into the lives of His creatures for the purpose of purifying them for their Home Going is a wonderful story (John 3:16)
- We see His death through faith, others see it as just another death

Observations

- The Psalmist asked, why is it that some bad people get all the good stuff and all the bling!
- “That ought to be me!” “I thought God was good to those who are pure in heart.” “Why am I struggling and the wicked have it all[?]”
- Children of God have to deal with these questions to get a spiritual education. Unless you deal with it, it will deal with you

Verses 13-16

“Did I keep my heart pure for nothing? Did I keep myself innocent for no reason? I get nothing but trouble all day long; every morning brings me pain.

If I had spoken this way to others, I would have been a traitor to your people

So I tried to understand why the wicked prosper. But what a difficult task it is!”

Observations

- Do you hear what the Psalmist is saying? He is wondering if he has been faithful for nothing
- He is wondering if living a Christian life and trying to live an innocent life is a waste of time
- It reminds us of Solomon in Ecclesiastes Chapter 9, who questions living a good life, when both the good and the evil meet the same end---death

Observations

Verse 15

“If I had really spoken this way to others, I would have been a traitor to your people.”

- *Asaph says if he had told people what he was thinking, he would have led God’s people the wrong way*
- *You remember, Asaph was a priest, and priests are not supposed to think like he is thinking. They are supposed to be strong, decisive, wise, resilient in faith*

Observations

- Sometimes graduates, life will hit you hard
- The power of peer pressure will try to ease you away from your faith
- The pressure will be there to give up on God and trust your instincts about things, or people that ***look good, or sound good***
- Sometimes there is the haunting reality of ***being alone because you won't go along***

Is the purity of heart worth the pain and the pressure?

Asaph Tells Us Where You Go When Struggling With Your Faith

Verse 17

“Then I went into the sanctuary, O God, and I finally understood the destiny of the wicked.”

- You won't find strength for your faith in places where everyone else is going these days
- When you struggle with your faith in God and your theology clashes with the realities of this world, there is a place to go and find truth that lasts.
- Unless you go to the place where God is, you will go blind spiritually

The Sanctuary of God

- Your prayer life with God
- Your meditation with God, your “secret place”
Psalms 91:1
- Your scriptural study with God
- Your meetings with the saints of God
*“Where there are two or three gathered together
in my name, I am in the midst of them.”*
Matthew 18:20
- Asaph learned that temporary prosperity falls apart
and destroys the people who cling to it

Hebrews 3:13

“You must warn each other every day, while it is still “today,” so that none of you will be deceived by sin and hardened against God. For if we are faithful to the end, trusting in God just as firmly as when we first believed, we shall share in all that belongs to Christ.”

The Plan of Salvation

Hear the Gospel

Acts 15:7

Believe the Gospel

Acts 15:7

Repent of Sins

Acts 17:30

Confess Christ

Acts 8:37

Be Baptized

Acts 2:38