

From Where I Sit . . .

ON BECOMING A CHRISTIAN WHILE YOUNG

As a young boy, I remember the excitement of the prospect of becoming a Christian and being allowed to take a part in the work of the church as an added benefit. All the boys and girls in the churches where I worshipped made decisions for Christ at reasonably early ages. I don't mean by this that they were 7, 8, or 9 years old, but by the time they were 12 to 13 years of age, most of them had obeyed the Gospel. I remember one young man who still had not done so clear into our senior year in high school. He never missed coming to class and services, but never obeyed the Gospel. I worried about him.

I've always believed that children mature at different rates, and there must be an allowance for this in our considering whether one is old enough that we should start worrying about their failure to decide for Christ. There is no Biblically prescribed age for this decision, though some have used the 12th year more out of the Jewish background of the young boys being presented in Jerusalem as Jesus was. All of this aside, however, there is a time when we should start to worry.

My phone rang late one night a call from one of my Elders that a neighbor of his had just lost their 18 year old son in a car wreck. George told me that this family had no church home and were totally without guidance as to funeral proceedings, so we paid a visit and offered our comfort and our services. This was the beginning of a friendship that led to baptizing the entire family ----EXCEPT PAT! Pat was dead. He had been tragically killed during his senior year at Choctaw High School in the Oklahoma City area. What words of comfort were there to offer to an aching heart of that devastated father and mother on behalf of the eternal destiny of their son? Would to God that someone could have reached that family before such a tragic hour and that Pat could have entered eternity totally prepared to meet his God.

My alarm is revived every time I hear of a teenager in the church who has participated all their lives in Bible school and worship, plus other youth activities, but still has not confessed the name of Jesus and been baptized. Questions flood my mind: How have we failed them? Have we not been able to convict their hearts that Jesus is indeed Lord? Have we not shown them enough of the joy of Christian living to make them earnestly crave the experience? Have we not convinced them that those who do not obey the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ will have their part in the lake of fire and brimstone? "In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ:" (2 Thess 1:8).

"And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved" (2 Thess 2:10).

"Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them;" (Eccl 12:1).

May I lovingly encourage any young person who has delayed, to study very carefully this urgent matter.

..... Terry Broome

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