

ages of two and twenty, what are we doing wrong in training the next generation?

The greatest reason that my generation is unfaithful is because they were not reared to be committed to God above all else. Really, it all comes down to priorities. In many (probably most) cases, those who fall away were likely shown that, on occasion, something else is more important than God. Jesus named Deuteronomy 6:4 as the greatest commandment (Matthew 22:37). “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might” (NASB). Those who turn away from the faith do not love God in this way. So, the first step that must be taken in order to pass on a faith that lasts is to practice this devotion to God in your own life. One of the reasons many give for leaving the church is the hypocrisy of Christians. On a certain level it makes sense that they would have a problem with being expected to follow commands that their parents won’t. So, developing a daily commitment to love God with everything you have is absolutely essential in rearing a faithful child.

At some point, children need to be actively taught. God follows up the first command in Deuteronomy 6 with another. “You shall teach them (God’s commands) to your sons and shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise up.” You must actively teach God’s Word to your children in all situations.

If you prioritize God and His teachings, you will love Him in the way He deserves and your children will see it. In both word and deed, parents must show that God is first, family is second, and everything else comes after.

**Some decide not to put God first with regards to their time.** This manifests itself in various ways, with sports being perhaps the most discussed. When parents decide to allow their children to participate in some activity (whether athletic, academic, or otherwise) that conflicts

with worship or Bible study times, they are sending a clear message about what is more important. We shouldn’t be surprised when kids don’t have time for spiritual activities when they grow older.

**Others decide not to put God first in their goals.** The pursuit of the “American Dream” has derailed the faith of countless men and women as they worked to climb the corporate ladder instead of stepping toward Heaven. While achievement and hard work are desirable qualities (Colossians 3:23), their end must be considered. If the goal in itself is more money, bigger houses, and nicer cars, God will not come first in such a life. Are your goals and hopes for your children in accordance with what is best for their souls?

**Finally, others decide not to put God first in choosing their influences.** Proverbs 13:20 says that the companion of fools will suffer harm. Do you know what kind of people your kids spend time around? What about their entertainment choices? Do their favorite songs glorify sinful behavior? Are you taking an active role in filtering the people and things that have an impact on how your children think and act?

We can’t keep hoping for the church to “survive.” Our goal should be for the Lord’s body to thrive and grow. The quickest way to make this happen is to stop the stream of young people who are hanging up their Christianity and putting on the ways of the world. We need to raise the bar and stop simply hoping that the children will stay faithful. We should expect them to be warriors prepared for battle and ready to lead the church into the future for as long as the Lord gives us until His return. If we train up souls who put God above all else and love Him with every fiber of their being, this will turn from dream into reality. It’s all about priorities.

Wilkie, Jack. “Why Are the Youth Leaving?” *Think* August 2012: 21.

# Why Men Still Hate Going to Church

excerpt from an interview with David Murrow appearing in Leadership magazine, Summer 2012

Women sense the need. Women see their husbands bored. They see their sons dropping out. They see their brothers irreligious. They sit on the pew with nine other women. They know the situation on the ground.

The men who are already in the church and comfortable with the church and, quite frankly, for many of them church is their power area, they are the ones who push back. They are the ones who say things like, "Well, men should just learn how to sing those songs," or "Men need to be comfortable holding hands or hugging." They have all these pious-sounding phrases.

But it reveals that they really don't have a missionary mindset. They are comfortable, and more concerned with protecting their own power in the current structure.

David Murrow is author of a new book, *Why Men Hate Going to Church: Completely Revised and Updated* (Thomas Nelson).

## -----News-----

**Jerry Robinson** is scheduled for a stress test on August 22.

**Chuck Brooks** (Cody Bo's dad) is scheduled for surgery on September 5.

### Prayer List

**Healing:** *Deanna Armenta's daughter April and sister Patsy; Chuck Brooks, Faye Atchley, Nicolas Self, Douglas Gardner, Brandon (Gerry Clark's grandson), Diane Cocke's brother-in-law Dave Smith, Ben Atchley, Dave Morse, Richard Tuey.*

**Travels:** *John and Sharon Cunningham.*

# Safford Church of Christ

3888 S Hwy 191, Safford, AZ 85546

**12 August 2012**

## Sermon Topics

**A.M. What Is Your Assigned Task?**

Mark 13:32-37

**P.M. Closing of a Great Book**

Hebrews 13:18-25

Evangelist

*Ken Knowlton: 428-5974*

Elders

*Ben Atchley: 428-2246*

*Greg Briggs: 428-8756*

*John Cunningham: 428-0895*

Services

Sunday Bible Class	10:00 A.M.
Sunday Morning Worship	11:00 A.M.
Sunday Evening Worship	6:30 P.M.
Wednesday Evening Class	6:30 P.M.

# Why Are The Youth Leaving

abridged

When was the last time you took a look around your congregation on a Sunday morning and noticed how many 18-25 year olds were in attendance? If your church is like many in America, that number is probably rather low. While it's difficult to come up with a precise number, the most conservative estimates say we're losing nearly half of all those reared as Christians by the time they reach college, with others saying the number is much higher than 50 percent.

The fact of the matter is that we're doing a terrible job of helping those reared in the church to make the transition into being faithful adult members. So, between the