

The Lakeview Lamp

“Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.” – Psalm 119:105

Nov 2

2008

The Life Benefits of Regular Church Attendance

Neil MacQueen

What if I told you there was a well-researched and statistically proven program that can:

- * increase the average life expectancy of your children by 8 years
- * significantly reduce their use and risk from alcohol, tobacco, and drugs
- * dramatically lower their risk of suicide
- * help them rebound from depression 70% faster
- * dramatically reduce their risk for committing a crime
- * improve their attitude at school and increase their school participation
- * reduce their risk for rebelliousness
- * reduce the likelihood that they would binge drink in college
- * improve their odds for a “very happy” life
- * provide them with a life-long moral compass
- * and get them to wear their seatbelts more often

Is there such a program?

Yes, there is.

And it is supported by research from Duke University, Indiana University, The University of Michigan, The Center for Disease Control, Barna Research Group, and the National Institute for Healthcare Research.

How much would a program like this be worth to you? What if I told you it was free, and only took a few hours a week? Take a look at the list again. It’s not a dream. The program is called “active church participation.”

In study, after study, after study, children who actively engage in a faith community on a regular basis are rewarded with *significantly* reduced likelihood of problems and risks, and significantly improved odds of a happier, healthier, longer life. These studies show the same results for adults as well.

To increase the odds of receiving these results, you can't wait. According to a Barna Research Group study, adults who attended church regularly as children are nearly three times as likely to be attending a church today as their peers who avoided church during childhood (61% to 22%, respectively). In other words, parents who truly want the best for their children should get their children involved at church now and regularly.

Our secular culture has taken up preaching “parents (as) the anti-drug,” promoting D.A.R.E. programs, school uniforms, after-school programs, and athletics as solutions to various ills. And yet, a whole host of problems plaguing young people have only become worse over the last 30 years. Perhaps not so coincidentally, Sunday School attendance has fallen over that same period. The latest tremor to rock the “what works” lobby has been several studies that indicate D.A.R.E. and its 700 million dollar budget doesn't work.

In a search for “what works,” researchers keep turning up “active participation” in a “faith community” as the one consistent potent factor in raising up children in the way they should go. It's time for the Christian Church to speak up on this matter, beginning with our own Christian parents.

To paraphrase Jesus, “What parent, knowing that it is bread that really works, would give their child a stone?”

(To view the sources of these statistics, visit www.sundaysoftware.com/stats.htm.)



Preacher's point – While we shouldn't need statistics to realize the importance of “active church participation” for our children (and for us), sometimes it helps to see them. What are our children missing when they are not assembled with the saints? All kinds of benefits – greater benefits than they can get anywhere else doing anything else! What takes place in the church building is more important than what takes place on any ball field or other place. Which are we teaching our children is more important? What results are we reaping?

News and Notes

Members:

- * Mary Burnett had some stomach problems this weekend. She will soon be moving back in with her daughter and son-in-law. We will provide her new contact information at that time.
- * Metty Fain remains in Highland Manor Nursing Home; Room B2; 215 Highland Circle Dr; Portland, TN 37148.
- * Nancy Reed has an appointment Tuesday with the specialist about her ear infection.
- * Ame White is experiencing flu-like symptoms.

Friends and Family:

- * Sandlyn Fultz has tests scheduled for later in November. For details see www.caringbridge.org/visit/nathanandsandlyn

Absent: Chris Gertsch (Dresden AM, here PM).

New Reports: Alessandro Corazza (Rome), Gary Hunt (NY).



*“The generation of the upright will be blessed.
Wealth and riches are in his house, and his
righteousness endures forever.”*

Psalm 112:2b-3