

Foundational Commitments of the True Church

Matt. 16:13-28

Part 1

Introduction

Statistics reveal a huge disconnect taking place between our children and their church experience

Nationwide polls and denominational reports are showing that the next generation is calling it quits on the traditional church. And it's not just happening on the nominal fringe; it's happening at the core of the faith.

In the first scientific study of its kind, the "Beemer Report" reveals startling facts discovered through 20,000 phone calls and detailed surveys of a thousand 20–29 year olds who used to attend evangelical churches on a regular basis, but have since left it behind.

The results are shocking:

- Those who faithfully attend Sunday School are more likely to leave the church than those who do not.
- Those who regularly attend Sunday School are more likely to believe that the Bible is less true.
- Those who regularly attend Sunday School are actually more likely to defend that abortion and gay marriage should be legal.
- Those who regularly attend Sunday School are actually more likely to defend premarital sex

The top 10 reasons were:

Boring service

Legalism

Hypocrisy of leaders

Too political

Self-righteous people

Distance from home

Not relevant to personal growth

God would not condemn to hell

Bible not relevant/not practical

Couldn't find my preferred denomination in the area

Seventy percent of evangelical Christians, according to the recent Newsweek survey, believe that a person can be saved and go to heaven apart from any confession of Christ. Extensively these are people who call themselves Christians and who identify with the church..

According to a survey some years ago, one of George Barna surveys, fifty percent of evangelical Christians do not believe in absolute truth. That is, they have been affected by the society in which they live, the culture and the thinking of our time, so as to say there's no such thing as absolute truth, absolute moral truth.

There's your truth and my truth and everybody else's truth and everybody's entitled to their truth therefore the Bible might be true for me but not necessary for you. That's a few years ago. In a more recent survey, very recently, students were surveyed in evangelical schools, evangelically identified students said, **ninety-one percent** of them, "There's no such thing as absolute truth."

According to the [Hartford Institute of Religion Research](#), more than 40 percent of Americans "say" they go to church weekly. As it turns out, however, less than 20 percent are actually in church. In other words, more than 80 percent of Americans are finding more fulfilling things to do on weekends.

Furthermore, somewhere between 4,000 and 7,000 churches close their doors every year. Southern Baptist researcher, Thom Rainer, in a recent article entitled "[13 Issues for Churches in 2013](#)" puts the estimate higher. He says between 8,000 and 10,000 churches will likely close this year.

Between the years 2010 and 2012, more than half of all churches in America added not one new member. Each year, nearly 3 million more previous churchgoers enter the ranks of the "religiously unaffiliated."

Top 10 reasons people don't go to church

(Among infrequent attenders and non-attenders)

Boring or unfulfilling church services 42%

Beliefs of the church 35%

Church's moral views 35%

No need to 34%

Prefer to do other things 31%

"My beliefs are too weak" 27%

The way churches are organised 24%

Other commitments 21%

Bad experience among church people 16%

Not enough time because of work 15%

Source: Why People Don't Go to Church, 1998 Australian Community Survey

Sources of peace and wellbeing

Time with family 89%
 Time with friends 80%
 Listening to music 65%
 Homemaking 63%
 In a garden 58%
 Time by the sea 57%
 Relaxing (doing nothing at all) 53%
 Working 52%
 Spending time
 in the bush 48%
 Travelling (internally) 40%
 Reading novels 37%
 Travelling (overseas) 36%
 Praying 29%
 Dining out 28%
 Playing a musical
 instrument or singing 27%
 Watching TV 25%
 Watching movies 25%
 Meditating 24%
 Watching sport 23%
 At church services 21%

Look with me for a moment at a important passage by way of introduction to our thoughts this morning

Hebrews 10:22-25

²² let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. ²³ Let us hold fast the confession of *our* hope without wavering, for He who promised *is* faithful. ²⁴ And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, ²⁵ not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as *is* the manner of some, but exhorting *one another*, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.

A very important passage about the priority of coming to Church, Assembling together

Context: Persecuted Hebrews,
Possibility of Losing your family

Content of the Passage— — —- very rich
Let us Consider one another

katanoéō: to take note of, perceive

Original Word: ΚΑΤΑΝΟΕΩ

Part of Speech: Verb

Transliteration: katanoéō

Phonetic Spelling: (kat-an-o-eh'-o)

Short Definition: I understand, perceive, consider

Definition: I take note of, perceive, consider carefully, discern, detect, make account of.

HELPS Word-studies

2657 *katanoéō* (from **2596** /*katá*, "down along, exactly according to" and **3539** /*noiéō*, "to think") – properly, to think from up to *down*, to a *conclusion*; to consider *exactly, attentively (decisively)*; to *concentrate* by fixing one's thinking " 'to perceive *clearly*' (*kata*, intensive), 'to understand *fully*, consider *closely*' " (Vine, Unger, White, *NT*, 123). **2657** (*katanoéō*) expresses *real comprehending* – "thinking *decisively* to a *definite* (clear) understanding."

[**2657** (*katanoéō*) has "the notion of considering *attentively* (note the *kata*, 'down into,' " *WS*, 349).]

John Gill states

“Saints should consider one another as men, that they are but men, of like passions and infirmities; they should consider their different tempers, and make allowance for them, and their outward state and condition in the world: they should consider one another as saints, partakers of the same grace; as that they are all loved with the same love, all conceived and brought forth in the womb of God's eternal electing grace, interested in the

same covenant, redeemed by the same blood, and have the same graces and privileges, and an equal right to glory; having one and the same Spirit, the same grace of faith, the same righteousness, the same fountain to wash in, the same fulness to partake of, the same throne of grace to go to, and the same inheritance to enjoy: they should consider one another as church members, the grace and gifts of the another, their different age and standing in the church, their relation to each other as brethren; they should consider them under suffering or sorrowful circumstances, under afflictions, temptations, desertions, declensions, and as attended with infirmities and sins: and the end of such consideration should be”

Matthew Henry writes that...

Christians ought to have a tender consideration and concern for one another; they should affectionately consider what their several wants, weaknesses, and temptations are; and they should do this, not to reproach one another, to provoke one another not to anger, but to love and good works, calling upon themselves and one another to love God and Christ more, to love duty and holiness more, to love their brethren in Christ more, and to do all the good offices of Christian affection both to the bodies and the souls of each other. A good example given to others is the best and most effectual provocation to love and good works.

John Wesley once said

There is nothing more unchristian than a solitary Christian.

Stirring up

paroxusmos: stimulation, provocation

Original Word: παροξυσμός, οὔ, ὁ

Part of Speech: Noun, Masculine

Transliteration: paroxusmos

Phonetic Spelling: (par-ox-oos-mos')

Short Definition: incitement, irritation

Definition: stimulation, provocation, irritation, angry dispute.

HELPS Word-studies

Cognate: 3948 *paroksysmós* – a provocation which literally jabs (cuts) someone so they "must" respond. See 3947 (*paraxynomai*).

Not Forsaking Pres Active Participle

egkatalaipó: to leave behind, i.e. (in a good sense) let remain over or (in a bad sense) desert

Original Word: ἐγκαταλείπω

Part of Speech: Verb

Transliteration: egkatalaipó

Phonetic Spelling: (eng-kat-al-i'-po)

Short Definition: I abandon, desert

Definition: I leave in the lurch, abandon (one who is in straits), desert.

HELPS Word-studies

1459 *egkatalaipō* (from 1722 /*en*, "in"; 2596 /*katá*, "down"; and 3007 /*leípō*, "to leave") – properly, left in a condition of lack ("without"); hence, to feel forsaken (helpless), like left in dire circumstances.

Uses

Matthew 27:46

NAS: MY GOD, WHY *HAVE YOU FORSAKEN* ME?

Acts 2:27

NAS: BECAUSE *YOU WILL NOT ABANDON* MY SOUL

2 Tim 4:16

KJV: Demas *hath forsaken* me, having loved the present world

The Assembling

episunagógé: a gathering together, an assembly

Original Word: ἔπισυναγωγή, ἥς, ἡ

Part of Speech: Noun, Feminine

Transliteration: episunagógé

Phonetic Spelling: (ep-ee-soon-ag-o-gay')

Short Definition: a gathering together

Definition: a gathering (collecting) together, assembling.

HELPS Word-studies

Cognate: 1997 *episynagōgḗ* – a specific (apt) "grouping together" that fulfills (builds on) the specific *purpose* of the gathering together (note the *epi*, "on"). See 1996 (*episynágō*).

USES

in this form is used in

2 Thess 2:1

Now, brethren, concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to Him,

Ignatius says. “When ye frequently, and in numbers meet together, the powers of Satan are overthrown, and his mischief is neutralized by your likemindedness in the faith.” To neglect such assemblies together might end in apostasy at last.

The manner of some or custom

ethos: custom, a usage (prescribed by habit or law)

Original Word: ἔθος, οὐς, τό

Part of Speech: Noun, Neuter

Transliteration: ethos

Phonetic Spelling: (eth'-os)

Short Definition: a custom

Definition: a custom, habit; an institute, rite.

HELPS Word-studies

Cognate: 1485 *éthos* (from 1486 /*éthō*, "to be accustomed") – *an unwritten custom; behavior based on tradition (a habit) fixed by the religious social life of a nation.* See 1486 (*ethō*).

But Exhorting ———-Pres Active Participle

parakaleó: to call to or for, to exhort, to encourage

Original Word: παρακαλέω

Part of Speech: Verb

Transliteration: parakaleó

Phonetic Spelling: (par-ak-al-eh'-o)

Short Definition: I summon, entreat, admonish, comfort

Definition: (a) I send for, summon, invite, (b) I beseech, entreat, beg, (c) I exhort, admonish, (d) I comfort, encourage, console.

HELPS Word-studies

3870 *parakaléō* (from 3844 /*pará*, "from close-beside" and 2564 /*kaléō*, "to call") – properly, "make a call" from being "close-up and personal." 3870 / *parakaléō* ("personally make a call") refers to believers *offering up evidence that stands up in God's court.*

[3870 (*parakaléō*), the root of 3875 /*paráklētos* ("legal advocate"), likewise has *legal* overtones.]

The Day approaching

eggizó: to make near, refl. to come near

Original Word: ἐγγίζω

Part of Speech: Verb

Transliteration: eggizó

Phonetic Spelling: (eng-id'-zo)

Short Definition: I come near, approach

Definition: trans: I bring near; intrans: I come near, approach.

HELPS Word-studies

1448 *eggízō* (from 1451 /*eggýs*, "near") – properly, *has drawn close (come near).* 1448 (*eggízō*) occurs 14 times in the Greek perfect tense (indicative mood) in the NT which expresses "extreme closeness, immediate

imminence – even a *presence* ('It is here') because the moment of this coming happened (i.e. at the beginning of Jesus' ministry)" (J. Schlosser).

Uses

Matt.3:2

NAS: for the kingdom of heaven *is at hand*.

Brethren, We Have Met to Worship

Brethren, we have met to worship and adore the Lord our God;

Will you pray with all your power, while we try to preach the Word?

All is vain unless the Spirit of the Holy One comes down;

Brethren, pray, and holy manna will be showered all around.

Brethren, see poor sinners round you slumbering on the brink of woe;

Death is coming, hell is moving, can you bear to let them go?

See our fathers and our mothers, and our children sinking down;

Brethren, pray and holy manna will be showered all around.

Sisters, will you join and help us? Moses' sister aided him;

Will you help the trembling mourners who are struggling hard with sin?

Tell them all about the Savior, tell them that He will be found;

Sisters, pray, and holy manna will be showered all around.

Is there here a trembling jailer, seeking grace, and filled

with tears?

Is there here a weeping Mary, pouring forth a flood of tears?

Brethren, join your cries to help them; sisters, let your prayers abound;

Pray, Oh pray that holy manna may be scattered all around.

Let us love our God supremely, let us love each other, too;

Let us love and pray for sinners, till our God makes all things new.

Then He'll call us home to Heaven, at His table we'll sit down;

Christ will gird Himself and serve us with sweet manna all around.

Matthew 16:13-19

I. A Great Confession What We Believe

¹³ When Jesus came into the region of Caesarea Philippi, He asked His disciples, saying, "Who do men say that I, the Son of Man, am?"

¹⁴ So they said, “Some say John the Baptist, some Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.”

¹⁵ He said to them, “But who do you say that I am?”

¹⁶ Simon Peter answered and said, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.”

John Calvin said, "If a church does not have sound doctrine and exposition of Scripture, it's not a church." And he added two more things, church discipline and baptism and the Lord's table. If any of those are missing, that's not a church.

Heb 10:23

²³ Let us hold fast the confession of *our* hope without wavering, for He who promised *is* faithful.

hold Fast— — —-present Tense

katechó: to hold fast, hold back

Original Word: ΚΑΤΕΧΩ

Part of Speech: Verb

Transliteration: katechó

Phonetic Spelling: (kat-ekh'-o)

Short Definition: I hold fast, bind, restrain

Definition: (a) I hold fast, bind, arrest, (b) I take possession of, lay hold of, (c) I hold back, detain, restrain, (d) I hold a ship, keep its head.

without wavering

aklinés: unbending

Original Word: ἀκλινής, ες

Part of Speech: Adjective

Transliteration: aklínés

Phonetic Spelling: (ak-lee-nace')

Short Definition: unbent, unyielding, resolute

Definition: unbent, unyielding, resolute, firm.

II. A Great Communication What we Preach

¹⁷ Jesus answered and said to him, “Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed *this* to you, but My Father who is in heaven.

Revelation of the Church

¹⁸ And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it. ¹⁹ And I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.”

Richard Phillips writing an article in a book called *The Church* said this, and I quote: *"If we want people to join in Peter's great profession and thus to be admitted into the saving company of Christ's people, then we must not rely on flesh and blood devices. We must not be tempted by the things that appeal to men and women today, especially the entertainment that so dominates our secular culture and sadly much of the church as*

well. We may make the most effective appeals to flesh and blood, to the things which are persuasive and enticing to the fleshly nature of mankind. But Jesus here assures us that by those means we will never bring about the saving faith first professed by Simon Peter. Instead, we must rely on the one means God has provided, His revealed Word. As we teach and proclaim God's Word about Jesus, the Father in heaven reveals the truth in the minds and hearts of men and women and brings them to true and saving faith."

III.A Great Contrast

IV.A Great Conquest

V. A Great Conflict

VI.A Great Contradiction

VII.A Great Consummation