



# The SaltShaker

March 2013

Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt has lost its savour, Wherewith shall it be salted? It is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men. Matthew 5:15

## LifeChangers June 16-21, 2013 Registration Due – April 15<sup>th</sup>, 2013

*LifeChangers* will be June 16-21, 2013 at Calvary Baptist Church. The total cost for all participants (including adults) will be \$75. A \$50 deposit will be required to reserve a space. This is for youth who have COMPLETED the 7<sup>th</sup> grade through senior adults. We MUST have ALL chaperones' names listed on the registration form in order for the registration to be complete. We reserve the right to refuse registrations that are incomplete. PLEASE get your chaperones **NOW** and save us all a lot of headaches.

### YOU can Help with LifeChangers:

1. PRAY, PRAY, PRAY!
2. We need churches that are willing to provide an evening meal for the whole group
3. We need churches who would be willing to feed a crew of 12-15 each day Monday – Friday.
4. Monetary donations for breakfast food or construction supplies are also needed.

If you would be willing to help with this, please contact Louanne 662.5921.

### Cooks for Christ Chicken Bog Benefit for Brittany Hamilton

Thursday, February 28, 2013

Lunch 11 am – 2 pm Supper 4 pm – 7 pm

Tickets - \$6.00

West Florence Fire Station on Pineneedles Road



Brittany Hamilton is a member of Elim Baptist Church. She is 19 years old and was diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis at the age of 17. She was in MUSC and Children's Levine Hospital in Charlotte, NC for almost 6 months. She currently goes every four to six weeks to have IV therapy to try and help with her frequent attacks. Cooks for Christ is

raising money to help with travel expenses, medical bills and her medications.

### Ten Top Reasons Our Kids Leave Church

(The following article is taken from a blog entitled, *Ten Top Reasons our Kids Leave Church* by Marc Solas. It caused me to really start to think about how we "do church" especially with our youth. To read the entire article go to: [www.marc5solas.wordpress.com](http://www.marc5solas.wordpress.com).)

We all know them, the students who were raised in church. They were stars of the youth group. They maybe even sang in the praise band or led worship. And then... they graduate from High School and they leave church. What happened? The statistics are jaw-droppingly horrific: 70% of youth stop attending church when they graduate from high school. Nearly a decade later, about half return to church. There's no easy way to say this: The American Evangelical church has lost, is losing, and will almost certainly continue to lose OUR YOUTH. For all the talk of "our greatest resource", "our treasure", and the multi-million dollar Dave and Buster's/Starbucks knockoffs we build and fill with black walls and wailing rock bands... the church has failed them. Miserably!

Marc wanted to find out why youth quit going to church so he talked to MANY 20-somethings to see what they had to say. He found 10 top reasons this might be happening. This will challenge your heart!

### The Church is "Relevant"

### Reason 10

I didn't say irrelevant, I said 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 our kids. It's not cool. It's not modern. What we're packaging is a cheap knockoff of the world we're called to evangelize. As the quote says: "When the ship is in the ocean, everything's fine. When the ocean gets into the ship, you're in trouble."

I'm talking about the fact that we yawn at a 5-minute biblical text, but almost trip over ourselves over a minor celebrity or athlete who makes any vague reference to being a Christian. In our effort to be "like them" we've become less of who we actually are. It's not relevant, The minute you aim to be "authentic," you're no longer authentic!

### They have never attended church

### Reason 9

From a Noah's Ark themed nursery, to kids church, to pizza parties and rock concerts, many evangelical youth have been coddled in a not-quite-church, but not-quite-world hothouse. They've never sat on a pew

between a set of new parents with a fussy baby and a senior citizen on an oxygen tank. They don't see the full timeline of the gospel for every season of life. Instead, we've dumbed down the message, pumped up the volume and act surprised when.....

### **They get smart!**

#### **Reason 8**

It's not that our students "got smarter" when they left home, rather someone actually treated them as intelligent. Rather than dumbing down the message, the agnostics and atheists treat our youth as intelligent and challenge their intellect with "deep thoughts" of question and doubt. Many of these "doubts" have been answered, in great depth, over the centuries of our faith. However.....

### **You send them out unarmed!**

#### **Reason 7**

Let's just be honest, most of our churches are sending youth into the world embarrassingly ignorant of our faith. How could we not? We've sold them on "deeds not creeds" and encouraged them to start the quest to find "God's plan for their life." Yes, I know your church has a "What we believe" page, **but is that actually being taught and reinforced from the pulpit?** I've met evangelical church leaders ("Pastors") who didn't know the difference between justification and sanctification. I've met megachurch board members who didn't understand the atonement. Have we chosen leaders based upon their ability to draw and lead, rather than to accurately teach the faith? We don't teach the faith! Surprised? Instead of the orthodox, historic faith.....

### **You gave them hand-me-downs!**

#### **Reason 6**

You've tried your best to pass along the internal/subjective faith that you "feel". You really, really, really want them to "feel" it too. But we've never been called to evangelize our feelings. You can't hand down this type of subjective faith. With nothing solid to hang their faith upon, with no historic creed to tie them to centuries of history, without the physical elements of bread, juice, and water, their faith is in their subjective feelings, and when faced with other ways to "feel" uplifted at college, the church loses out to things with much greater appeal to our human nature. And they find it in.....

### **Community**

#### **Reason 5**

Have you noticed this word is \*everywhere\* in the church since the seeker-sensitive and church growth movements came onto the scene? When our kids leave home, they leave the manufactured community they've lived in for nearly their entire life. With their faith as something they "do" in community, they soon find that they can experience this "life change" and "life improvement" in "community" in many different contexts. Mix this with a subjective, pragmatic faith and the 100<sup>th</sup> pizza party at the local big-box church and the result is that it doesn't compete against the easier, more naturally appealing choices in other "communities". So, they left the church and.....

### **They found better feelings!**

#### **Reason 4**

Rather than an external, objective, historical faith, we've given our youth an internal, subjective faith. The evangelical church isn't teaching our kids the fundamentals of the faith! We're simply encouraging them to "be nice" and "love Jesus". When they leave home, they realize that they can be "spiritually fulfilled" and get the same subjective self-improvement principles (and warm-fuzzies) from the latest life-coach or from spending time with friends or volunteering at a shelter. And they can be truly authentic, and they jump at the chance because.....

### **They got tired of pretending:**

#### **Reason 3**

In the "best life now," "every day a Friday" world of evangelicals, there's little room for depression, or struggle, or doubt. Turn that frown upside down, or move along. Kids who are fed a steady diet of sermons aimed at removing anything (or anyone) who doesn't serve "God's great plan for your life" has forced them to smile and, as the old song encouraged them be "hap-hap-happy all the time". Our kids are smart, often much smarter than we give them credit for. So they trumpet the message I hear a lot from these kids. "The church is full of hypocrites." Why? Even though they have never been given the categories of law and gospel.....

### **They know the truth!**

#### **Reason 2**

They know the truth but they can't do it! The Bible has a word for it: Law. That's what we've fed them, undiluted, since we dropped them off at the Noah's Ark nursery: Do/Don't Do. As they get older it becomes "Good Kids do/don't" and as adults "Do this for a better life." The gospel appears briefly as another "do" to "get saved." But their diet is Law, and scripture tells us that the law condemns us. So that smiling, upbeat "Love God and Love People" vision statement basically condemns youth. Nice huh? They either think that they're "good people" since they don't "do" any of the stuff their denomination teaches against (drink, smoke, dance, watch R rated movies), or they realize that they don't measure up to Jesus' own words of what is required. There's no rest in this law, only a treadmill of works they know they aren't able to meet. So they walk away from the church because.....

### **They don't need it!!**

#### **Reason 1**

Our kids are smart. They picked up on the message we unwittingly taught. If church is simply a place to learn life-application principals to achieve a better life in community... **you don't need a crucified Jesus for that.** Why would they get up early on a Sunday and watch a cheap knockoff of the entertainment venue they went to the night before? The middle-aged pastor trying desperately to be "relevant" to them would be a comical cliché if the effect weren't so devastating. As we abandon the gospel, our students are never hit with the full impact of the law, **their sin before God,** and their desperate **need for the atoning work of Christ.** Now THAT is relevant, THAT is authentic, and THAT is something the world cannot offer.