

## Faith in S.T.A.G.E.S. – Adulthood (18-24 yrs old) – Hebrews 10:23-25

***“Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful. And let us consider how to stir up one another to love & good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encourage one another, & all the more as you see the Day drawing near.”***

Today we are talking about the “Adulthood” stage! A study done in 2017, revealed that 66% of 18-22 yr olds (who were in church prior to graduating high school), stopped attending church regularly for at least a year.

Of those surveyed, “69% said they were attending church at 17, that fell to 58% at age 18 and 40% at age 19. Once they reached their 20s, around 1 in 3 said they were attending church regularly!”

Lifeway research gave the top 5 reasons why youth leave the church:

- 1) Moving to college (34%)
- 2) Church members seemed judgmental or hypocritical (32%)
- 3) I didn’t feel connected to people in my church (29%)
- 4) I disagree with the church’s stance on political/social issues (25%)
- 5) My work responsibilities prevented me from attending (24%)

In 2011 the Barna Group did an extensive study of young adults, who grew up in the church. This study revealed that:

- 1 out of 9 (11%) lose faith in Christianity completely
- 4 out of 10 (40%) leave the Church but still call themselves Christian
- 2 out of 10 (20%) disconnect from church and express frustration about “church culture” and their disconnects with society
- 3 out of 10 (30%) stay involved in church Are we ok with this?

CHURCHLEADERS article by Marc Yoder – **Why Youth Leave the Church: 10 Surprising Reasons Teens Disappear**

### 10) The Church is relevant.

*“We’ve taken a historic, 2,000-year-old faith, dressed it in plaid and skinny jeans, and tried to sell it as “cool” to kids.” Consider Hebrews 11:23*

The church is not intended to look and sound like the world... The Church is intended to be set apart from the world, and to evangelize it! 1 Cor. 1:18

### 9) They never attended church to begin with. Consider Hebrews 11:25

Many teens, & their families, claim a church home that they are rarely ever present at! And when they are present, they are in their individualized silos!

### 8) They get smart They need spiritual meat & we keep serving them milk!

*“Students don’t get smarter when they leave home; rather, someone actually treats them as intelligent.” Are we dumbing down the message in hopes of keeping our young people? That won’t work long-term!*

### 7) We send them out unarmed “Hold fast... Without wavering...”

*“Most churches send young people into the world embarrassingly ignorant of the faith, which plays a role in why youth leave the church.”*

### 6) We give them our hand-me-downs “Hold fast the confession...”

*“We try our best to pass along the internal/subjective faith that we “feel.” We really, really want our kids to “feel” it too. But God never called us to evangelize our feelings. You can’t hand down this type of subjective faith.”*

### 5) They can find better feelings

When the church sets aside the external, objective, historical faith & replaces it with what’s internal, subjective, & feelings-based, any “self-help”, and/or “warm and fuzzy” fix will do! John 16:33

### 4) They want real community “stir up... not neglecting... encourage...”

When relationships “in the church” are manufactured, superficial, & only surface deep young adults will search for/discover other places of belonging.

### 3) They get tired of pretending so they start leaving church

They know that they don’t “love” (God & neighbor) as they should... They know that their “good works” are not always good/good enough!

### 2) They know the truth That they can’t measure up!

If the church only preaches moralism it will produce hypocrites or dropouts! “Stir up one another to love & good works” puts things in proper perspective!

### 1) They don’t need it

*“If church is simply a place to learn life-application principles to achieve a better life in community... you don’t need a crucified Jesus for that.”*

If we aren’t offering the true gospel, then everything else won’t be enough!

We are either living for this moment, or preparing people for eternity! As our youth start “Adulthood” we need to point them to “the Day drawing near.”

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