

Christian Scouts Turn Girls into Women of God

The women of the Bible have been providing heroic examples of courage, wisdom and servant leadership for millennia.

Stories about Esther saving her people from genocide, Deborah leading the Hebrew army into battle and Lois being extolled by the apostle Paul for her faith. These women and the examples they set for future generations are sadly underrepresented on lists of influential women.

American Heritage Girls (AHG) is looking to change that by offering a Christ-centered approach to scouting. In an interview with "The Stream," founder Patti Garibay explains what AHG is and their mission:

"It is America's premiere, faith-based scout-type character development program for girls. And it's dedicated to the mission of building women of integrity through service to God, family, community and country," Garibay told "The Stream."

"The activities that the girls do across the nation include badge programs, service projects, leadership opportunities, outdoor experience, all with the emphasis on Christian values and family involvement."

In recent years, there has been a change within the traditional scouting organizations including the Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts of America. With both organizations embracing the LBGTQ agenda, many Christian and secular parents have pulled their children from the organizations and have looked for alternatives that match their family values.

AHG started in 1995 near Cincinnati because of frustrations in dealing with the secular youth organizations at the time. By taking the character-building aspects of scouting programs,

AHG infused their group with faith as a Christ-centered organization.

With this focus on Judeo-Christian values, troops began popping up all over the country. There are now 52,000 girls and young women who are members of AHG in all 50 states and 15 countries around the world.

This is a positive trend among the negative views that the youth of Gen Z and upcoming Gen A have of religion. In a recent study conducted by the "Religion in Public" blog, Gen Z youth are much less religious than previous generations. This shift away from religious affiliation is only worsening as time goes on:

"In 2016, about 39% of Gen Z were none's. Today, it's up to 44%, with 7% identifying as atheists, 6% as agnostics and another 31% saying that they are 'nothing in particular.' In 2020, 35% of this generation identified as Catholic or Protestant, down from 41% in 2016, which means ... there are more none's in Gen Z than Christians."

Garibay shares how AHG is growing in the face of a generation without God, "You know why? Because we all have that 'God-sized hole.' Wasn't it Pascal that spoke about the God-sized hole in everyone's heart?"

She continues, "Now they're looking at this and you know why? Because they feel like they can be part of the solution of societal ills. And so, faith-based leaders that are feeding the poor, that are dealing with those that are being sexually trafficked, these are the issues that are very important to Gen Z, particularly girls. And so, if you're helping to find solution and be part of that, they want to be alongside you."
{eoa}

James Lasher is a Copy Editor for Charisma Media.