

Tuesday, August 27. 2013

## **REAL COLLEGE PREP**

According to recent studies, almost half of all American college students will abandon their Christian faith during their undergraduate years. Half. The most common reason given is that the environment of higher education is often anti-faith. A recent study by the Fuller Youth Institute found that almost a third of college students say their institute of higher learning was not helpful in keeping or growing their faith. In fact, it was antagonistic toward it. Most universities would defend themselves by saying that examining one's faith in an intellectually stimulating environment such as a college or university should lead to a deeper understanding of a childhood faith. It's a good line. But it's not true.

According to the research of political scientists Robert P. Putnam and David E. Campbell, "Young Americans are dropping out of religion at an alarming rate of five to six times the historical rate." Another study found with each year of education, there is a 15% increase that the student will believe that there's "truth in more than one religion" and believe in a "higher power" rather than a personal God.

<http://www.churchandculture.org/blog.asp?id=4814> This situation is related to, but very different than, youth dropping out of the local church. This is youth dropping out of Christianity. There may well be an overlap, but the main issue here is intellectual, not sociological- a different set of problems and issues. Churches must prepare their youth intellectually for secular college (and for "Christian" schools that are increasingly secular).

Many years ago, I realized that to effectively make a difference for Christ in the world, the key is to reach young people who will be change-makers in the world, ie- college students (and increasingly, high school students). The usual or typical church and church member is not going to make much of an impact on Society, on changing social, economic or political structures for Christ. To confront and change the Powers that be, this requires, besides faith and spiritual tools, a mind well-educated in the way the world works and well trained in applying Biblical Precepts and Principles to that world. Our youth must be well-grounded in the Bible and our Faith and able to cogently witness to a Biblical World view and defend it against all it's detractors. That preparation must begin early on. School must be put back into Sunday School.

Our original Vision for our bookstores (my wife and I had three of them) was to offer the resources to Christian students to do this in tandem with the secular courses they were studying or to help answer questions that they were being asked by secular and often severely critical faculty and fellow-students. Most Christian students are totally unaware of the Christian scholarship available for this work- hence we made materials and study groups available to them.

Posted by Cal in Christian Living at 12:00