

# Wings

*“Those who wait on the Lord shall renew their strength;  
they shall mount up with wings like eagles.”  
Isaiah 40:31*



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## Losing Our Youth

There are a number of reasons why churches are losing so many young people to the world, but one reason is absolutely inexcusable—and we can fix it.

*“And do not become idolaters as were some of them. As it is written, ‘The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play.’” (1 Cor. 10:7).*



In recent months a spate of articles has circulated on the internet expressing alarm at the large number of young people who are leaving denominational churches. Parents and churches are in a panic trying to figure out what is causing this exodus, and what to do about it.

Logan Judy is a young sci-fi author and prolific movie reviewer. He is also a committed believer with his own opinions on the subject of why his peers are jumping ship. In a recent online article, he had sharp words for how most churches are trying to address the issue:

“And what’s the proposed solution been? More youth groups, pizza parties, movie nights, and amusement park trips. Instead of filling them with the love of God, we fill them with entertainment and teach them that church is the place to get it. And we’re so ignorant, so short-sighted, that we don’t realize that we’re adding more fuel to the fire.

Because the root problem in some of these situations is that their heart is given to fun, not to Jehovah, and by adding more fun in the name of God, we’ve just driven them even farther away from Him. . . . The end result, then, is that while we’re telling our young people to just have fun, they look for fun in places away from God instead of seeking God with all their hearts. And then, in those moments that they do think on more serious things, they aren’t going to look to God, because we’ve taught them, even if unintentionally, that Christianity is for the shallow and ignorant, not for serious thinkers.” (“Why Entertainment is Costing the Church its Young People” on *clearlens.org*, 8/1/2014).

In other words, in the name of trying to make Christianity “relevant,” churches have instead rendered it largely irrelevant by substituting fun and games for the serious work of educating and discipling.

Young people are no longer little children who need to be coddled, but emerging adults with very real questions—even doubts—about faith, life,

God, ethics, and relationships. If churches do not deliberately and patiently act to answer these questions, young people will go elsewhere to find answers. And all the pizzas and movies in the world won’t keep them around.

Ancient Israel got into trouble when they turned their religion into “sitting down to eat and drink, and rising up to play.” Churches today are reaping the results of decades of a shallow social gospel approach to religion. Their youth are entering the world poorly-prepared for the threats they will face.

So what can we do to hold on to our young people? Logan Judy offers a simple Biblical strategy: “Push our children and peers to seek God instead of living for fun, and start confronting head-on the difficult questions of theology and truth.” That approach will require a lot of study and preparation on the part of preachers, teachers, and parents, but there are no short-cuts. We live in a hostile culture that is aggressively seducing our young people. We must join the battle with all the intellectual firepower we can muster.

– David King