

HOW TO KEEP MILLENNIALS ENGAGED



By Tom Truax

INTRODUCTION

Why have millennials left the Church? Why do increasingly more children decide to leave the faith when they leave their father and mother's home? This is a question that has been asked more times by older believers, and addressed in many articles without any solid answers that I have seen so far.

Most blame stuffy doctrine, boring music, theology, and the like. Saying that it is a mistake to discuss doctrine, or statements of belief, and that we should rather simply be out loving people. While I agree whole heartedly that we should be out loving people, as the Bible (sound doctrine) exhorts us to, we cannot do so without being equipped to do so. Paul wrote:

“ **All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work. (1 Tim 3:16-17)**

From the words of Paul to the young man Timothy, we find that doctrine is profitable, and allows us to be "thoroughly equipped for every good work." So here we find that contrary to the drone of many hip Christian authors and bloggers, that apart from doctrine we are not equipped to do good works. We are lacking without the study of the Word of God and become next to useless in our endeavors, because rather than point to Christ we end up pointing to our own good works.

THE SOLUTION: VIBRANT DOCTRINE LIVED OUT

I know of a particular church that has a unique dynamic. It is filled with mostly Millennials. It is vibrant with people who serve in many capacities, loving each other vigorously. They do have problems, as all groups of sinners saved by grace, but the age dynamic alone makes it unique. Most would expect to see a church that shuns any sort of absolute truth, and hip music with light shows being the draw. What is amazing is that this is not the case at all-well, apart from good music. There is a wise teacher of the word at its helm, and those who gather there are assiduous students of the Word who have put my own zealousness in study to shame. This church is thriving with young people having doctrine be at its forefront! Imagine that, Scripture seems to have gotten it right.

So, if it isn't doctrine that is causing young people to leave the church, what is it?

I believe the answer lies in living out of our faith as Christians. In our fast-paced world, especially in an affluent culture, we forget the simple truth that chasing the American Dream is not how God calls us to live, but rather we are called to service in the Body of Christ. We are called to be about growing and edifying the Church (whole corporate Body of Christ, not the building) in this little vapor of time we have been given. But instead, too often, we devote our life to acquiring things.

There. I said it. We are not living in congruence with what we say we believe. Our children are not stupid; they see it. If you are not convinced let me give you a positive example from Acts:

“ **And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers. Then fear came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were done through the apostles. Now all who believed were together, and had all things in common, and sold their possessions and goods, and divided them among all, as anyone had need. So continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart, praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved. (Acts 2:42-27)**

Notice how they continued in the "apostles doctrine"? They were a very popular, growing church.

Now seeing this, imagine if your Pastor said, "hey all, lets meet together daily!" What is your first thought?

What if members in your church started to sell most of their belongings, giving the profits to their brothers and sisters who had less, would you start doing it too?

Your answers to these questions may very well indicate how important your children believe the Church actually is to you.

We see the repercussions of faithful actions like these, "And the Lord added to the Church daily those who were being saved."

CONCLUSION

Numerous young people see many who attend a church as people who have clung to a forced fantasy that allows them to believe there is something good out there without having to accept the harsh reality of the fallen world that needs them. They look at many of us and say, "if they really believed this, it would be more important to them."

If we want to see young people, our children and grandchildren, stay in the faith then we must live like we really believe that God has saved us and wishes for us to be the Church. We must start making the Church our priority, trusting that as we honor God through honoring each other, He will take care of the rest. We must realize that having sound doctrine involves living it out. Life might start to look different for us, which can be scary, but I believe the benefits far outweigh the hardships, if they can be called so, because even our hardships are glories in Christ as we walk in faith.

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Unite believers under the banner of God's grace (Eph 4:3-6), **share** the gospel and aid those who will proclaim it faithfully (Rom 10:14-15), **increase** believers' confidence in the power of the indwelling Christ (Gal 2:20), **love** without hypocrisy (Rom 12:9a), **proclaim** the hope of Christ's glorious kingdom (Rom 8:18-21), and **equip** the saints to share Christ's matchless grace and love with others (2 Tim 2:2).

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