



Apostolic Notes

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THE REAL DEAL



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One day, while at my favorite office (Starbucks) I overheard a conversation of two acquaintances discussing church and youth. There are those who state we live in pre-Christian culture today: the majority of society understanding very little about Christianity. A lack of Bible knowledge has led to a bag of mixed behaviors, many contradictory, all under the label of Christian. The result of these behaviors has produced a generation of young people who are cynical.

When you say to our youth of today, "you need to come to church," their response is often "why?" Now the older generation would think this is a rebellious attitude. However, it is a sincere and honest question that needs to be answered. Why would they want to come to your church?

Let's look at the reason for the question. Today's youth have a very good reason to be cynical. They are the product of a generation who's goal was the acquisition of material things. Subsequently, these families suffered a higher divorce rate, these young people were "latchkey kids" overlooked by their parents as wealth and power were sought. The material things failed to fulfill the need of the young people for love and acceptance. Also, this generation has witnessed the failure of prominent individuals in society. In almost every arena; ministry, government, business, sports and entertainment, we see the fall of those that were considered role models. These figures, who previous generations would look to, have let down the younger generation. Therefore trust is severely lacking.

So this generation has a right to ask Why?

How does this apply to the church? First, the church is not a building, organization or even a local assembly. **The church is people:** those who have been called out of darkness to reveal a spiritual kingdom and it's King. This translates into the fact that for the church to be attractive to this generation, WE must act in a way that reveals we are DIFFERENT.

This difference is not in our music style, how we dress for service, how the facilities are decorated or any other cosmetic aspect. This difference must be demonstrated in our DAILY LIVES.

- How much do I act like Jesus?
- How much power do I exhibit?
- Do I resist the temptations of this world?
- Do I tell the truth?
- Do I take a stand even when the crowd is going in another direction?
- Do I exhibit a love and acceptance of people like Jesus did?

Jesus' first message was: "*Repent : for the kingdom of heaven is at hand*" (Matt 4:17). The original text for *kingdom* means "*royal power, dominion, rule*" (Vine's/Thayer's). Jesus' first message was that there is a dominion or rule from heaven that has come near. But He just didn't preach about it, He demonstrated it: "*And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people*"(Matt 4:23). Jesus did not have a problem attracting people to his ministry. He did not use the latest fad or marketing program. He demonstrated what He preached. He demonstrated the power that was within Him.

I submit to you that the answer to the cynicism of today's young person is the demonstration of the "dominion, rule and power" of heaven in our daily lives. Let's make Jesus real.

Food for thought:

How do I demonstrate Kingdom dominion in my life?

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