

When Do Most People Accept Christ?

Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me...for the kingdom of Heaven belongs to such as these." (Matthew 19:14, NIV)

I have recently come across an interesting research study done by the Barna Research Group out of California that really shows how we need to keep on reaching kids!

The company's nationwide surveys have determined the probability of people accepting Christ as their savior in relation to a person's age. The data show that if a person has not accepted Jesus Christ as their savior before the age of 14, the likelihood that they ever will is extremely small.

Based on a nationwide survey of more than 4200 young people and adults, the data show that people from ages 5 through 13 have a 32% probability of accepting Christ as their savior. Young people from the ages of 14 through 18 have just a 4% likelihood of doing so, while adults (ages 19 through death) have only a 6% probability of making that choice.

Other studies by the Barna group have shown that the majority of people give their lives to Christ before the age of 18, but this is the first study that has shown the probabilities at various ages. It also has shown that the evangelistic impact is getting younger.

The study points out that children and adolescents are most impacted evangelistically by family members, peers and their youth group (e.g. Sunday school, Kids Church, AWANA, VBS, etc). In fact, the years prior to age 12 are when a majority of children make their decision as to whether or not they will follow Christ.

George Barna, president of the firm that conducted the research, analyzed the data. Barna stated, "The statistics are eye-opening because they show how little evangelistic impact we are having in America upon teenagers and adults. However, that does not mean that teenagers and adults cannot be reached with the gospel. It simply challenges the approaches currently used to reach those individuals."

The study clearly notes, however, that the greatest evangelistic window currently available is among young children.

We have a great opportunity and challenge before. Let's do it!