



AMERICA'S YOUTH CULTURE MANIFESTO

Generally speaking, American teens are way too over-stimulated with rights and privileges, while being way too under stimulated with responsibilities and obligations. They've failed to attach reward to achievement; because, our politically correct culture has brainwashed them, and their parents, into thinking that, "Everyone's a winner" and "They deserve it", resulting in kids being cheated out of the character-building experiences that are only learned by struggle, defeat, disappointment, and failure. They've been made to grow up in areas they should still be kids and allowed to be kids in areas they should be made to grow up. They fear what they shouldn't fear and don't fear what they should. They've been exposed to illicit sex, illegal drugs, irreverent entertainment and other sin and vice—to the point of acquiring unnatural appetites, habits, and addictions for all of it. They've been abandoned by adults in certain areas of their lives, while being pampered, coddled, and entitled in other areas. They've been allowed to make heavy decisions based on emotions, feelings, and comfort as opposed to logic, reason, and a moral high-ground. The bars of expectation for accomplishment, behavior, etiquette, education, prudence, responsibility, excellence, character, obedience, and respect have all been lowered to the point that teens can't even respect themselves anymore.

They've been allowed to do things they shouldn't, while never been made to do things they should. They've understood love and discipline as being mutually exclusive—if they've understood them at all—and therefore rarely received the Divine character benefits of either. They've been brainwashed by a 24/7 media, music, and entertainment barrage that teaches them nothing about moral purity and virtually everything about what Godly parents don't want them to know, believe, accept, or perpetuate themselves—everything our parents, the church, and our culture once told us to avoid. They've been allowed to blame others, while being bailed out of the sufferings and consequences of their own mistakes. Relativism and postmodern thought have blinded them to the fact that they've even made mistakes at all—giving them no transcendent point of moral reference beyond their own subjective ideas, presuppositions and lusts. They've been cheated out of the security of knowing moral absolutes and the self-restraint of living within them. They've been deprived of legitimate authority figures who will enforce the few boundaries they've been given—the boundaries they actually want and need in order to acquire the self-restraint needed to attain a healthy and sober sense of self-esteem and self-respect. There are too few "stand in the gap" models in their lives through which these morals can be learned by example only. They've been pleased into imbecility with all the techno-toys their parents have worked so hard to provide them—to the point that they've become insatiable and anhedonic. They go, like monkeys on a vine, grabbing the next pleasure before releasing the last—leaving no margin of time to contemplate or desire answers to the deeper questions of life—issues such as origin, meaning, morality, and destiny. Not only have adults too often allowed these attitudes and behaviors, in many cases they have promoted them.

Our kids have no peace or rest in their souls; because, they've been pursuing creation without regard for their Creator—unaware of St. Augustine's prayer, "Lord, You have made us for Yourself; and, our hearts are restless until we find our rest in You." Today's teens don't know God; and, they don't feel they know anyone who truly does. Still, their restless hearts continue to pursue what mankind has always pursued throughout history--something to worship. However, because of their extreme and very often legitimate distrust of adults, they pursue with futility this rest and worship in all the wrong places. Their favorite pop-icons become, in their eyes, the only thing worth worshipping. Meanwhile, adults too often do little more than show their own intrigue and interest in the very same idols their kids have created for themselves through the world of entertainment--music in particular.

We have a youth problem largely because we have a greater parent problem. We have a parent problem largely because we have a greater cultural problem. We have a cultural problem largely because we have a greater church problem (2 Chronicles 7:14). Today's church has allowed Baal in the camp and hasn't gotten rid of the high places. We have confused worship with entertainment; spiritual fulfillment with carnal pleasure; ministry needs with career desires; and, God's will with man's lusts. Until the church returns to her First Love in humble repentance, our youth will continue to grope for answers in all the wrong places. Adults, committed to the person of Jesus Christ, and who are unashamedly committed to passing on their faith to future generations through the actions of their daily lives despite cultural persecution, are the greatest tools of hope for the future of the church, our nation, Christian parenting, and the youth of America.