

# Newsbytes

The First Watch

No. 755

Since 2001

January 20, 2016

Newzbytes is a ministry of Calvary Chapel of Appleton

[www.ccapleton.org](http://www.ccapleton.org)

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“Let us be alert to the season in which we are living. It is the season of the Blessed Hope, calling for us to cut our ties with the world and build ourselves on this One who will soon appear. He is our hope—a Blessed Hope enabling us to rise above our times and fix our gaze upon Him.” Tozer

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## Watching and Waiting

Pete Garcia

“Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.” Matthew 6:19-21 NKJV

Have you ever been talking to someone about bible prophecy, and how the signs we are seeing today are all pointing to Christ’s soon return and they mockingly correct you by saying ‘my great grandmother thought Christ would return in her day and He still hasn’t come’?

I know I’ve heard that used on me a number of times as an attempt to discredit my concern for the lateness of the hour in which we find ourselves in. More often than not, it’s from well-meaning Christians who perhaps don’t know any better due to their denominational upbringing. But from others, the condescending nature of their rebuttal seems as if there is a hidden resentment against the very idea that Christ would have the audacity to return.

There are three instances in the New Testament that the Apostles themselves called the times in which they lived either the ‘last times’, or the ‘last hour’. Even Paul expected Christ in His day when he concluded on a number of occasions by using the wording “we” and “us” as being included in the group that could see Christ return. We know that the Apostles (Paul, John, and Peter in particular), didn’t write what they wrote arbitrarily, but rather, by inspiration from God the Holy Spirit...so it’s not there by mistake.

It was their deeply held belief in the imminent return of Christ for the Church, which could happen at any moment. Since then, it has been some 2,000 years since Christ’s departed planet earth, and if they thought they were in the Last Days, how much closer are we?

“Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will He really find faith on the earth?” Luke 18:8

The departure from expectancy was not missed by Christ. He foresaw the way the world would become even before He laid the foundations of the earth. He knew all that would transpire between Adam and Eve’s fall from grace to the conditions the world would be in prior to His Second Coming. He even knows what will happen 100 billion years into even our future.

Jesus is the Alpha and the Omega (Rev. 1:8), and although He has not returned as of yet, He will. He is God and cannot lie, therefore, when He said I will come again and receive you to Myself (John 14:3), we must take Him at His word. That day will be the trigger to usher in the final stage of human history, in which the wrath of God is poured out on a Christ-rejecting earth. As P.T. Forsyth once stated; “The non-intervention of God bears very heavy interest, and He is greatly to be feared when He does nothing. He moves in long orbits, out of sight and sound. But He always arrives. Nothing can arrest the judgment of the Cross, nothing shake the judgment-seat of Christ” (in The Justification of God).

### Assessment

And in the days of these kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed; and the

kingdom shall not be left to other people; it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever. Inasmuch as you saw that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it broke in pieces the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver, and the gold—the great God has made known to the king what will come to pass after this. The dream is certain, and its interpretation is sure.” Daniel 2:44-45

As the Holy Spirit moves over the face of the earth, explosions of revival breakout in former demonic strongholds along the way. This is the case today in places like Nigeria, Iran, and China where millions have turned to Christ. In response, Satan dials up the persecution to quell the outbreak of Christianity. This has been the case over and over for the past two thousand years.

It is primarily here in the West, where Christianity has long been incubated, that Satan has been most effective. He has been conducting a long war of doctrinal attacks aimed at corrupting the foundations of the Christian faith with things like; skepticism, eastern mysticism, replacement theology, human secularism, and Darwinian evolution. And while these have been very effective in knocking down formerly Christian strongholds within governments, educational institutions, media, and even the public arena of ideas...what Satan has found most effective within Christianity is simply getting man's focus off our eternity and back onto the here and now.

Satan's tool of choice in distracting man with the here and now has been to relentlessly attack true, biblical eschatology by offering a human solution to the idea of "the Kingdom". Instead of a 'blessed hope', we were told we have a 'sacred duty' to build Christ's Kingdom in the here and now, which sounds impressive but is misleading in its end state and is ultimately aimed at helping Satan building his.

Simply look at how Amillennialism drives men to try and establish a Kingdom here on earth. If Amillennialism were true wouldn't the "Kingdom" have already been built? I mean, we have had the "Vicar of Christ" (i.e...the Pope) since the 6th century AD. We've had crusades. We've had the Protestant Reformation. We've had the Puritans who settled in their new American homeland. We've had the 1st and 2nd Great Awakenings. We've had the Restoration movement. We've had the Social Gospel movement.

We've had in more recent times; the Toronto Blessings, Lakeland Revival, Third Wave, Latter Rain, New Apostolic Reformation, and Kansas City Prophets. We've had a renewed push for ecumenism between Mormons and Evangelicals. Between Roman Catholicism and Evangelicals. We've had Purpose Driven, Seeker Friendly, social-gospel, name it-claim it, emergent church, Promise-Keepers, and everything in between.

All of these groups and movements were supposed to be earth shattering, kingdom-building, and man-centered efforts to transform the world we live in into some type of Christian utopia. These groups also share similar eschatologies which are either of the Amillennial or Post-Millennial purview, redefining the Kingdom on man's terms.

If we were to judge the fruits of Amillennialism we would have to contend with Preterism, which is a byproduct of Amillennial teachings. What Preterism introduces is skepticism onto Scripture. Preterism seeks to dismiss any possibility of Christ's physical return to earth to establish His Kingdom by either spiritualizing it, (as does Amillennialism) or by redefining everything within Revelation to fit their narrative.

If we were to judge the fruits of Post-Millennialism we would largely from the aforementioned list above, which seeks to force change on a culture by assuming control of the Seven Mountains (or some variation thereof), in order to make society conform through their Christian influence.

While the intentions might have been in the right place, and some may have been saved in the process, none of these programs and movements ever built anything except perhaps more confusion within the body of Christ. (See 1 John 5:19, Luke 4:4-6, or 2 Cor. 4:4)

Skeptical theologians and scholars love to state that Eschatology is simply a second rate issue that has no bearing on our salvation. That is true in as much as how it affects Christians. However, it (false eschatologies) can be highly destructive toward the saving faith of those who are not yet Christians. Simply look at the damage that date setters such as William Miller and Harold Camping have put on Christianity as a whole and have turned away unknown numbers of potential converts.

What they also don't tell you is, holding to or promoting false eschatological beliefs, side-tracks that unwitting

believer into following a path which ultimately ends in failure, spiritual emptiness, and ultimately disillusionment with the faith as a whole.

False eschatological views also breed a tendency towards militancy, skepticism, and anti-Semitism by confusing the Church with Israel (or vice versa). And if your end-times view has you going through the Tribulation, your focus now is not on waiting on Christ, but on stocking up, gearing up, and hunkering down waiting for all hell to break loose.

Needless to say, Satan has been busy.

So that is how we have arrived here in the final moments of human history, with Israel back in her land (as prophesied in Scripture), wars and rumors of war, earthquakes, pandemics, starvation, advancing technology, world government, and the overall convergence of signs, all while the church is asleep at the wheel. Remember therefore how you have received and heard; hold fast and repent. Therefore if you will not watch, I will come upon you as a thief, and you will not know what hour I will come upon you. Revelation 3:3

### **Be of Good Cheer**

For those of us who study Bible prophecy regularly from a Pre-Tribulation viewpoint, might feel discouraged at times because we are always talking about it and Christ said that He would come at a time when we 'think not'. We (I) tend to neglect the reality that we (as a community of believers) make up a tiny percentage of the total number of Christians who are actively watching and waiting for the Lord to return.

When you compare us as community to humanity as a whole, our numbers are even significantly smaller and probably microscopic in comparison. While those who are waiting on the Rapture is not a prerequisite for salvation, it is indicative of the 'state of the church' when Christ returns.

For those who are frantically working to build up some kind of kingdom here on earth, often accuse us of being lazy, head in the clouds, starry-eyed doom and gloomers, who are too heavenly minded to be of any earthly good, prophecy nuts. Here is the will of God...that we believe on the One whom God has sent. (John 6:29)



As believers, we are instructed to share the gospel, to work quietly in whatever field God has put us in, to be workman who needeth not be ashamed and ready to give a defense of the hope that is in us, to love one another, to mature in the faith, and to watch and be ready for when our Lord returns. For those who ignore Christ's imminent return because they are so focused on trying to build their kingdom in the here and now, I would gently remind them...

Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—is not of the Father but is of the world. And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever. 1 John 2:15-17

## **Germany's 21st-century descent into hell**

By Carol Brown

More and more news is pouring out of Germany on the coordinated violence that Muslims perpetrated on New Year's Eve, as the scale of what unfolded slowly comes to light.

The number of cases that have been reported in Cologne has passed 500 and is climbing by the hour. Nearly half of the reports are for sexual assault. The police have confirmed the focus of their investigation is on people from North African countries and that the majority are "asylum seekers" and people who are in Germany illegally.

Information continues to emerge regarding the coordination of these attacks that brought colonizers from outside Germany to partake in the violence. Jihad Watch, reporting on an AFP article, writes:

“Germany’s Justice Minister Heiko Maas said Sunday that the shocking spate of sexual assaults during New Year festivities in Cologne was organized. For such a horde of people to meet and commit such crimes, it has to have been planned somehow,” he told Bild am Sonntag newspaper.

“No one can tell me that this was not coordinated or planned. The suspicion is that a specific date and an expected crowd was picked,” he said, adding that if confirmed, that would “take on a new dimension”.

Quoting confidential police reports, Bild am Sonntag said some North Africans had sent out calls using social networks for people to gather in Cologne on New Year’s Eve. Young men not only from Cologne, but as far as France and Belgium responded to the call to travel to the western German city, the newspaper said.

Meanwhile, the number of reports from other cities in Germany where there were attacks also continues to climb. For example, as of this writing, there are nearly 133 reports from Hamburg.

Another city that saw violence on a mass scale was Berlin, which was like a war zone. This video shows explosives going off, hordes of Muslim men shooting guns in all directions, the air thick with smoke, deafening noise, sirens cutting through the din, and German citizens darting through the chaos, trying to make their way to safety.

In Bielefeld, 500 Muslim men tried to storm a nightclub. It was somewhat ironic in light of the fact that two months ago the Sunday Express reported on a nightclub in Germany that was targeted by human rights groups (uh-huh) after the club instituted a policy that banned refugees from the premises. The ban was put in place to protect the club’s female patrons from “predatory migrant men” who did such things as follow women to the ladies’ room and hurl verbal insults at them. For trying to protect their customers and attend to liability issues, the owners of the club were labeled racists and “Nazi pigs.”

This is what Angela Merkel (and all of those who supported and continue to support her) has wrought. Not that Merkel cares. In fact, a few days after the wave of brutal New Year’s eve attacks, she said: “We/Germans must accept that immigrants are more criminal.”

Wow. Really? Apparently she wasn’t one of the rape victims, so she is free to intellectualize inane ideas such as inviting savages into one’s country, witnessing them wreak havoc, and then informing German citizens they must accept it. A few days prior, during her New Year’s Eve address, Merkel once again exposed her seemingly incurable madness when she made a series of asinine, stupid, absurd, ridiculous, insulting, threatening, idiotic, dangerous, misguided, off-the-mark, lying, crazy remarks that are summarized below from a Daily Mail report:

She said the new year should be marked by “cohesion” and not division, accusing those who are against immigration of, among other things, laying “sole claim to what it means to be German and seek to exclude others.” She claimed that mass immigration would ultimately be worth it because “countries have always benefited from successful immigration” and integrating new immigrants now will be an “opportunity for tomorrow.”

If Merkel likes cohesion so much, she should have thought about that before she invited more than a million Islamic colonizers into the country (with another million expected in 2016). Because cohesion isn’t really their thing. Unless you’re talking about the caliphate when everyone is coalesced under Allah’s roof of darkness and death. As for her admonishing patriotic Germans for being patriots, she has a lot of nerve when it is she who is destroying the country they love.

Regarding her accusation of Germans seeking to exclude others, this is the kind of leftist garbage we are exposed to on a daily basis. Hey! Why not “exclude others” if those others hate you, want to kill you, and want to take over your country? Exclusion sounds like sound policy to me.

Merkel then subjected Germans to her rationale that successful immigration has always benefited cultures. I would challenge (1) her idea of what “successful” means, because I’m sure that’s not what’s happening in Germany, and it never will with respect to importing people from Islamic cultures, and (2) her assertion that immigration is always a good thing.

Meanwhile, in March, there are going to be three regional elections in Germany that will be a referendum on the madwoman at the helm of the German government. As of this writing, opinion polls show a surge in support for

the anti-immigration movement as former Eastern bloc countries hold firm in their resolve to resist EU pressure to take more “migrants.”

Sadly, leadership and lemmings in the United States have the same disease that Merkel has. We hear the same rationales. And we will suffer the same fate if a lot doesn't change. And soon.

Read more: [http://www.americanthinker.com/blog/2016/01/germanys\\_21st\\_century\\_descent\\_into\\_hell.html#ixzz3x9Od0bN0](http://www.americanthinker.com/blog/2016/01/germanys_21st_century_descent_into_hell.html#ixzz3x9Od0bN0)

## Anti-Semitism drives record-high Western European immigration to Israel *Amid rise in attacks, 9,880 make aliya in 2015, including almost 8,000 from France.*

AP — Jewish immigration to Israel from Western Europe has reached an all-time high as a result of a rise in anti-Semitic attacks, a leading nonprofit group said Thursday.

The Jewish Agency, which works closely with the Israeli government and acts as a link for Jews around the world, reported that 9,880 Western European Jews immigrated to Israel in 2015 — the highest annual number ever.

The vast majority, close to 8,000, came from France where a rise in anti-Semitic attacks has shattered the sense of security of the world's third-largest Jewish population.

Just this week, a machete-wielding teen attacked a Jewish teacher in the French town of Marseille, prompting a local Jewish authority to ask fellow Jews to refrain from wearing their traditional skull caps to stay safe.

Close to 800 Jews have emigrated from Britain in this latest exodus. Italy and Belgium are next on the list. “That a record number of European Jews feel that Europe is no longer their home should alarm European leaders and serve as a wake-up call for all who are concerned about the future of Europe,” said Jewish Agency Chairman Natan Sharansky.

“At the same time, the fact that Israel has become the number one destination for European Jews seeking to build a better future elsewhere is a tribute to the appeal of life in Israel and the values the Jewish state represents,” Sharansky added.

Experts say European Jews have not felt this threatened since World War II, when 6 million Jews were murdered in the Nazi Holocaust. Jews have been targeted in Belgium, Denmark and other European countries, but France has seen the worst of it. Jews have increasingly reported assaults and intimidation, mostly from Muslim extremists. While some attacks have been linked to anger at Israeli policies toward the Palestinians, most have been anti-Semitic in nature.

France is still reeling from a series of attacks in Paris on November 13 that killed 130 people, and just marked the first anniversary of attacks on the satirical newspaper Charlie Hebdo and a kosher grocery store which killed 17 people. In each case, the Islamic State group claimed responsibility.

France's Jewish community of some 500,000 is the largest in Europe. Jewish schools and synagogues are often surrounded by soldiers in combat fatigues who patrol the streets with automatic rifles. Though Jews make up less than 1 percent of the population, French officials say more than 50 percent of all reported racist attacks in 2014 were directed against them.

# *The Juvenilization of American Christianity*

By: Thomas E. Bergler

***Newsbytes Note:*** *While I don't agree with every single point this author makes, his over-riding observations are valid and worth considering in light of the fact that spiritual immaturity is rampant in the church today and causes all sorts of mischief. He mentions church programs: the very reason we do not do programs here at CCA is because if a person simply reads/studies God's Word and is a doer of the Word, the resulting work of the Holy Spirit in the student's life will produce a kind of maturity and sanctification that no manmade program can ever hope to achieve. But, that said, the article has worthwhile observations. Here is an appropriate quote from A.W.Tozer:*

**"My eyes and ears and spirit are aware of the immaturities in the so-called evangelicalism of our time. The more noise we make, the more we advertise, the more bells we jingle, the happier we seem to be. All of the signs of immaturity are among us." ~A.W. Tozer/"Tozer for the Christian Leader"**

Americans of all ages are not sure they want to grow up. It is common to hear thirty-, forty-, or even fifty-year-olds say things like, "I guess I have to start thinking of myself as an adult now." Many emerging adults ages eighteen to twenty-three want to get married and have children eventually, but they think of settling down as the end of the good part of their lives. As one young woman put it, having children would be nice someday because they are "what makes your life, like, full, after like, you are done with your life, I guess."

Try this experiment. Ask a group of college students to raise their hands if they think they are adults. They won't know what to do. I can guarantee they won't all raise their hands.

The problem goes deeper than just a fear of growing old. Early in my teaching career, I asked a group of college students, "What does a mature Christian look like? Let's list some traits of spiritual maturity." They disliked the question and came back with responses like these: "I don't think we ever arrive in our spiritual growth." "We're not supposed to judge one another." "No one is perfect in this life." Sadly, these evangelical Christian college students did not think of spiritual maturity as attainable or even desirable. They wrongly equated it with an unattainable perfection.

## REACHING YOUNG PEOPLE BUT LOSING SIGHT OF MATURITY

Where did this problem of low expectations originate? Over the past seventy-five years, three factors combined to create what I call the juvenilization of American Christianity. First, new and more powerful youth cultures created distance between adults and adolescents. Second, Christians responded by creatively adapting the faith to adolescent tastes. Finally, the journey to adulthood became longer and more confusing, with maturity now just one among many options. The result was juvenilization: the process by which the religious beliefs, practices, and developmental characteristics of adolescents become accepted as appropriate for Christians of all ages.

## The History of Juvenilization and Where It Went Wrong

Juvenilization often begins with good intentions, as an attempt to win young people to the faith. Many benefits have come to the church through injecting more youthfulness. Church growth, mission trips, and racial reconciliation all received a big boost from the youth ministries of the past seventy-five years. Youth ministries are crucial laboratories of innovation that at their best keep churches strong and help them adapt to the unique challenges of each generation. But history shows that making Christianity more adolescent sometimes ends badly, with too many people embracing immaturity as a lifelong way to be Christian.

Juvenilization began in the 1930s and 1940s as Christians faced what everyone was calling the "crisis of civilization." As they lived through the massive disruptions of the Great Depression, World War II, and the Cold War, adults feared that unless young people were saved and mobilized for Christ, American freedom and democracy might collapse. After all, Hitler and Stalin had ridden to power on the backs of fanatical youth movements. Meanwhile, the word "teenager" was being coined to describe a new group of young people who all went to high school and all participated in the same commercialized youth culture. Adults wanted teenagers to

save the world. But teens had other plans. As one teenage girl put it in the 1940s, “We just want to live our own lives. We’re not in a hurry to grow up and get all serious and morbid like older people.”

The most effective youth ministries of the 1950s fully adapted to the teenage culture of the day complete with Christian pop music, movies, games, hay rides, slapstick skits—everything that we now associate with the stereotypical youth ministry. The enduring club model of youth ministry was born in this era: a few skits, games, and upbeat songs are followed by a brief testimony or gospel presentation. The idea is to reach kids for Christ and then help them go deeper in their faith through other venues. But in many cases, the majority attends only the more superficial outreach-oriented programs. At their best, these programs provide a bridge between adolescent superficiality and mature discipleship. At their worst, they unintentionally communicate that immature faith is the best kind. Youth ministries don’t create spiritual immaturity, but sometimes they do little to overcome it.

## IMMATURE FAITH TODAY

What does juvenilized Christianity look like? The National Study of Youth and Religion calls it “moralistic, therapeutic deism.” Most American teenagers believe that God wants them to be good (moralistic) and that He is there in the background of their lives (deism) when they need Him to help them with their problems (therapeutic). Even some young people who attend church a lot describe their faith this way. In sharp contrast to other subjects they care about, American teenagers are amazingly inarticulate about their faith, probably because there is little content there. In short, juvenilized Christianity is self-centered, emotionally driven, and intellectually shallow. The researchers stress that moralistic, therapeutic deism is not unique to teenagers; they learn it from their parents and from society as a whole. It is the religion of American culture that has supplanted historic Christianity. I would only add that teenagers learn this deficient faith from adults because, for at least three generations now, people have been learning a shallow adolescent faith and never growing out of it.

### Lasting Effects

Why do some people never grow out of spiritual adolescence? Both the journey to adulthood and the destination itself have changed significantly in recent decades. So many people are taking longer to reach the key adult transitions of getting married, settling into a career, and having children that a new life stage has been identified called emerging adulthood. Here’s how the experts describe it: “Emerging adulthood as a social fact means not making commitments, not putting down roots, not setting a definite course for the long term. It is about experimenting, exploring, experiencing, preparing, anticipating, having fun, and hopefully not screwing things up too badly in the meantime.”

But even once the twenties are over and adulthood becomes harder and harder to escape, some people are choosing immaturity. Sociologist James Co<sup>^</sup>te argues that in order to support the massive consumption that drives modern economies, North American societies have redefined the seven deadly sins into a new pleasure-focused way to be adult: “Pride has become self-esteem, individuality, and vanity; greed has been redefined as materialism; anger has been sublimated into competitiveness and drive; lust has become sexuality, sex appeal, love life, and fashion; envy is now channeled into initiative and incentive; sloth has become leisure; and gluttony is associated with the ‘good life,’ which many people seek (either through retirement or by trying to strike it rich).”

Small wonder that Chap Clark found in his ethnographic study of a Southern California high school that adults had systematically abandoned adolescents. Adults absorbed with their own self-development don’t have the time or inclination to care deeply for children. Thankfully, many adults still achieve spiritual maturity. But contemporary American culture makes it harder.

## CULTIVATING SPIRITUAL MATURITY IN CONGREGATIONS

What can be done to overcome the problems caused by juvenilization and the new immature adulthood? Churches need to put spiritual maturity high on their agenda. We must work together to get what we say (formal and informal teaching), what we do (modeling), and how we lead (structures of ministry) to be congruent and all pointing toward spiritual maturity.

### Implementing Biblical Commands to Maturity

First, Christians need to rediscover and teach what the Bible teaches about spiritual maturity, with special

attention to those elements neglected by juvenilized Christians. Spiritual maturity is not only attainable in this life, it is expected after a reasonable period of growth (Heb 5:11–6:2). Spiritual maturity is desirable because it means becoming like Jesus and continually growing to know Him more (Luke 6:40; Phil. 3:7–16; Gal. 5:22–26). Immature Christians rely on works righteousness or cheap grace rather than honestly examining themselves to find out whether Christ is transforming their character to bear the fruit of the Holy Spirit.

Intellectually, a mature Christian knows the basics of the faith well enough to teach them to another person, is not easily swayed by false teaching, and has good judgment (Heb. 5:11–6:2; Eph. 4:13–14). Juvenilized Christians don't think it matters much what you believe.

Maturity is not just an individual pursuit, but is a corporate reality only attainable as Christians deeply connect with one another and minister to one another in the body of Christ (Eph. 4:7–16). Immature Christians think they don't need the church; it's an optional tool for those who find it helpful.

A spiritually mature Christian lives for others and joins other disciples in partnering with Jesus in His kingdom mission (Matt. 28:16–20; John 20:21). Immature Christians think that serving others is optional.

When it comes to emotions, a spiritually mature Christian understands and embraces the fact that both suffering and comfort are regular parts of the Christian life (2 Cor. 1:3–7; 4:7–18). Immature Christians think that negative emotions are to be avoided at all costs and that the primary benefit of Christian faith is that it makes them feel better.

Second, we need to build these elements of spiritual maturity into the culture and activities of our churches. Gather your leaders and discuss questions like these:

What do we think spiritual maturity is? How would we describe it?

How well do we think we are doing as leaders in our growth toward spiritual maturity?

How well are the people who attend our church doing in their growth toward maturity?

Which of our programs are fostering spiritual maturity?

Which elements of spiritual maturity do our programs foster, and which do they neglect?

What changes could we make to our activities to promote spiritual maturity?

Then make plans and begin implementing changes. One church I know abolished “membership” and replaced it with “joining the ministry team.” They made participation in a service team or a spiritual growth group a requirement for all those who wanted to have full membership privileges in the church.

Third, reform youth ministry to take advantage of the best research on how to promote strong faith in the next generation. The longitudinal National Study of Youth and Religion has now shown that teenagers who experience the following factors will be more likely to have strong faith as emerging adults:

(1) Parents say faith is very important to them and they attend church often.

(2) Teen says faith is very important to him or her.

(3) Teen has many religious experiences.

(4) Teen frequently prays and reads Scripture.

(5) Teen has many adults in religious congregation to turn to for help and support.

(6) Teen has no doubts about religious beliefs (especially important for teens with less-religious parents).

One of the most important things all Christians can do is to offer their services to help as many young people as possible receive these spiritual benefits. Churches should equip adults to walk through life with adolescents and emerging adults in meaningful spiritual mentoring relationships. Churches can play a crucial role as mentoring “matchmakers” between youth and adults. The Exemplary Youth Ministry Study confirmed that the strongest youth ministries in the country are the ones that foster such intergenerational relationships. Adults will grow toward maturity as they invest in the lives of young people. As Paul reminds us, we need each other to grow into the full measure of Christ (Eph. 4:15–17).

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