THE EFFECT OF CHURCH ATTENDANCE ON TEENAGERS MORAL BELIEFS.

Religion is a very core part of life which determines ones morals and beliefs. It determines how people view life. It is an interest, a belief, or an activity that is very important to a group of people. Religious based morals and norms help to maintain conformity in the society. Wen adolescents believe religion is important, frequent church attendance further strengthens their moral beliefs. Church attendance is essential is the religion of Christianity as attending church helps to strengthen your faith and one is able to associate with the fellow members which gives a good sense of belonging. The church serves as a great help to teenagers but today research has shown that teenagers attend regularly only for a season and as they grow older their history of regular church attendance is being pulled away as they get busy with other things like getting to college, they start searching for jobs after school and so on. The church has several benefits in the lives of its members.

Church attendance has been found to have effect on teenagers’ grades in school. Students in grades 7 to 12 who went to church weekly also had lower dropout rates and felt more a part of their schools because they have regular contact with adults from various generations who serve as role models. Their parents are more likely to communicate with their friends' parents. They develop friendships with peers who have similar norms and values and can also assist them with school work. They're also more likely to participate in extracurricular activities. Regular church attendance, high subjective importance of faith and years spent in religious service groups are associated with high self-esteem and more positive self-attitudes. They feel more confident in their selves due to the teachings in the church as they are taught how to behave in any situation they find themselves in according to biblical standards.

Church attendance alongside praying privately, reading scriptures, reading religious articles and meditation on God’s word has been found to protect against anti-social behaviors such as substance use and abuse, truancy and sexual activity, and conduct problems including harm to others. As we know that teenagers of today are more subject to harm than ever and can easily be influenced, church attendance teaches them the right way of life and they are able to relate and share their problems with one another. The teenagers are also guided in the right manner as they are taught that sex is only meant for the married and trying to satisfy all our earthly desires won’t take us anywhere as it only leads to us be discontent. Regular church attendance helps teens to know the right pattern of behavior when with people and they also learn that causing harm to people is wrong as it only causes more harm. Substance abuse is wrong and bad for the health as the bible even teaches us to condemn such acts of drunkenness which is alcohol abuse ass the end results are unfavorable.

Research has shown that people that attend church are less likely to be depressed as religiosity protects against negative youth psychological outcomes such as depression and they have a better life attitude and self-image. Teenagers’ participation in in worship and other religious activities predicted less depression cases. Teenagers have more hope about life and tend to have more strength and faith to face life’s difficulties. Although the future often feels hopeless and life meaningless but studying god’s word and dwelling on its promises gives teenagers strength to face whatsoever difficulties that come by. Eighteen percent of 12 graders who attend religious activities weekly or more say faith is important in their lives although sometimes they feel that they are up to no good but their faiths surpasses all doubt although sometimes they could struggle through depression especially while grieving over the loss of a loved one and when things are not going their way.

Religion helps in creating an ethical framework and also a regulator for values in day to day life. This particular approach helps in character building of a person. In other words, Religion acts as an agency of socialization. Thus, religion helps in building values like love, empathy, respect, and harmony. Hence church attendance also helps in building values as we teenagers learn to love unconditionally. They are even taught to love their enemies and to be kind to those in need. They learn the right attitude towards others as they learn to respect, to be polite, how to act in unfavorable situations like in an argument they are told to be slow to anger as being angry adds more fuel to the fire, they are told to speak politely to others and to be wise in all situations. The church serves as a great advantage to the teens of today it helps them in their life activities.