

spotlight on **Youth**

by Robert Hatfield

Jesus said, "heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away" (Mat. 24:35). Traditions, cultures, and fashions may change, but one thing will always remain the same — **people must hear the truth that makes men free (John 8:32)!**

The future of the church is dependent upon today's teens. NOW is the time to get serious about religious matters and NOW must be the time to prepare for the future. Jesus admonished all who would follow him (regardless of age) to seek **first** the kingdom of God (Mat. 6:33). However, the sad truth is that most young people appear uninterested in what the Bible says. Those who do express an interest in religious matters seem only to care about that which will entertain and bring forth good feelings. Unfortunately, many once-faithful congregations of God's people heard the voices of the teen movement and, in an effort to increase numbers and promote entertainment, took the Bible out of Wednesday night Bible study and filled it with food and fun instead of basic Bible teaching. It occurs to this writer that young people have plenty of food and fun, but seem to be lacking in the area of basic Bible knowledge. Are they "ready always to give an answer" (1 Pet. 3:15)? Do they know the answers to Bible questions? If not, why not?

In Luke 14:25-35, the gospel records Jesus' parable which is often entitled, "counting the cost." The master teacher pointed out that men often spend great amounts of time in preparation for various things. A man who is building a tower will make sure he has enough money and supplies to complete the project. A king, in preparation for battle, will scope out the enemy and be sure his army has a good chance of victory. So it must be with all who want to follow Christ. Jesus makes the point that there is a price to be paid in serving God, and it would be wise to be prepared for the life of service to God to which each Christian is called. In Matthew 16:26 the Savior said, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me." Being a Christian requires both work and conformation to the Will of God.

The concept of the future is hard to grasp for most young people. Life seems almost endless and the road ahead promises many opportunities. Someone may think, "*Why should I waste time now settling down and worrying about religion?!*" Yet, the Bible emphatically pleads that there is no greater time than TODAY to do that which is right in God's sight, for even the longest life on earth is nothing more than a vapour (James 4:14).

While life is brief and temporary, the word of God is lasting and eternal. Jesus said it will never pass away! One thing about which all people — young and old — may be confident is this: the word of God *must* be followed today in its entirety, for that same word will judge every soul on the day of judgment (John 12:48).

Please plan to attend Sunday, July 15th. The purpose is to strengthen our youth and prepare them for eternity. Souls are at stake!

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