

The Youth Awakening in America Has Begun

Looking at things through natural eyes, without faith and spiritual insight, it is not looking good for young people in America when it comes to their faith in the Lord.

Already in 2018, Barna could report that, “More than any other generation before them, Gen Z does not assert a religious identity. They might be drawn to things spiritual, but with a vastly different starting point from previous generations, many of whom received a basic education on the Bible and Christianity. And it shows: The percentage of Gen Z that identifies as atheist is *double* that of the U.S. adult population” (emphasis in the original).

Quoting from ‘The Kaleidoscope Effect: What Emerging Generations Seek in Leaders,’ an article on notes that, “Whereas 85% of the silent generation (born 1928–1945) call themselves Christians, just 56% of today’s younger Millennials (born 1990–1996) do the same, even though the vast majority (about eight in 10) was raised in religious homes. Over the past 70 years, each successive generation has included fewer and fewer Christians, and the overwhelming majority of the Christians remaining today are over the age of 35.”

The same article notes that, “According to Springtide Research’s The State of Religion and Young People report, ‘Nearly 40% of young people ages 13–25 indicate that they are unaffiliated, whether agnostic, atheist or ‘nothing in particular.’”

Directly related to all this is the finding in a 2021 Barna poll that, “Nearly 40% of U.S. Gen Zs, 30% of young Christians identify as LGBTQ.” (The most recent Gallup poll puts the stats at about half or less than the Barna findings, but these

numbers are still very significant, trending dramatically higher than among older generations.)

Why, then, do I say that a youth awakening has already begun in America? It is certainly not by way of a published statistical analysis, nor is it by my own personal surveying of hundreds of churches and youth ministries in America.

Instead, it is something I sense in my spirit, reinforced by something I have been witnessing with increasing frequency, namely, deep, powerful movings of the Spirit among spiritually hungry young people. Added to this is the ripeness of the harvest among the younger generation because of the increasing anxiety, depression, loneliness, fear and uncertainty which they often experience. This makes them more open to look to God for help and transformation.

Recently, Pastor Brent Simpson sent me a picture taken towards the end of their Sunday night service on January 29.

Brent is an ordained Assembly of God minister who leads Arise Church in Tampa (with three local campuses). He also helps church planters and those working to revitalize older, dying congregations in his denomination. And he has looked to me as a mentor over the years, because of which I have been able to see firsthand what the Spirit is doing in their midst.

January 29 was the last day of a 21-day corporate fast, meaning that many of the members fasted during some or all of that time period, also gathering for special times of prayer.

At the end of the service, after I called on all present to surrender their lives afresh to the Lord, I then called all the young people in attendance to join me on the platform, from children to college students.

The platform was soon packed to capacity, as these young people began to cry out to God to move on their generation. (And remember: they had already been to a church service that

morning and were now were back out on a Sunday night.)

The photo that Brent sent me epitomizes the saying that one picture is worth a thousand words, as you can see the passion, the devotion, the hunger and the fervor of these kids and young adults. This was not about entertainment or hype. This was about Jesus. All for Jesus! Heart and soul and mind and strength for the Lord!

I then turned to these young people and said with full assurance of faith, "Look at me! I'm not dreaming! You're going to see it with your own eyes! You're going to see a great youth awakening! You're going to see it!"

In the past, when gripped in the same way by the Spirit, I have turned to crowds of ministry school students and assured them of what was coming. I knew what I was saying was true as surely as I knew my own name, and by God's grace, those things have come to pass.

Now, I am convinced that something is afoot here in America among the young people, something that will be deep and lasting and radically transformational. And if it goes deep enough, it is even something that, over time, could turn the course of the nation.

And I don't say this because of a single service at a single church—although, again, that sacred moment captured on camera is priceless—but because I have seen similar scenes like this across America. God is powerfully on the move!

Of course, God has always been on the move in every generation, and there have always been small pockets of spiritually hungry young people. I am grateful for the multiplied thousands who have been seeking God in prayer and fasting over the last 25+ years.

✖ But I truly believe something new has begun among us, which is why I announced on radio in late January that

the beginning of the first wave of revival had already hit America. And, as many readers would recall, about one week later, the Lord Himself put an exclamation point on the subject of revival in America, sending a fresh outpouring to Asbury University.

Since then, I've received reports of powerful meetings taking place on numerous campuses, including Harvard.

Let us, then, cry out afresh for this young generation to have a glorious encounter with the risen Lord, and let us prepare for the coming harvest. The time is now! {eo}

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