

Dealing with Satanism in our Youth by Lloyd Robertson

There is the old story about sadomasochism. The masochist looks at the sadist and says "hurt me". The sadist smiles slightly, looks back and says "No".

Different motivations can trigger the same action. There are different reasons why a young person may dabble in Satanic practices. Individuals from northern communities who have worried about these youth are often at a loss understanding their motivations.

Some youth are simply curious. Christianity has given Satan a lot of free publicity over the past number of eons and many youth want to hear it from the old goat's mouth, so to speak. This may explain the popularity of the Church of Satan website on the internet. It's actually pretty tame stuff and I suspect most of the visitors to this site go away disappointed.

The largest percentage of "Satanic" youth that I have worked with are seeking attention. They paint a few symbols on the school wall, dress in black, listen to Marilyn Manson music and bait some Christians (usually their parents and teachers). The adults get frantic, moralize, assert their authority, call the priest, bring in the "occult specialist" and, generally, convince the youth that they have something going here. This ensures that they will delve deeper into the subject.

A few youth are attracted to Satanism because they believe that they will gain magical powers. This falls into the category of religious belief and is not, by itself, delusional. If, however, you tell me that you actually did fly like a bird, shape change, become invisible or give your worst enemy shingles, then I will begin to wonder.

Generally, a person wanting magical powers is lazy or grandiose. The lazy person does not want to do the work necessary to gain personal power and recognition by legitimate means. He is looking for an easy fix. The grandiose person wants to accomplish things that may not be humanly possible. So he turns to inhuman forces.

If we exclude the attention seekers and the merely curious, the majority of youth who are "seriously" into Satanism are motivated by revenge. European Satanism is a history of vengeful desire.

From the 10th to the 13th centuries Christianity consolidated its hold on north-central and western Europe. In the process they killed up to two million followers of the old "pagan" religions.

Many of the survivors secretly refused to worship the Christian god, Jehovah. At the same time they lost faith in their old gods who had failed to protect them. Seeking revenge, they turned to the only god that the Christians seemed to fear, Satan.

There was no internet and no Church of Satan that they could turn to learn how to worship their new god, So they made it up as they went along. They borrowed the Christian cross and turned it upside down. They turned the Wiccan pentagram upside down and called it a "baphomet". They

borrowed much from the Book of Revelations in the Christian bible as well as much from the older Wiccan and Druidic religious practices.

Similarly, vengeful Satanic youth have also been hurt. But the hurt has been different. I have found that physical or sexual abuse and neglect are common. These youth identify Christianity with their families or with the society that has delivered these hurts. It is not uncommon for these youth to cry when their hurts have been acknowledged in therapy. Such emotions are often the beginning of fruitful treatment.

Prevention is better than treatment. The eight principles of good parenting listed in my last column are a basis for prevention. In particular, it is important to show all children that they are worthy, valued and loved. They also deserve to be raised in a secure environment free from abuse and superstitious fear.