

An Open Letter To Young People

by Bill Crews

Many churches are playing a very dangerous game involving souls, time and eternity. You are the objects of this game. Some of you are participating in it. You are appealed to as justification for it. I would like to believe that not a few of you have seen through it, and that you are insulted and shocked by it.

The game that I have in mind is that of church-sponsored recreation and entertainment for you -- the young people. It has been fathered and fostered by the older members of churches, many of them parents who know they have failed to shoulder their own responsibility toward their children ("too busy," "don't have the time"), who reason that churches will lose their young people and fail to reach other young people if they do not provide recreation and entertainment for them.

They contend that spiritual values alone -- the gospel of Christ and the spiritual blessings that are in Christ -- will not draw and hold them (see Romans 1:16 and Ephesians 1:3). They imply that you are so young, immature and shallow that you must have your doses of religion in the sugar-coated pills of fun and frolic. So they have the congregation promoting and the elders endorsing games, contests, picnics, parties, refreshments and summer camps for you.

They are not too much concerned about what the true nature and mission of the church are. They have stopped asking for and giving Scriptural authority for church activities. They have lost sight of the fact that Jesus died to save souls from sin and that His church was designed to minister to the needs of souls in preparation for eternity. They reason that "the end justifies the means." Never mind that neither Christ nor His apostles authorized such social functions as church work; never mind that not a single congregation in the New Testament ever engaged in such activities as church work.

But I would like to believe that some of you see through this game, and that you resent it and lament it.

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