

DO YOU LOVE YOUR CHILDREN?

Take them to church at least once a week.

Pray together at least once a day –
mealtimes and bedtime come to
mind.

1Ti 4.7 But have nothing to do with worldly fables
fit only for old women. On the other hand,
discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness; (8)
for bodily discipline is only of little profit, but
godliness is profitable for all things, since it holds
promise for the present life and also for the life to
come.

I am often reminded of that phrase I underlined in
v. 8 -- is godliness useful in this life?

A great number of people don't believe so!

On average last year, 36 percent of Americans in ABC News/Washington Post polls identified themselves as members of a Protestant faith, extending a gradual trend down from 50 percent in 2003.

A recent study from some folks at Harvard, who probably never read 1Tim 4.8 *said that godliness is profitable for this present life* is indeed the case!

“Associations of Religious Upbringing With Subsequent Health and Well-Being From Adolescence to Young Adulthood: An Outcome-Wide Analysis”

They followed 5,600 to 7,400 young people and their parents and looked at what religion did for them 8 to 14 years later.

<https://academic.oup.com/aje/advance-article/doi/10.1093/aje/kwy142/5094534>

This comparison looked at children, age 12-19, and mothers age 35-54, who had been taken to church once a week or more (57%), with children who were taken to church less than once a week (27%), or never (16%).

I named these groups the “religious”, the “Holiday” and the “atheists/agnostics”, but all of them had about the same education and income levels.

The only thing that I noticed in differences is that 94% of the religious group were married, with 89% of the Holiday group and 88% of the atheists.

Gal 5:22-23 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, (23) *gentleness, self-control*; against such things there is no law.

It turns out God got it right again.

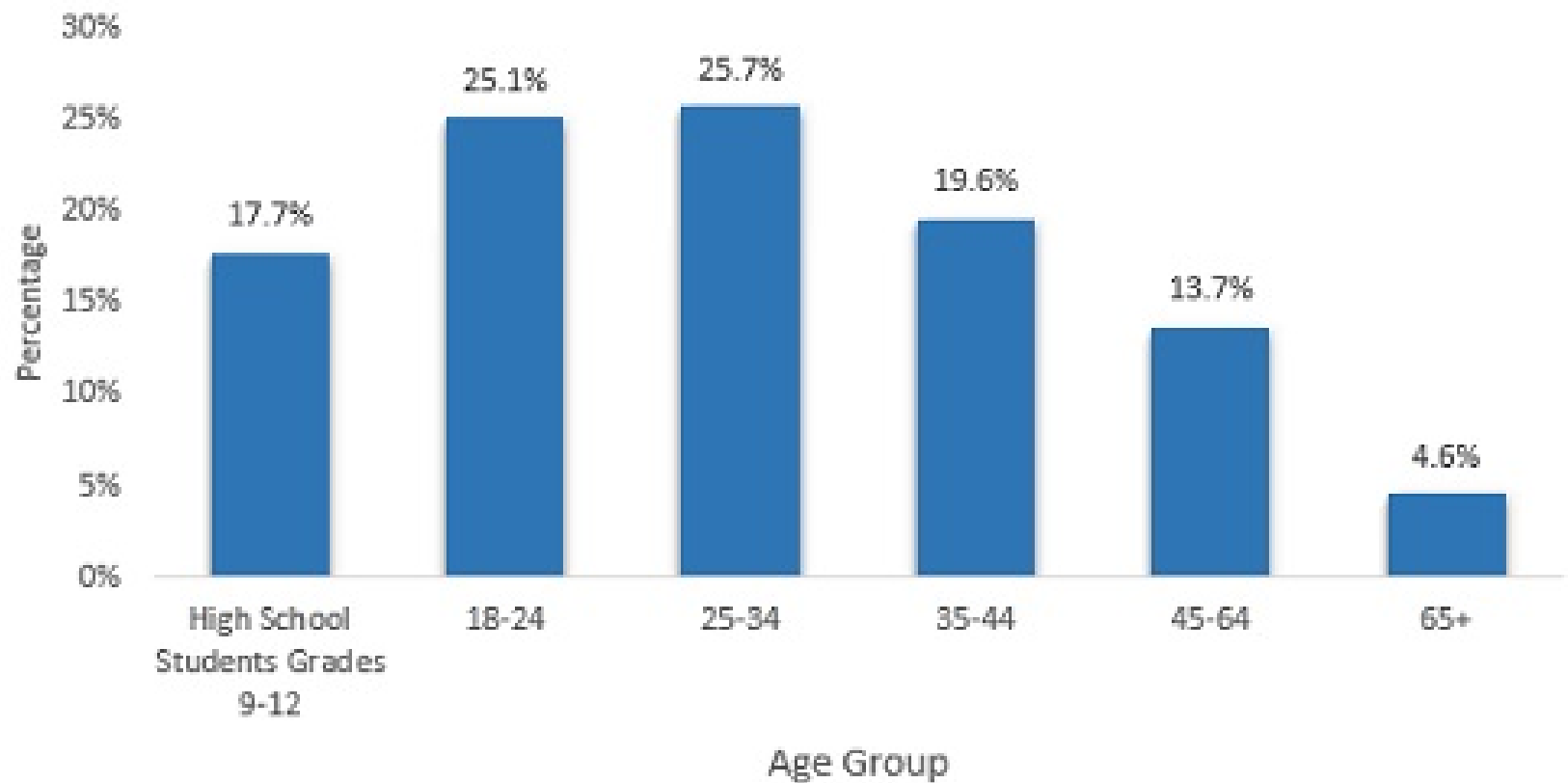
Following the children of the religious group for 9 years showed they had significantly less depressive symptoms, depression diagnosis, anxiety symptoms or diagnosis, and less trauma.

Gal 5:19 Now the deeds of the flesh are evident,
which are: immorality, impurity, sensuality, (20)
idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy,
outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions,
(21) envying, drunkenness, carousing, and things
like these, of which I forewarn you just as I have
forewarned you that those who practice such
things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.

Let's take a look at some "deeds of the flesh" --
sorcery (drug use) and drunkenness

Children whose parents took them to church
suffered from binge drinking 8% less than the
Holiday group.

Who Binge Drinks?



Binge drinking is defined as men consume 5 or more drinks or women consume 4 or more drinks in about 2 hour

Marijuana use was 17% less by the religious and other illicit drug use was 37% less than the atheists and 25% less than the Holiday group.

Prescription drug misuse was 2% higher in the Holiday group than in the atheists, while the religious group was 16% lower.

Opioids used to treat pain: Fentanyl (Actiq, Duragesic, Fentora), hydrocodone (Lorcet, Lortab, Norco, Vicodin), oxycodone (OxyContin, OxyFast, Roxicodone)

Do you want your kids to stay off these drugs?
Bring them to church more than once a week and they'll have a better chance.

Prescription drug misuse was 2% higher in the Holiday group than in the atheists, while the religious group was 16% lower.

Central nervous system (CNS) depressants, such as benzodiazepines (Xanax, Valium, Ativan,), used to treat anxiety and sleep disorders

Stimulants, such as amphetamine (Adderall) or (Concerta, Daytrana, Methylin, Ritalin), used to treat attention deficit disorder and narcolepsy (a sleep disorder).

There are other things on the list of the deeds of the flesh in Gal 5.19: *immorality, impurity, sensuality* where the religious folks do well.

The number of lifetime sexual partners of the religious group was 1/3 that of Holiday or atheist groups.

1Co 6:18 So run away from sexual sin. It involves the body in a way that no other sin does. So if you commit sexual sin, you are sinning against your own body. (ERV)

The likelihood of early sexual contact was 20% lower in the religious group than that of the Holiday or atheist groups.

Heb 13:4 Marriage should be honored by everyone. And every marriage should be kept pure between husband and wife. God will judge guilty those who commit sexual sins and adultery. (ERV)

Especially important to those who care about society – others – is (you guessed it) religion.

Mat 20:28 Do as I did: The Son of Man did not come for people to serve him. He came to serve others and to give his life to save many people.”
(ERV)

When you think about the example Jesus set for us and the example we are to set for our children, religion pays off.

Frequency of volunteering was nearly twice as high among the religious group as the Holiday/atheist groups.

The likelihood of forgiveness was twice as high for the religious.

When you think about it, why would an atheist forgive anyone unless it was to their advantage?

Jesus taught His disciples to pray, Luk 11:4 “And forgive us our sins, For we ourselves also forgive everyone who is indebted to us.”

All of these things simply show that God's way is best -- *since it holds promise for the present life and also for the life to come.*

Concerning the *life to come.*

I hope you agree that we don't do all of the above simply because our children will do better, but rather because we believe in God and what He has told us.

Joh 14:1-3 Let not your heart be troubled: believe in God, believe also in me. (2) In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you. (3) And if I go and prepare a place for you, I come again, and will receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.

If you believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, do what the Scriptures shows you.

Act 8:36-39 And as they went along the road they came to some water; and the eunuch said, "Look! Water! What prevents me from being baptized?" (37) And Philip said, "If you believe with all your heart, you may." And he answered and said, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." (38) And he ordered the chariot to stop; and they both went down into the water, Philip as well as the eunuch; and he baptized him. (39) And when they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord snatched Philip away; and the eunuch saw him no more, but went on his way rejoicing.