

We Have a Problem **- Ron Stullenbarger -**

70-75% of Christian youth leave the church after high school (see survey data at Barna and USA Today). Christian youth in America are not being taught to examine the skeptical and atheistic views they encounter when they leave home.

More than half of all college professors view Christian students unfavorably (see article at Free Republic). College professors are five times more likely to identify themselves as atheists than the general public. Christian students are not equipped to resist rabidly anti-Christian college professors who are intent on converting their students to atheism.

The “*new atheists*” — Richard Dawkins, Sam Harris, and the late Christopher Hitchens — have written books, and they are growing in popularity.

Why are they leaving? Some think church is irrelevant. Others, out on their own for the first time, are attracted by all the world has to offer and they put God on the back burner. Yet many leave because they’ve come to doubt Christianity. In fact, intellectual skepticism is a major reason cited by those who have left. According to Barna, now less than one percent of adults in America have a complete Biblical worldview!

We can lay the blame for much of this on ourselves — that is, on the home and the church. While there are notable exceptions, most American churches over-emphasize emotion and ignore the biblical commands to develop the mind (1 Peter 3:15, 2 Corinthians 10:5). In other words, we’re doing a great job performing for our youth with skits, bands, videos, and pizza, but a terrible job informing them with logic, truth, and a Christian worldview. We’ve failed to recognize that what we win them with we win them to. If we win them with emotion, we win them to emotion.

Now, I don’t want to discount the importance of emotion. If the Bible is true, then God does want us to love Him with all of our hearts. But He also wants us to love Him with our minds (Matthew 22:37). Christians don’t get Brownie points for being stupid! We’re supposed to know what we believe and why we believe it. And for good reason — emotion alone is not enough to protect Christian students at college or make them bold witnesses for those they meet. If they arrive at college with nothing more than good sentimental feelings about Christ, they are easy prey for anti-Christian professors and a campus environment intent on undermining their faith.

Something to think about: Are You Paying for Atheism?

“Children spend the majority of their waking hours in school. Parents invest a good portion of their life savings in college education and entrust their offspring to people who are supposed to educate them. Isn’t it wonderful that educators have figured out a way to make parents the instruments of their own undoing? Isn’t it brilliant that they have persuaded Christian moms and dads to finance the destruction of their own beliefs and values? Who said atheists aren’t clever?”

– Dinesh D’Souza, *What’s So Great About Christianity*