

// Parent Ministry

Going on For God:

Encouraging the Next Generation to Grow Up & Go on For God

A Practical Conversation for Christian Parents AND Church Leaders

Author: Mel Walker

REVIEW:

Author of *Inter-Generational Youth Ministry*, Mel Walker is back with another powerful book of practical wisdom for parents and leaders about the partnership of church and home in the faith journey of the next generation. The heart of this veteran youth worker shines through on every page as he passionately gives us real steps to take in walking beside the next generation, so they will continue on with God and not leave faith after their teen years. This straight-forward and easy to read book is a must read for today's church leaders and Christian parents.

SNAPSHOT

"What Do We Want for Our Kids?"

If you are a Christian parent or grandparent, **OR** if you are a pastor, youth pastor, or other church leader, I think you would agree that we want our kids to grow up and go on for God as adults, right?

Youth ministry was never intended to be a *terminal* program where teenagers graduate from high school, finish their involvement in youth group, and then quit participating in church. Yet, that is what is happening in the lives of so many emerging adults. The percentages vary, but the reality behind the statistics remains: too many of our young adults are leaving the church and walking away from God once they leave youth ministry. It's time to stop the exodus!

I don't claim to be a parenting expert, and I'm not currently a pastor or elder, but as a longtime youth ministry insider, I wanted to do *something* about this negative trend. This new book is my attempt to participate in a dialogue with Christian parents AND church leaders about our mutual long-term objective for our kids. The Bible is clear that BOTH the church (see Ephesians 4:11-16) and Christian parents (see Ephesians 6:1-4) are designed by God to help the next generation grow towards spiritual maturity.



Many of today's parents understand that it takes dedication on their part for their kids to be involved in community soccer leagues, ballet lessons, or some other extra-curricular activity. Yet, more and more families are not committing to God's work in the world today – His church.

The Lord has given me the opportunity to visit approximately 30 churches each year – and I have done that for almost 30 years. Plus, I am a parent of 3 now-adult children – all of whom are serving the Lord in career ministry; and (proudly) I am a grandfather to 8 grandchildren. My 40-plus years of active involvement in various aspects of youth ministry has given me a unique perspective to be an observer of cultural and church-life trends. The Lord has put a growing burden on my heart to be a voice in this dialogue about churches and Christian parents encouraging our kids to grow up and go on for God.

I am also an enthusiastic champion of God's grace doing amazing things in and through the lives of young people through His church. I've seen it happen – over and over again. That's why I encourage Christian parents everywhere I go to make the commitment necessary to make the church (and especially children's and youth ministry) a top priority in their lives and schedules.

In my new book *Going on For God: Encouraging the Next Generation to Grow Up and Go on For God*, I discuss the following important topics (and more) facing the church and the home in today's post-Christian and post-church culture:

- Are the church and the family in trouble?
- Why are emerging generations leaving the church, and what can we do about it?
- Why is the church crucial for today's families?
- What are the various approaches of family ministry?
- Is it a danger sign if "the family" is more important than the church?
- Why is mentoring so important for the church?
- How can the church *be a family* in today's culture?

I have written this book to be a practical and helpful conversation for Christian parents AND church leaders who are interested in proactive suggestions for encouraging the next generation to grow up and go on for God. The principles and ideas in *Going on For God* were basically gained from my observations of what God is doing in and through His church. Take it from a fellow struggler on this journey – it's certainly worth the effort. We're in this together.

If you are interested in more information about the book or about ways I might be able to minister to you or to your church, take a look at: www.GoingOnForGod.com.

- Mel Walker

