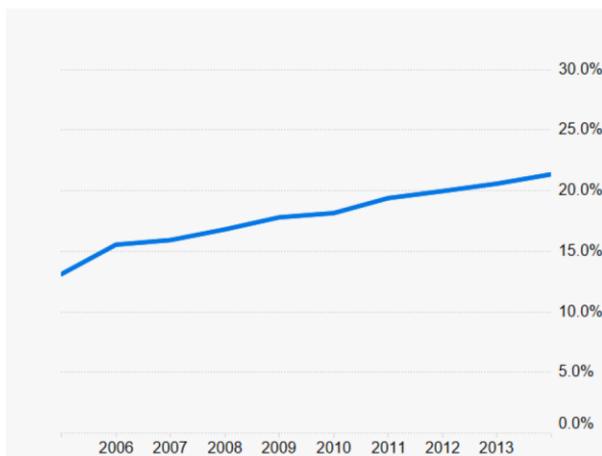


While not a true diagnostic category, the popular phrase “Failure to Launch Syndrome” describes a young adult who seems to be “stuck,” not “moving forward” or “maturing” in a way that seems appropriate for his/her age and expectations as well as the expectations of parents and loved ones.

Based on census data, a recent report from real estate hub [Zillow](#) said that in 2014 an estimated 10 million Americans between the ages of 24 and 34 still lived with their parents. That is about 21.4 percent of that age group

That's up significantly from the 13.1 percent in 2005.

Figure 1: How Many Young Adults Live with their Mom? 



In 2014, about 14.1 percent of 24 to 34-year-olds living at home were unemployed. The majority of those who had not moved out yet were male.

This has been called by social scientists....

**A Failure to Launch!**

There are actually live in programs for young adults who suffer from this disorder.

In 2006 a movie was made about a young man and some of his friends who had this disorder. The young man was Matthew McConaughey.

Apparently, there was a similar disorder going on in the church according to the book of Hebrews.

[Heb. 5:12-14](#)

[12 For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the first principles of the oracles of God; and you have come to need milk and not solid food. 13 For everyone who partakes only of milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, for he is a babe. 14 But solid food belongs to those who are of full age, that is, those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.](#)

Instead of maturing and taking on the responsibility of discipling others, there was apparently a significant problem with believers in the church who were not becoming skilled in the use of the Word of God and sharing the gospel with others. They remained babes in their spiritual maturity. There was a failure to launch.

This was having an incredible impact on the advancement of the gospel through this early church.

Various statistics show that this failure to launch disorder is occurring in the church today.

## [Churchgoers Believe in Sharing Faith, Most Never Do](#)

by [Jon D. Wilke](#)

[When it comes to discipleship, churchgoers struggle most with sharing Christ with non-Christians according to a recent study of church-going American Protestants.](#)

[The study conducted by LifeWay Research found 80 percent of those who attend church one or more times a month, believe they have a personal responsibility to share their faith, but 61 percent have not told another person about how to become a Christian in the previous six months.](#)

[These distressing results came from an extensive discipleship research project focused on measuring spiritual maturity in individuals. Overall, LifeWay Research found eight biblical attributes consistently evident in the lives of maturing believers. Of those eight, "Sharing Christ" has the lowest average score among Protestant church attendees.](#)

### ["The Greatest Story Ever Told"](#)

[It is a 1965 American epic film produced and directed by George Stevens. It is a retelling of the story of Jesus Christ, from the Nativity through the Resurrection.](#)

In 2016, another epic film could be made for the church. It could be called...

### "The Greatest Story Never Told"

In the church, we possess the greatest story ever told.

Instead of being made right with God by always being right, we are made right with God by Jesus Christ making us right!

Every disciple of Jesus in His church is supposed to mature and start discipling others and this would include sharing the greatest story ever told with others. (Matthew 4:19; Matthew 28:19-20)

But the reality is there is a failure to launch occurring in the majority of believers that attend church.

The failure to share the gospel is just one sign that there is a general epidemic of failure to launch happening in the church.

What is causing this problem in the church that we are calling Failure to Launch?

- Failure to Launch is caused by misinformation and poor training by Pastors. Pastors are not teaching their members that making disciples is every member's responsibility.
- Failure to Launch is caused by Pastors who are using a poor strategy for making disciples in the church. Pastors have employed a strategy to make disciples that secular professional educators would say is destined to fail.
- Failure to Launch is caused by a failure of each member to use the training they have received from their Pastor. If you do not use your training to disciple others, you lose it. This is true in learning a foreign language. This is true in math. This is true in learning God's Word.

This was a problem in the churches that Hebrews was written to.  
Heb. 5:14 But solid food belongs to those who are of full age, that is, those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.

- Failure to Launch is caused by sin issues in our heart.

This was also a problem in the churches that Hebrews was written to.

Heb 3:7-12

7 Therefore, as the Holy Spirit says:

"Today, if you will hear His voice, 8 Do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion, In the day of trial in the wilderness, 9 Where your fathers tested Me, tried Me, And saw My works forty

years. 10 Therefore I was angry with that generation, And said, 'They always go astray in their heart, And they have not known My ways.' 11 So I swore in My wrath, 'They shall not enter My rest.'"

12 Beware, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God;

NKJV

For the next several weeks we are going to examine this problem and what needs to happen at Western Hills for us to overcome this problem.

Following the conquest of Canaan by Joshua until the formation of the first Kingdom of Israel and Judah (ca. 1150–1025 BC), the Israelite tribes formed a loose confederation. No central government existed in this confederation; in times of crisis, the people were led by *ad hoc* chieftains, known as judges.

A **Biblical judge** was a ruler or a military leader who would unite the tribes as well as someone who presided over legal hearings and made decisions based on the law of Moses.

A man named Samuel was the last of the 15 Hebrew Judges and the first of the major prophets who began to prophesy inside the Land of Israel. According to the text of the Books of Samuel, he also anointed the first two kings of the Kingdom of Israel: Saul and David.

Samuels had two sons. He hoped that his sons would succeed him as judge in Israel.

The following story takes place in the 11<sup>th</sup> century BC. It can be found in I Samuel 8. (Tell the story).

1 Sam 8:1-5

Now it came to pass when Samuel was old that he made his sons judges over Israel. 2 The name of his firstborn was Joel, and the name of his second, Abijah; they were judges in Beersheba. 3 But his sons did not walk in his ways; they turned aside after dishonest gain, took bribes, and perverted justice.

4 Then all the elders of Israel gathered together and came to Samuel at Ramah, 5 and said to him, "Look, you are old, and your sons do not walk in your ways. Now make us a king to judge us like all the nations."

NKJV

Samuel's sons had an incredible spiritual leader, their father. From early childhood his whole life was devoted to God's service. He was called by God to be a priest and prophet. As a prophet God spoke directly to Samuel. Samuel lived a blameless life.

But in spite of having such an incredible spiritual leader, his sons, Joel and Abijah, failed to launch. Instead they acted foolishly and did not fulfill their mission.

1 Samuel 8:3

3 But his sons did not walk in his ways; they turned aside after dishonest gain, took bribes, and perverted justice.  
NKJV

Why did they fail to launch and act so foolishly?  
They coveted the things of this world.

Can you relate to Joel and Abijah?  
Have you ever turned aside after dishonest gain? Have you ever taken bribes? Have you ever perverted justice for your own personal benefit? All of us have done this when we were children.

As an adult, you may have never taken dishonest gain, or taken bribes, or perverted justice for your own personal benefit, but can you relate to the struggle they had with coveting the things of the world?

Can you relate to longing for things and setting your heart on things that God forbids? God forbids us to covet what belongs to our neighbor, money, fame, and power.

Even our family can become something that we covet?  
Jesus said...

Luke 14:25-26

25 Now great multitudes went with Him. And He turned and said to them, 26 "If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple.

NKJV

Whatever we covet becomes the goal of our life!

- It dictates how what we live for.
- It dominates how we spend our time and money.
- It determines the choices we make.

Even if we convert to Christianity, we will remain babes in Christ until we change what we covet. We will become another example of a failure to launch.

What should we covet?

Ps. 19:9-10

9 The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever: the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether.

10 More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold: sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb.

KJV

Prov. 8:10-11

10 Receive my instruction, and not silver,

And knowledge rather than choice gold;  
11 For wisdom is better than rubies,  
And all the things one may desire cannot be compared with her.  
NKJV

Col. 3:1-4

1 If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.

2 Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.

3 For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.

4 When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.

KJV

And why should we covet things above and not things on the earth?

- It is foolish to covet things on the earth.
- It is our eternal nature to covet things above.
- It is the way to lay up treasures in heaven.
- It is how we glorify Jesus.

Has this change occurred in you? Do you covet the things of the world? Or do you covet things above?

Are you straddling the fence? Jesus called this spiritual condition lukewarm.

Rev. 3:15-16

15 I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I could wish you were cold or hot.

16 So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of My mouth.

NKJV

This change in our heart about what we covet must occur in us for us to grow spiritually and become disciples that teach others.

For some it seems to occur when they are converted.

For some it is a process that occurs as they share life with those are mature.

For others it seems that they have to go through some kind of crisis before this change occurs.

For some it never occurs.

For some of you I would say to you...

Heb. 5:12

12 For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the first principles of the oracles of God; and you have come to need milk and not solid food.

Do you want to change? Or do you want to remain babes in Christ?

Are you even a babe in Christ? Have you received Jesus? If not, will you receive Jesus?

If you have received Jesus and you are a babe in Christ are you willing to really start growing? Today, would you set your affections on things above rather than things on the earth?

Would you surrender to the Lord's call on your life to make disciples?

You will not have to make this change on your own.

God has given you the Holy Spirit to help you make the change and maintain the change.

God has given you His Word to help you make this change and maintain this change.

God has given you the church to help you make this change and maintain this change.

Is He working in your heart right now? Is He convicting you that you covet things on the earth? Will you confess that to Him? Will you set your affections on things above?