

# Why Do We Lose Our Children?

**Introduction.** The “Beltway Sniper,” John Allen Muhammad, was convicted in May 2006 in Maryland for murdering six people. He had already been sentenced to death in Virginia for murders committed there. However, during the trial, some frightening information was revealed about what Muhammad would have done if he had evaded capture. According to Lee Boyd Malvo, Muhammad’s accomplice in the sniper attacks, Muhammad planned to bomb schools and children’s hospitals after the sniper phase of his plan was completed. When Malvo asked why, Muhammad said, “For the sheer terror of it, the worst thing you can do to people is aim at their children.”

When people attack our children, we’re willing to defend them to the death. But curiously, we allow them to be attacked and die all of the time in a different way. The number of children who fallen away from God has always been frightening. A congregation in Baton Rouge, LA surveyed their membership during their existence and found they had lost nearly 40% of their young people. Another congregation did a similar survey of their young people over a 12-year period and found that only 36% were still attending the assemblies of a sound congregation.

Many parents agonize about what went wrong and wonder where they failed, while other parents know precisely what happened and are grieved until the day they die. Everyone knows that children are remarkably like their parents because their parents guide their interests. Knowing this, we are going to make four observations which will help parents understand why we lose our children.

## ***I. We Do Not Teach Them Right***

- A. Sometimes parents are too busy establishing a home.
  - 1. They may be working for future security or they may be trying to achieve certain financial goals.
  - 2. But a constant, materialistic emphasis of physical goals over spiritual goals teaches children that life is found in abundance (Luke 12:15).
  - 3. As we age, we naturally begin to realize the importance of spiritual values over physical values (Matthew 6:33), but it may be too late for our children.
- B. Christians are taught, not inherited (2 Timothy 3:15).
  - 1. It is entirely possible for a child to grow up and never learn the plan of salvation because Bible class lessons and sermons are never emphasized or discussed at home. The parents assume that their children know it.
  - 2. Also, the wicked effects of evolution and humanism, which infiltrate the school system, slowly destroys faith in God and His truth.
  - 3. The end result is that a young person grows up and never becomes a Christian or marries and enters a false religious group with their spouse, and their parents wonder why (2 Timothy 1:5).
  - 4. One of the saddest situations is when parents come to a preacher to try to help when the children are in their twenties and their mind is set. You need to open your eyes now!
- C. The church could grow from the inside out if we could save our children.
  - 1. Satan does not sleep, he prowls (Job 1:7; 2:2; 1 Peter 5:8).
  - 2. Israel raised a generation of untaught and so can we (Judges 2:10-12).

## **II. We Run Brethren Down Before Our Children**

- A. This is definitely not what children need to hear.
  - 1. Young, impressionable ears do not need to hear their parents gossip about brethren in front of them (Proverbs 18:8; 26:20; 2 Timothy 3:1-3).
  - 2. Children also do not need to hear the term “hypocrite” used loosely of other brethren. Before long, children think all in the church are hypocrites and no one wants to be associated with hypocrites their entire life.
  - 3. Gossiping and falsely labeling those in the pew in front of you or the Bible class teacher or the preacher will not help your children get to heaven.
- B. In time, you can see children develop the exact same attitude. You try to visit and warm up to them, but it is to no avail because they are leery of all brethren. Sadly, as soon as they reach the age to make own decisions, they leave.
- C. God will judge those who do not treat their brethren with love (Romans 12:10). Love does not act unbecomingly (1 Corinthians 13:5).

## **III. We Let Them See Apathy And Hypocrisy**

- A. Children are taught by lukewarm actions.
  - 1. The parents never get involved in the work of the church.
  - 2. The children are not involved with other Christians; they are “outsiders.”
  - 3. So the children see the church as of little or no value (Revelation 3:15-16).
- B. Children are taught by spasmodic attendance.
  - 1. They constantly see this “take it or leave it attitude.”
  - 2. The attitude is contagious and children catch it (Hebrews 10:24-25). You can see the signs everywhere:
    - a) If they come to Bible class, they come unprepared and unlearned.
    - b) If special services offered, they never attend.
    - c) If invited to social gatherings, they never come.
    - d) If they go on trips, they rarely see parents make provisions to attend.
  - 3. If you’re pulled away Sunday after Sunday, you need to get out of denial: you’re entangled (2 Timothy 2:3-4). And maybe you need faithful brethren or our elders to help you see it.
- C. Parents can play a role at assemblies or around the brethren.
  - 1. But their religion does not govern their own life. That is so easy for a child to detect. Religion is not something you get; it’s something you do (James 1:27).
  - 2. The parent may act pious and holy around other Christians, but the child knows that’s not the way they really are.
    - a) At home:
      - (1) They may see their parents frequently being dishonest.
      - (2) They may see their parents frequently cursing.
      - (3) They may see beer and/or wine in the house, or filthy entertainment on the television.
    - b) The child may not know what to call it, but he knows what it is (Matthew 7:1-5; 23:3). Do you think Ananias and Sapphira’s children, if they had any, would have known the truth (Acts 5:1-2)?

#### **IV. We Expose Them To Worldliness**

##### **A. Evil companions.**

1. Make an effort to know who your child befriends (1 Corinthians 15:33), and if you find an ungodly one, keep your child away from him or her.
2. Allow and encourage your children to bring their friends over. Use your home and be there to guide them and their friends.
3. Allow and encourage your children to go places with good companions.
  - a) Parents may have to say “no” many times, but they need to look for and take advantage of opportunities to say “yes.” If evil companions corrupt, what can good companions do (cp. 1 Samuel 18:1-4)?
  - b) When they do not want to be around the good ones, there’s a problem.
  - c) Make sure you don’t have evil companions yourself. Make friends and maintain relationships with godly people (2 Kings 2:2; Romans 16:3-4).
4. It is such a shame to till soil, plant good seed, fertilize, weed, and water, only to lose the garden to some little, unsuspecting insect.

##### **B. Music.**

1. Virtually all forms of popular music today contain filth set to notes — the doctrines of Satan.
2. Music should teach and admonish elements of godly propriety (Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:16). Do you encourage your children to remember and recite the lyrics of good psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs?

##### **C. Television, movies, and the Internet.**

1. Children see violence, vengeance, immodesty, profanity, and fornication all of the time in television and movies.
2. If that weren’t bad enough, evolution, situation ethics, drinking, gambling, and homosexuality is also heavily promoted with television and movies.
3. On the Internet, pornography and other forms of rampant immorality, along with false teaching, can be found easier than in any other time in history.
4. The worst of all is mocking the idea of God and making fun of religion in general. Guard your heart (Proverbs 4:24-27)!

**Conclusion.** You cannot replace a child. If you neglect your car or house, you can simply buy a new one. But where do you go to replace a lost soul (Matthew 16:26)?

Our children are our most precious possession, being a gift and reward from the Lord (Psalm 127:3). They come to us like an empty sponge; what are they going to soak up? Put thoughts, deeds, and teaching before them that will shape them in a godly way (Proverbs 22:6).

Realizing the possibility of losing them to the devil might awaken some parents. We often take too much for granted. Raising godly children takes constant work, time, and concern. Work to avoid mistakes and help save the coming generation.