

Christians who look out for their souls. And that's what they have in a faithful local church—elders or shepherds specifically charged to look out for their souls (Acts 14:23, Titus 1:5; Hebrews 13:17; Acts 20:28-31). But it's not just them. They have others who "sincerely care" for the welfare of their soul (Philippians 2:20). Churches that designate one man as the "youth minister" miss the point entirely. Every Christian is a minister or servant (Philippians 2:3-4), and as such will look out for the young, the old, and everyone in between.

Let's not cheat our young people. What they need more than anything else is the bread of life. Listen to Jesus:

"This is the bread which came down out of heaven—not as the fathers ate and died; he who eats this bread will live forever" (John 6:58).

"I am the bread of life. He who comes to Me shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst" (John 6:35).

Anyone think they've got something better to offer?

Written by; Bryan Gibson (Plain Words from God's Word- Facebook group).

## Marietta church of Christ

8150 Driggers St.  
Jacksonville, FL 32220

### Times of Worship

Sunday:

9 am - Bible Study / 10 am - Worship / 5 pm - Worship

Wednesday:

7 pm - Bible Study/Worship

Evangelist: Devin Barber

[www.mariettacoc.com](http://www.mariettacoc.com)



### The Father of Lies

Our adversary the Devil is a known and established liar. The Bible is replete with examples of his lies and deceptions leading to the downfall of man, the fall of nations and peoples, and the unsuccessful tempting of our Lord Jesus. Yet still Satan wields his oldest and most powerful weapon. We know that he is a liar and the father of it (John 8:44). Which begs the question, what is his greatest lie?

Of course, his greatest lie was "ye shall not surely die", as that was the lie that led to man's fall from grace. It might be more timely for us to ask "what is his greatest lie today?" After all, Satan lost the war when Jesus rose from the dead, and he has been fighting a losing battle ever since. But he is still actively lying today.

He has lied and convinced people that the Catholic church is the original church of Acts 2. He has lied and convinced people the Pope is the ultimate spiritual authority on Earth. To some, he lied and convinced them that their idols such as Molech, Zeus or Odin were gods to be followed. In the middle east, his lie was that Muhammad was the final prophet of Allah (Allah is simply the Arabic word for God.)

And today in 21st century America, he has lied and convinced people he doesn't exist. There have been studies and polls showing that less and less people believe that Satan and Hell exist. What could be more dangerous than to deny the existence of a threat? If there is no Devil or Hell, then by default we would all go to Heaven. ...

There would be no need to live righteously and heed God's commands because there is no danger to avoid. One can see then how this lie is particularly insidious.

To deny the existence of Satan and Hell is to directly ignore God's constant warnings that there is a threat to our souls. We know from 1 Peter 5:8 that we are to live soberly because our adversary walks about like a roaring lion. Why would that verse exist if Satan did not? True, the New Testament was written during a time when demon possessions were occurring. Do people believe that because possessions ceased the devil just "went away"?

Make no mistake, the devil is very real and very active in the world today. To deny this is to demonstrate profound levels of ignorance to God's Word and warnings. Satan does not have the power to pluck us from God's hand, but we can absolutely choose to leave God and dwell in Satan's darkness. For many in the world, they have already sided with Satan by virtue of believing he doesn't exist. Christians are commanded to preach of God, yet we do a disservice to our fellow man if we neglect to warn them of Satan and his schemes.

A well-known proverb is "Ignorance is bliss". This is unfortunately a very true saying. To be ignorant of Satan is indeed bliss. To believe that Hell does not actually exist and that nobody will go there is comforting in a way. One of the most common denials of Hell is "How could a loving God punish people with eternal torment?". Even among the few people who do believe in Hell, they will often say that only exceptionally sinful people will go to Hell, such as serial killers or dictators. Of course, this is far from the truth. Revelation 21:8 gives a list of the kind of people who will be in Hell, and notably it says, "and all liars shall have their part...", not "just the really bad liars shall have their part."

If there was no Satan, there would be no sin to resist. If Hell did not exist, there would be nothing to avoid. Everyone would go to Heaven for their afterlife, which is a comforting, yet misguided thought. This fallen world is Satan's kingdom, and he will use every weapon in his arsenal to steal souls from God's light and love. One of his most effective weapons is the simple lie, from "You shall not surely die" to "You don't have to be baptized to be saved" to "I don't exist, and neither does Hell. There's nothing to worry about." As Paul warns in 2 Corinthians 2:11, let us not be ignorant of Satan's devices.

Written by; Daniel Young

## God's Youth Program

"What kind of youth program do you have?" It's a question asked by many when looking for a church to attend. Here's a better way to frame the same question, just to make sure what we do comes from God.

"What should a local church offer its youth, according to God?"

**Gospel preaching.** No, the gospel is not too outdated for today's youth. It is every bit as relevant and powerful today as when it was first preached (John 6:68; Acts 11:14; Romans 1:16; Psalms 119:9). Young people need to hear gospel preaching, and they need to hear it regularly.

**Bible classes.** They can also benefit from Bible studies geared toward them in particular. And while certain visual aids, illustrations, activities may help teachers better communicate truth on their level, let's not turn it into something other than a Bible study. It's not an art class, it's not social hour, and it's not time to discuss "more relevant issues." Some are amazed to learn how many Bible stories even two- and three-year-olds can learn.

**Worship activities in the assembly,** the very ones we read about in the New Testament, where spiritual edification, not entertainment, is the result (1 Corinthians 14:26). "Contemporary style" services may entertain the young, but offer very little to feed their souls. Let's go to the New Testament, look at what those local churches did, and then just follow their example. That's God's way, and we simply cannot (dare not) improve on that.

**Godly or righteous examples.** Young people need good role models (Philippians 3:17), people who "hear" AND "do" (James 1:21-25). They need the ones in the Bible, which they'll learn all about from sermons and Bible studies. But they also need the people around them to be "a pattern of good works" (Titus 2:7). That's the beauty of this local church arrangement the Lord devised—He puts young people in the company of other people who can show them what it means to be a follower of Christ.

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