

CONTRIBUTING FACTORS FOR WHY SOME FOLKS FROM NON-ANABAPTIST BACKGROUND LEAVE ANABAPTIST AND SIMILAR CHURCHES...

(reasons given by the folks themselves)

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1. “We will never belong”.

- a. Cannot seem to penetrate the ethnic Anabaptist (EA) culture.
- b. So much revolves around family and extended family that they never feel like they truly belong.
- c. Children from non-Anabaptist background (NAB) homes are sometimes laughed at, pushed to the side, or even picked on by EA adults and children
- d. Feel like they are an Anabaptist “project” rather than a brother or sister in the Lord

2. “We can never measure up.”

- a. Cultural; Housekeeping, Culinary arts,
- b. Values; Child training, Bible Knowledge, Work ethic, Thriftiness
- c. Social; Teamwork; submission to a group; cross gender reserve; listening skills

3. “Ethnic Anabaptists are partial to their own families and those of their ethnic background.”

- a. NAB’s sometimes feel they are held to a higher standard than EA’s. Minister’s children sometimes get preferred treatment, etc.

4. “Ethnic Anabaptists have inconsistencies that they are unwilling to look at.”

- a. In some Anabaptist settings, men have no problem asking women to wear homemade clothes while they themselves wear store bought clothes which allow them to blend with society.
- b. EA’s often expect NAB’s to disregard their parent’s values as they apply for membership in an Anabaptist church; yet EA’s will highly regard their own

parents values, even if those values are a spiritual drag or detriment to the spiritual life of the congregation.

- c. EA's often think of themselves as having one of the best expressions of Biblical Christianity and this attitude causes them to defend their inconsistencies and short comings.

5. "Many ethnic Anabaptists don't appreciate their spiritual heritage even if they outwardly conform to it. Many are running away from their heritage."

6. "Too many ethnic Anabaptists are not on a spiritual quest."

- a. NAB's sometimes surpass EA's spiritually only to discover that EA's have reached a plateau and are not interested in journeying further as a congregation
- b. The NAB is expected to grow spiritually but it is assumed the average EA does not
- c. One NAB says that his biggest critique of conservative Anabaptists is that they live out of the past rather than collectively seeking how the Holy Spirit wants to guide their church and their movement in the present.

7. "Anabaptists too often confuse personal preferences with Biblical injunctions."

8. "Being a disciplined Christian is just too hard for us!"

9. "The church was not 'biblical enough', 'conservative enough', 'spiritual enough', etc."

10. "The conservative Anabaptists at the church I attended couldn't get along with each other."