

LIBERTY BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

FACTORS FOR SUCCESSFUL ADOLESCENT MINISTRY

IN THE LOCAL CHURCH TODAY

A Thesis Proposal Submitted to
Liberty Baptist Theological Seminary
In fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree

DOCTOR OF MINISTRY

By

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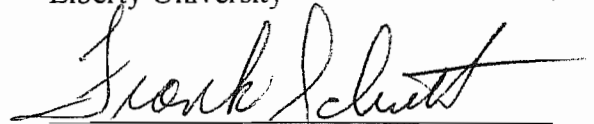
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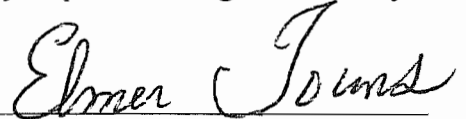
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ABSTRACT

FACTORS FOR SUCCESSFUL ADOLESCENT MINISTRY IN THE LOCAL CHURCH TODAY

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Liberty Baptist Theological Seminary, 2001

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The purpose of this project is to wade through a number of ideologies and practices that pose as successful in the venue of local church ministry and identify those factors that truly reflect success. This will be based upon surveying several prominent veteran youth workers. The identified factors will be a reflection of the larger picture of youth ministry. There will also be some prognoses as to where youth ministry is headed in the near future.

Abstract length: 99 words

DEDICATION

This is dedicated to my wife, Pamela Jo, and to my kids, Joshua, Vanessa, and Jonathan. Their patience through this process has been very much appreciated. I would also like to dedicate this to my Mom and Dad. They have always been excited every step of the way.

A special thanks to Dr. Frank Schmitt for “adopting” me during my early seminary years. I continue to reap the benefits of that “adoption.”

I would also like to thank my colleagues: Dr. Lee Vukich and Dr. Elmer Towns for their support and encouragement.

A special thanks needs to be expressed to Linda Elliott for her masterful job of editing and formatting this thesis and to Daniel Broyles for getting the typing of this thesis started and to Jabez Kong for his contributions.

CONTENTS

ABSTRACT	iv
CONTENTS	vi
CHAPTER 1	1
INTRODUCTION	
Purpose of the Study	
Methodology	
Sample Survey Questions	
Statement of the Problem	
Limitations	
Definition of Terms Used in this Study	
A Review of the Literature	
The Biblical Basis of this Thesis	
CHAPTER 2	16
A PHILOSOPHY OF YOUTH MINISTRY	
Erroneous Philosophies	
The Need for Youth Ministry	
What is Success in Youth Ministry	
Goals and Objectives of Youth Ministry	
Sunday Morning Sunday School	
Conclusion	
CHAPTER 3	37
THE YOUTH MINISTER	
Introduction	
What the Youth Minister Is Not	
The Biblical Basis for the Youth Minister's Position in the Local Church	
Qualifications	
Conclusion	
CHAPTER 4	53
THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SENIOR PASTOR AND YOUTH PASTOR	
Downside Of The Pastor's Position	
What to Look for in a Pastor	
How Should a Pastor Handle His Youth Pastor?	
What Questions to Ask	

How to Treat Your Senior Pastor
Conclusion

CHAPTER 5.....	74
THE PROGRAM-CENTERED MINISTRY VERSUS THE INDIVIDUAL-CENTERED MINISTRY	
Characteristics of a Program-Centered Ministry	
Characteristics of An Individual-Centered Ministry	
Which Extreme Should Be Followed?	
Level of Holiness	
Conclusion	
CHAPTER 6.....	89
PHILOSOPHY OF ACTIVITIES	
The Evangelistic Activity	
Discipleship Activities	
Youth Camp	
Athletics	
Conclusion	
CHAPTER 7.....	102
REACHING THE UNREACHABLES	
Counseling Services	
Sponsoring Program	
Sponsorship Program Rules	
Conclusion	
CHAPTER 8.....	116
THE YOUTH MINISTER'S WIFE	
Introduction	
Qualifications of a Youth Minister's Wife	
False Expectations	
Priorities	
Conclusion	
CHAPTER 9.....	129
WHAT THE FUTURE HOLDS IN YOUTH MINISTRY	
A Historical Background	
Trends in Society	
The Sheer Numbers	
The Disappearance of Adolescence	
Post-modernity	
Future Trends And Changes In Youth Ministry	
Conclusion	

APPENDIX A	166
Volunteer staff regulations of the San Fernando Valley Juvenile Hall	
APPENDIX B	168
A Suggested List of Web Sites for the Youth Minister	
APPENDIX C	173
A Suggested List of Periodicals for the Youth Minister's Reading	
APPENDIX D	176
Miscellaneous	
APPENDIX E	193
Sample Survey Questions	
APPENDIX F	195
Youth Pastor Job Descriptions	
BIBLIOGRAPHY	203
VITA	214

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

We are living in an age where change is the only aspect of life that is consistent. Human interests change just as constantly, with interests changing from the nuclear power plant dilemma to the price of a gallon of gas. It is inevitable that when society changes, the local church follows suit, sooner or later.

Change is always a long and many times, a painful experience for the church. The machinery of denominationalism and tradition are usually the restrictive forces during change. With our hindsight being better than our foresight, we can see that the local church has made some dramatic changes. There are churches that have grown from small clusters of people meeting in an abandoned store into congregations of thousands meeting in auditoriums equipped with the latest in electronic wizardry. The church is no longer a one-room building with its entire ministry centering around the pastor. Instead, the church has developed into a complex, multi-faceted ministry in an attempt to meet the unique needs of people.

It is one of the facets of local church ministry that this writer will deal with, the facet of youth ministry. There is no doubt that youth ministry has changed simply by the fact that what it took to reach young people twenty years ago, no longer works today. Not only have methods changed, but philosophy of youth ministry has also changed.

Youth ministry philosophy is made up of what we think are priorities in youth ministry and the reasons to support them.

Purpose of the Study

Because of all these changes in local church youth ministries, there has arisen the need for an updated exposition of factors for success in this area. There will be a fine line between philosophy and practicum of youth ministry as it is discussed. They are inseparable. You cannot have one without the other. Philosophy determines what the practicum will be; practicum reflects what your philosophy is. The purpose of this study is to identify factors that will contribute to success in youth ministry.

This study will contribute in the following ways:

1. It will establish the youth minister's position as one to be held in high esteem, along with the senior pastor; and will show the need for maximum personal preparation by the youth minister.
2. It will establish a medium between program and person-oriented ministries.
3. It will give practical suggestions for activities, evangelistic opportunities, and areas of separation or holiness.
4. It will prepare the youth minister for changes in youth ministry in the coming years.

This study will attempt to answer the following questions:

1. What are the qualifications of a youth pastor, and is his position valid according to Scripture?
2. What ideology should you accept, all programming or all discipleship?

3. What is a balanced philosophy of youth ministry?
4. What is the relationship between the senior pastor and youth pastor?
5. What is a balanced philosophy of holiness?
6. What trends can we expect?

In 1980, this author wrote a thesis entitled, “Factors for Successful Adolescent Ministry in the Local Church Today.” Twenty years later, there have been quantum leaps, with regards to changes in our culture and society. These changes have had direct impact and influence on young people, as well as those youth leaders/pastors/directors who try to minister to them. Ministry experiences can give ostentatious learning curves. Now from the vantage point of a student in his forties, this author can look back and do some serious evaluation, with regards to this thesis, and more importantly, youth ministry. Did theory match practicum? Is this author a better philosopher than a practitioner?

Adolescent or youth ministry is a practical, hands-on ministry. Youth ministry, by its very nature (just like the teens), is extremely active and energetic. Young people are looking for sound bite answers to spiritually life-threatening questions. They want these answers faster than they can connect to www.you'vegotmail. Our efforts to minister to these young people must be effective and have a kind of adolescent attraction. It is a short-lived ministry, from the perspective of Christian education. (We realistically have teen-agers for a period of six to seven years, if we allow seventh through ninth grades, and then tenth through twelfth grades, give or take a grade, depending on the county's middle school grading system). Yet it is so critical in the spiritual development of an individual. This development (or lack of) will be apparent for the rest of their lives. This “window of opportunity” or even better described, “door of opportunity,” does not remain open very

long. Not only must we take advantage of it; we must do an effective job—as well as a successful one.

Methodology

In an effort to be as current as possible, the writer interviewed various noted churches about their individual youth ministries. These churches were chosen on the basis of their evangelistic outreach, influence in their community, reputation among other evangelicals, their pastor and their youth ministries. Some of the churches that participated were: Garden Grove Community in Garden Grove, California; First Baptist of Modesto, California; Thomas Road Baptist Church in Lynchburg, Virginia; Peninsula Bible Church in Palo Alto, California; First Baptist of Van Nuys, California; College Avenue Baptist Church in San Diego, California; First Presbyterian in Hollywood, California; Grace Community Church in Panorama City, California; The Church-On-The-Way in Van Nuys, California; and Bellevue Baptist Church in Memphis, Tennessee.

Larger churches were used in this study because of their leadership and achievement in ministry and outreach. It is evident that when ministers begin looking for a church example to follow and get ideas from, they go to the larger, more affluent churches. It is the smaller churches that look toward the larger churches for ministerial advice and instruction.

It should be noted that in this author's previous thesis in 1980, a chapter was devoted (Chapter 10) to future considerations in adolescent ministry. A review was made of some of these considerations and the accuracy of these predictions and their relevancy

today were evaluated. One way this was done was by looking at current youth ministry writings that deal with programming and ministry, and comparing their core theses.

Another method of evaluation was to interview ten current youth pastors/leaders, and get their input as to the accuracy and relevancy of these earlier predictions. A copy of Chapter Ten in this thesis was made available to them. From their vantage point, their opinions were solicited as to forecasts they would make regarding youth ministry.

Research, for the most part, was done in the seventies, along with a solicitation of several youth leaders who are still active in some form of youth ministry here in the year 2001, to act as evaluators of Chapter Nine, "What the Future Holds in Youth Ministry." Each of these evaluators was asked to evaluate the chapter and cite any issues and suggestions they might have, with an emphasis on foreseeing any future trends that would have an impact on the way youth ministry is done. Even though this author was looking more for affirmation than condemnation, this author encouraged the evaluators to include disagreements of any kind. Some of the evaluators included: Dr. Dave Adams, Executive Director of the National Center for Youth Ministry at Boyce College (a school of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky); Dr. Gordon Luff, Director of Lassen Pines Retreat Center in Viola, California and the first Youth Ministry Professor at Liberty University; Dr. Lee Vukich, the Executive Director of the Center for Youth Ministry and Professor of Youth Ministry at Liberty University; Mr. David May, a youth pastor at Vista Grande Baptist Church in Colorado Springs, Colorado; Mr. Tim Grandstaff, Sr., Sr. High Youth Pastor at Thomas Road Baptist Church in Lynchburg, Virginia; Mr. Ken Collins, Executive Director of Middle Tennessee Youth for Christ; and Mr. John Freel, itinerate speaker for the Toronto Airport Christian Fellowship in Toronto,

Ontario. All of these individuals have an approximate one hundred and fifty combined years of youth ministry experience. This will insure research results and conclusions to be as current as possible. Thus, the suggestions that are made will also be as current as possible.

Along with the previously mentioned church and Christian youth ministries, there was input from men who are also involved on a full-time basis in youth ministry. Among these men are Bill Muir, National Campus Life Club Director; Bill Randolph, Executive Director of Campus Life in San Fernando Valley, California; and Wayne Swearingen, youth evangelist from Indialantic, Florida. Their insight is important not only because of their involvement with young people but also because they are viewing youth ministries in local churches as an outsider looking in. This different angle will prove to be profitable.

Sample Survey Questions

The questions involved in the survey were designed to give a general overview of the youth minister's philosophy, along with some specifics to aid in comprehending his philosophy. The questions were:

- *What is your age?*
- *What is your marital status?*
- *What is your total annual salary?*
- *Educational degrees achieved?*
- *Are you ordained?*
- *How many church youth ministries have you been involved in and what was your length of ministry at each? What were your reasons for leaving?*
- *What is your average church attendance (past twelve months)?*

- *What is your average Sunday school attendance (past twelve months) in Junior High, Senior High, and College/ Career?*

_____ Jr. High

_____ Sr. High

_____ College/Career

- *What emphasis is placed on the following; number from 1-7 with number one being top priority?*

_____ Sunday school

_____ Church services

_____ Sunday evening program

_____ Wednesday Night Bible Study

_____ Scheduled activities

_____ Music groups; choir

_____ Other _____

- *What is your Sunday school format?*
- *What teaching materials get more favorable responses from your young people?*
- *What is your definition of success in youth ministry?*
- *What was your most successful activity (past twelve months) in Junior High, Senior High, and College/Career?*
- *Are you involved/cooperate with para-church organizations? Why?*
- *Where is the youth minister's position in regard to the church's organizational flow-chart?*
- *What are contributing factors to success in youth ministry?*
- *What are factors that hinder spiritual and numerical growth?*
- *What has been the greatest hindrance/obstacle in your ministry?*

- *What changes do you foresee in youth ministry during the next five years?*

Statement of the Problem

When a youth minister is looking for a way to be successful in his ministry, he invariably will look for the “answer” in one of a number of places; in books, at conferences, through other youth ministers, etc. There are factors for success in youth ministry. It has always been difficult to bridge the gap between the many varied opinions for success in youth ministry. This study will attempt to bridge those gaps and give workable, tangible principles to be a success in youth ministry. In his endless search for answers, the youth minister will accept one extreme of youth ministry without knowing what the other extremes are. This study will show that there are different ideas and views toward the various aspects of youth ministry. A synthesis of these views and ideas will be the most advantageous, ministerial productive, and spiritually fruitful.

Limitations

Some of the more identifiable limitations would be the fact that ministry applications derived from cultural trends would be from a North American grid. There is no question that a number of our societal problems and trends are unique to our North American society. Cultures in Third World countries would certainly differ when it comes to ministry applications.

Another limitation would be the issue of transition with regards to those who have been surveyed or have participated as evaluators. Transitions could, but not necessarily, mean that the individual has or has not remained in youth ministry. It could also mean

that they have moved into other roles in ministry or have taken up another occupation altogether. This could have some impact on the relevancy of their input.

Finally, there will be input, data, and opinions expressed, which will be somewhat dated. The perception will be that just because it is not current, it is not relevant. This will discourage this perception and instead, maintain the credibility and relevancy of this information with additional timely observations and gleanings.

Definition of Terms Used in this Study

To avoid any confusion and to eliminate any double meanings with certain terms, the following definitions have been made:

Youth Minister

The youth minister, also called youth director, youth pastor, youth coordinator, has the primary responsibility to plan, organize, execute, and follow through with the youth program, and is a staff member of a local church.

Adolescent

An adolescent is a young person who (1) sociologically is in a transition period, between being a dependent child and an independent adult, (2) sexually has the ability to reproduce himself biologically, (3) is emotionally self-aware, and is searching for identification, (4) chronologically is in the time span of approximately twelve to nineteen years of age, (5) culturally will become involved with a sub-culture and its values rather than that of the family, and (6) physically is marked by puberty. Occasionally, the terms, teen-agers, kids, and young people will be used with the same definition of adolescent in mind.

Local Church

A local church is a group of called-out believers who assemble together for the carrying out of God's commands and the Great Commission; and for the providing of fellowship, strength, encouragement, edification, and Christian growth to God's people.

Youth Ministry

Youth ministry is any involvement by the youth minister and the local church, whether formal or informal, that aids in reaching and teaching young people according to Matthew 28:19, 20. Another term for youth ministry that has been used interchangeably has been "student ministries." Even though the focus of this thesis is on local church youth ministry, there is some alluding to Christian youth organizations, with the intent being that Christian youth organizations are a significant contributor to youth ministry in local churches.

A Review of the Literature

A review of the literature for this thesis can be broken into four categories. Those categories are:

- Inner Life
- Leadership
- Youth Ministry Philosophy
- Youth Ministry Practicum

Inner life deals with spiritual formations within a person's life. There has been cultural ambiguity with regards to a person's public life and his/her personal or inner life.

A sampling of these books would include:

Eugene H. Peterson, *Working the Angles*, (Grand Rapids, Michigan, Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1987).¹ Eugene Peterson raises a concern. Pastors are leaving and not always for other jobs (even though it happens). It is happening in their practice and in their hearts. Peterson attempts to steer ministers back to their original calling. He devotes his writing to three areas of ministry that need to be addressed and embraced: prayer, Scripture, spiritual direction.

Another example of inner life would be Samuel D. Rima's book, *Leading from the Inside Out* (Grand Rapids, Michigan, Baker Books, 2000).² Rima looks inwardly what is on the inside of the leader. When current leadership qualities are judged on the basis of what someone can produce, Rima takes an almost surgical look at the inner man. This precision-like operation cuts to the very core of what a person is, on the inside. For the person who is "weak at heart," this book will challenge him/her to strengthen the weak areas. Rima is adamant that the private life of an individual will have direct cause and effect on his/her public life. The dumbfounded thinking of our society is that the two can be separated; that there is no correlation. Rima addresses this issue clearly, scripturally, and with relevancy.

Leadership is self explanatory. This subject is one that pundits have written volumes. Far more importantly, pundits have sadly written material based upon marketability. A book that stands head and shoulders above the typical genre would be

¹Eugene H. Peterson, *Working the Angles* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1987).

²Samuel D. Rima, *Leading from the Inside Out* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2000).

J. Oswald Sander's book, *Spiritual Leadership*, 2nd Revision (Chicago, Moody Press, 1967, 1980, 1994).³ It has sold over a half million copies. J. Oswald Sanders has written a classic on the subject of leadership. He adds the most critical adjective to leadership and that adjective is the word spiritual. Sanders describes the what, how, and why of spiritual leadership using a number of biblical examples (Moses, Elijah, Paul, Peter, Nehemiah, etc.), along with a number of his own contemporaries (Charles Finney, C. T. Studd, William Tyndale, A. B. Simpson, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, etc.). Sanders gives an attainable look at spiritual leadership. He makes it clear that leaders are not self made and also makes it clear that every Christian is in some way a leader. But instead of a life full of ambition and promise, Sanders gives a biblical view of leadership, with an emphasis on servanthood.

Youth ministry philosophy has much to do with the "why" of youth ministry. *The Godbearing Life, The Art of Soul Tending for Youth Ministry*, by Kenda Creasy Dean and Ron Foster (Nashville, Upper Room Books, 1998)⁴ is an outstanding sampling. The authors have put "ministry" back into youth ministry. They have placed emphasis in the right places and in the right order (a passion for God and a love for teen-agers). Youth ministry is relational and the presence of a concerned, caring adult is a critical part of that equation.

³J. Oswald Sanders, *Spiritual Leadership*, 2nd Revision (Chicago: Moody Press, 1967).

⁴Kenda Creasy Dean and Ron Foster, *The Godbearing Life, The Art of Soul Tending for Youth Ministry* (Nashville: Upper Room Books, 1998).

Youth ministry practicum has to do with the “what” of youth ministry. *Youth Ministry Nuts & Bolts*, by Duffy Robbins (Grand Rapids, Michigan, Zondervan Publishing House, 1990),⁵ is a book that deals with the mechanics of youth ministry. It is a practical primer that takes an exploratory venture into some of the basic components of youth ministry including team motivation, time management, budgeting, and working with parents, to name a few.

Helping the Struggling Adolescent by Dr. Les Parrott III (Grand Rapids, Michigan, Zondervan Publishing House, 2000),⁶ is an exhaustive writing on common problems adolescents face. It is written as a guide for counselors, pastors, and youth workers. Dr. Parrott has addressed the basics of being an effective helper of adolescents, struggles that adolescents are facing, and has provided over forty assessment tools to be used in assessing problems. Adolescents, at times, have desperate needs (abuse, homosexuality, obesity, parents, pornography, suicide, etc.). This book helps to meet some of those needs.

The Biblical Basis of this Thesis

Scripture indicates the importance and significance of adolescence, with all of its critical decisions that would color or taint an entire lifetime with digital clarity. There is also Scriptural evidence that our ministry efforts should be where there is some kind of

⁵Duffy Robbins, *Youth Ministry Nuts & Bolts* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1990).

⁶Les Parrott III, *Helping the Struggling Adolescent* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 2000).

“return” or receptivity. George Barna’s research group verifies this in a news release, stating that the data shows that if a person does not accept Jesus Christ before the age of fourteen, the likelihood of ever doing so is slim.⁷

Much can be said of the parallels of a shepherd and his flock. “I am the good shepherd; and I know My [sheep,] and am known by My own” (John 10:14). A shepherd knows the characteristics of his flock. The flock knows the voice of their shepherd because he has taken the time to look after them. “To him the doorkeeper opens, and the sheep hear his voice; and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out” (John 10:3). In a sense, he has established a relationship based upon trust. Surely this person in charge of kids is a pastor in the truest form of the word. It is a position that has all the benefits and responsibilities of a true elder or bishop. Pure pastoral care with adolescent distinctives is not only needed but also demanded. With so many formative habits and values being formed in the adolescent years, whether they be positive or negative, the need for a youth minister is more of a demand than ever before. Christ Himself gave His disciples instructions as to where to focus their evangelistic efforts in Luke Chapter Ten. The chapter gives some clear instruction to the disciples of Christ. They were to make plans to go to towns and villages. A closer look at the words “towns” and “villages” have a meaning that indicates the inhabitants of a particular topography or region. From a figurative perspective, adolescence would certainly fit this description, being a

⁷George Barna, “Teens and Adults Have Little Chance of Accepting Christ as Their Savior,” News Release, Barna Research Group, Ltd., 15 November 1999, 1.

sociological grouping of young people who make the landscape they inhabit distinct and adaptable to their liking. Luke Chapter Ten is also explicit in its instructions when a disciple is rejected. He is to leave and take his endeavors elsewhere. So if this is the case, it certainly builds upon the fact that ministry emphasis needs to be where it is accepted and not where it is rejected. Why waste our precious time where the message is not wanted? This is not to sound precocious. It is, however, a call to frugality with our resources of time, people, and money.

CHAPTER 2

A PHILOSOPHY OF YOUTH MINISTRY

In order to have any degree of success in youth ministry, the youth pastor must have the proper philosophy. His philosophy of youth ministry will determine what his practical ministerial efforts will be among the young people. If his philosophy is in error, his efforts will soon follow suit.

Erroneous Philosophies

Minimal Effort

There have been some general philosophical errors from past years of youth ministry that have managed to filter into local churches today. One of those errors is the idea that youth ministry needs only minimal effort. It may be true that years ago minute efforts in youth ministry succeeded. That time is no more.

In George Barna's book, *Generation Next*, Barna deals with the spiritual aspect of Generation X, (generally speaking those born between the late 60s and early 80s), giving the church a report card on its progress in the area of outreach (there is a perception of inflexibility, there is no room in the church, and the two are on different wavelengths). The bottom line is that the church must upgrade its efforts or be forever irrelevant with this perceived lack-luster effort for God. He also states that close to eighty five percent

of decisions made for Christ will be made before a person's eighteenth birthday.¹ This sobering statistic has been consistent over the years just as it was when first introduced by Campus Crusade for Christ in the mid 1970s. Luke 19:10 states the very reason why Christ came to this earth, "For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save those who are lost."

Technical Downgrading

Youth ministry cannot be done with the methodology of ten years ago. Contemporary methodology is mandatory to be a success in youth ministry. Young people are coping nicely with advanced technology in schools and at home. Their educational material surpasses any material that was taught five years ago. Facts and knowledge are a mouse click away. They play with games that are made of the latest technological and computer hardware. Youth ministry is no place for the technologically timid. Because adolescents are so familiar with technology, the youth minister must also get familiar with "techno-speak." Technology must be something that is embraced, not shied away from. Technology must be integrated almost to the point where it is assimilated without a lot of fanfare. Without this effort, youth ministry will be viewed as archaic and irrelevant.

Underfinanced

One philosophy of past youth ministries is that of programming with the least

¹George Barna, *Generation Next* (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 1995), 77.

amount of money. The thought of spending money on programming to some is considered absolutely unnecessary. There are those that hold to the opinion that if they did not have the opportunities that youth ministries offer today, then why should anyone else have them? The reasoning is that they turned out all right, so why should not the youth of today's church?

There is no doubt that youth programming today is going to cost. For some time youth ministry has operated on donated time, money, and effort. Obviously donations from people are still needed but the carrying out of the youth program is going to require regular budgeted money. It is clear that if a body of believers, a local church or Christian organization, has a mandate for evangelization, there should be a corresponding correlation in their efforts and resources aimed at the age group of adolescence. Dawson Macalister, prominent youth speaker and radio talk show host said, "If a church tells me that they are serious about evangelism, I ask them to show me their youth budget."² Now you may have only a hundred dollars a year in your budget. If you do, you have a problem; a problem that you should seek to change. We need to reassess our values and our priorities. We need to change our views in the local church in this realm.³

²Dawson MacAllister, personal interview held during meeting of youth pastors in Lynchburg, Virginia, 1 April 2000.

³Opinion expressed by Nido R. Quebin, author and lecturer, in a taped lecture "Philosophy of Youth Ministry" in High Point, North Carolina, 1974.

The Need for Youth Ministry

Large Numbers

The need for youth ministry is clearly apparent. In 1979, *ABC News* reported, "There are more teen-agers today than ever before in American history. There are approximately 20 million teen-agers in the United States."⁴

The numbers of adolescents will demand the attention of an increased number of adults.

Including their parents, teen-agers have the (admittedly divided) attention of thirty-six million adults. To their parents, add a million middle school and high school teachers, instructors, and coaches. Add a half a million church-based youth workers, three million employers, and sixteen million retailers, marketers, officers of the court, and, of course, demographers. And as long as we're counting, let's add that only a fraction of global teens live in North America. Before long, two billion teen-agers will inhabit this planet. Let me repeat that so you don't have to reread the sentence: In the years ahead two billion teen-agers will call this world their home.⁵

To carry out the Great Commission found in Matthew 28, the local church is going to have to take the Gospel to this young generation. Ministering to this mass of adolescents is going to require adolescent-gear methodology and not child-adult techniques. It is going to require programming that appeals to the adolescent and not to

⁴Statement made during ABC News presentation, "20/20," 12 November 1979.

⁵Jim Hancock, *Raising Adults* (Colorado Springs: Pinon Press, 1999), 7.

children or adults. Ministering to young people will require a contemporary approach to communication, in large and small groups.

Teen Problems

Besides the magnitude of the adolescent population, the need of youth ministry is reflected by the magnitude of problems young people face. During a testimonial time at a 1974 summer youth camp in northern California, the young people were publicly describing some of the problems they were facing at the present time. The purpose of the public description of their problems was to have other young people relate to them and attempt to solve their problems either through prayer or personal involvement. Their problems ranged from a drunken father who beat them each time he got drunk, to being the main connection for drugs at their junior high school, to parents who were involved in organized crime. The evangelist for that week at camp expressed in absolute amazement, "I have never heard such a variety and seriousness of problems faced by teen-agers in one church."⁶ Peter Boudoin, an author who is a theological combination of Baptist, Catholic, and Pentecostal, describes the reasons for the plight of adolescence today,

There are plenty of reasons to feel deeply sad.
When a generation bears the weight of so many failures-
including AIDS, divorce, poor schools, recessions, youth
poverty, teen suicide, outrageous educational and living
expenses, failure of government religious institutions,
national debt, high taxes, environmental devastation, drugs,
parents that need to be parented, violence, unstable

⁶Statement by Wayne Swearingen, Youth Evangelist, in Fresno, California, 18 July 1979.

economic security, premature loss of childhood—how can suffering not be an important part of one's identity?⁷

Boudoin brings attention to issues of adolescence that go deeper than the previously mentioned ones.

But beyond these dramatic issues there are more, many more, that are subtle yet equally serious. High on the list is the departure of adults from the lives of kids. The lack of adult supervision and time spent doing constructive, cooperative activities are important effects of other negative influences in the social environment for kids. Kids home alone are more vulnerable to every cultural poison they encounter than they would be if backed up by adults.⁸

Adolescent Morality

Much can be said about the lowering of morals among young people. Young people are confronted with the decision to swallow the debased morality of society. They are bombarded daily with sexual innuendoes and overtones in books, magazines, movies, radio, television, and the Internet. With all of this pressure, it is not surprising that "one out of every twenty American teen-age girls becomes pregnant."⁹

One author has described this lowering of morals as a cultural toxicity.

The toxicity on our culture can be measured by violent crime, lower achievement, higher rates of pregnancy, the percentage of America's children living in

⁷Tom Boudoin, *Virtual Faith* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1998), 104.

⁸James Garbarino, *Raising Children in a Socially Toxic Environment* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1995), 5.

⁹Beth Nissen, "Young Girls Still Go to Home for Unwed, But Shame Has Gone," *The Wall Street Journal*, 13 December 1978, p. 1, col. 4.

poverty, sexualized violence against and between children and adolescents, pandemic levels of sexually transmitted diseases (STD's), eating disorders and self-mutilation, addictive behaviors and drug dependency.¹⁰

Apart from the mounting statistics, another trend had come sharply and alarmingly into view: school crime and vandalism are no longer confined to ghetto schools; so-called good schools in good communities are plagued by the same things.¹¹

With all the complexity of the adolescent population, it is going to take a youth specialist to minister to them. A contemporary philosophy of youth ministry holds to the thought that traditional means and methods are no longer effective today. A more contemporary approach to youth ministry is needed in order to be successful.

What is Success in Youth Ministry?

There needs to be an attempt to define the need for success and what it looks like. There are different opinions as to what defines success in youth ministry. The following are some definitions of success in youth ministry according to outstanding youth leaders and youth pastors:

What Youth Pastors Are Saying

Randy Sykes, a youth pastor for First Baptist of Lakewood, California, says, "Success is measured by the type of students you are producing."¹²

¹⁰Jim Hancock, *Raising Adults* (Colorado Springs: Pinon Press, 1999), 32.

¹¹Jim Reapsome, ed., "Violence and Vandalism by Youth Continue to Plague Schools," *Youthletter*, July 1979.

Wayne Swearingen, youth evangelist, says, "Success is permanent results in lives changed over a period of time."¹³

Dan Webster, a youth pastor for Garden Grove Community Church in Garden Grove, California, says, "Success is changed lives that are bearing fruit according to John 15, and hearts that are a tablet that can be read by all."¹⁴

Jim Grindle, a youth pastor for First Baptist of Van Nuys, California, for fifteen years says:

Success involves a number of aspects: what outside people tell you about your young people, maturity level reflected by their conduct, what is happening in their personal lives, their attitudes, quality of leadership increasing, young people staying with the group, and numbers increasing.¹⁵

Doug Turner, a youth pastor for Thomas Road Baptist in Lynchburg, Virginia, says, "Success is when you have reached every teen-ager in your city. Therefore, your job is never done. You never "arrive" in youth ministry."¹⁶

Dan Carter, a youth pastor for Bellevue Baptist in Memphis, Tennessee, says, "Success is young people accepting Christ and growing in faith."¹⁷

¹²Based on comments made in response to this author's sample survey questions in 1979, located in Chapter One of this thesis.

¹³Ibid.

¹⁴Ibid.

¹⁵Ibid.

¹⁶Ibid.

¹⁷Ibid.

Mike Crooker, a youth pastor for College Avenue Baptist in San Diego, California, says,

Success involves certain factors: number of young people involved, how well they stand alone in their faith, number of outside people coming in and accepting Christ, number of young people sharing their faith, number of young people baptized into the church, their reputation in public schools, and the general opinion of the church about the youth group.¹⁸

Glenn Wright, a youth pastor for Thomas Road Baptist in Lynchburg, Virginia, says,

Success is taking young persons from salvation and moving them toward a definite spiritual walk, and living by definite spiritual principles. They are able to establish their own priorities and principles from Scripture.¹⁹

George Hendrickson, a youth pastor for Hollywood Presbyterian in Hollywood, California, says, "Success is young people coming to know the Lord better. The youth group develops leadership and can multiply."²⁰

Gerald Murphy, a youth pastor for Scott Memorial Baptist in El Cajon, California, says, "Success is when young people walk with the Lord."²¹

¹⁸Ibid.

¹⁹Ibid.

²⁰Ibid.

²¹Ibid.

Brian Morgan, a youth pastor for Peninsula Bible Church in Palo Alto, California, says, "Success involves young people open to growth in a team ministry, and spiritual gifts that are developed. Numbers are not important."²²

Gary Smith, a youth pastor for Grace Community Church in Panorama City, California, says, "Success is being able to progress toward goals, define gifts, equip the saints, and young people who evangelize among their friends and attempt to minister to others."²³

Bill Randolph, Executive Director of San Fernando Valley Youth for Christ, says, "Success is achieving visible results of evangelism and follow-up in the local church; specifically, reaching young people outside of the church."²⁴

Common Characteristics

After reading all of these definitions by men who are in the ministry of reaching young people and knowing what success is all about, there are certain common characteristics of success that are reflected. Success in youth ministry is reflected by the quality of the young people's spiritual lives. Of course this is an individual's decision to be spiritual or not. But without a leader to show them the options they have in life, they cannot make an intelligent decision.

²²Ibid.

²³Ibid.

²⁴Ibid.

Spiritual Leadership Among The Young People

The evidence of this quality is revealed by the type of spiritual leadership among the young people. These young leaders should be self-motivated when it involves further development of their spiritual lives. Personal devotion and Bible study is a regular part of their lives. Along with self-motivation goes the quality of being able to stand alone when the crowd seems to be going in a direction that is contrary to Scripture. Peer pressure is a major problem among adolescents. When confronted with an excuse for doing something that is wrong, the reason, "Well, everybody else is doing it," is the usual reply; but not from the spiritually mature. Spiritual growth is easily measured in an organized discipleship program. This is determined by such things as: the willingness to commit to spiritual disciplines, how many times in a week did they exercise these disciplines, the depth of questions asked, their overall behavior, and also the desire to spend time with other Christian leaders.

Obviously not every teen-ager in a youth group can possess or exercise all the qualities that we would like to see in them. But when the youth minister sees hints of development in this area among his young people, he should recognize that this is real success. The acid test of any spiritual quality in young people is if that quality remains with them up into the years of adulthood.

Ability to Reproduce Spirituality in Others

Success in youth ministry is also reflected by the ability to reproduce spiritual quality in other young people. It takes one ability to maintain a personal spiritual quality. It takes another ability to show others how to have a quality spiritual life. Of course the

first step to any spirituality is that of regeneration. Unless there is evangelism among young people, there can be no regeneration of other young people. Evangelism should be a spontaneous response. The motivation for young people in inviting unregenerated friends to activities such as camp, Sunday morning, large youth events, etc. is that, via the youth program, their friends will hear the Gospel and have an opportunity to respond.

After evangelism, the spiritual quality among the young people needs to permeate throughout the youth department of the church and eventually throughout the entire local church. The spiritual young people should be the ones who lead the youth group. Their example should be followed by others. The spiritual influence should be evidenced by the direction that the youth department takes. Oftentimes, the spiritual leadership of the young people surpasses the leadership of adults. This by no means is an opportunity for young people to go above the adult authority and have less respect for them. Instead, it should be an opportunity for the young people to minister to the adults in sincere humility, without any intention of making them feel spiritually inferior.

Once spiritual maturity is being developed among your young people, a more concentrated effort can be determined to reaching more young people. There is much debate about the quantity of young people in a youth department as a characteristic of success. Some say, "Numbers are not important." Others say, "Numbers should be increasing." Yet one cannot deny the numerical results in the book of Acts (Acts 2:41). The parable of talents in Matthew 25:14-30 is an example of being faithful with what you are given in order that God can bless you with more. The case in point is the number of young people. Unless a youth minister can deal effectively with the young people he has, God cannot honor his ministry by bringing more young people under his influence. The

antithesis is also true. Once the youth minister can minister effectively with the young people he has, God can bring more young people under his influence. This period of ministering effectively will vary in length of time. It could be a few months to a few years. It will be a personal evaluation of the youth pastor in deciding if he is successful in reaching young people. There is no way to calculate exactly how many young people should be in a youth department. A general rule for numerical success would be a consistent increase in attendance (not enrollment) throughout the year. Attendance can be adversely affected in the youth department by church divisions, change in leadership, cultural changes in the church's location, and adverse weather conditions. These factors need to be kept in mind when evaluating numerical success.

It should be kept in mind that success in youth ministry does not involve any single factor. It is a conglomeration of the previously mentioned characteristics. It would be possible to succeed in one point and fail in another. That would not be real success. All factors must be taken in consideration. Youth who have been quality-equipped, possessing the ability to spiritually reproduce, will result in quantity; that is success in youth ministry.

Goals and Objectives of Youth Ministry

To be a success in youth ministry, the youth pastor must have the right goals and objectives. Goals tend to be more immediate or short term. Objectives tend to be more long term and permanent and if he meets them, he is successful. The goals and objectives should be the underlying thought behind every aspect of his ministry.

General goals may be stated in these terms: to present the plan of salvation; to

nurture teens in spiritual growth; to develop leadership skills; to encourage witnessing and outreach; to develop positive Christian personalities and give direction in a Christian context to guide in the choice of future vocation; to instruct in personal Bible study methods.²⁵

As this author sees youth ministry, its goals are to make adolescents aware of their value as persons, to help them see and realize their God-given potential, and to offer to them the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Dr. Elmer Towns, Dean of the School of Religion, Liberty University, in Lynchburg, Virginia, put the goals and objectives of youth ministry in a simpler manner:

The aims of the church are the aims of youth work. There is no place in Scripture where God spells out a different set of aims for young people than for all Christians. Also, there is no place in Scripture where God spells out a different set of aims for the youth program from the aims of the church . . . The Great Commission (Matthew 28:19,20) contains the aims for the local church.²⁶

A major goal of youth ministry should be that of evangelism. It would be easy for a youth minister to get involved with all the social aspects of youth work. He could discuss current issues and debate social activities. Yet all of this involvement would be futile if he neglected to attempt to present the Gospel to an unregenerated youth

²⁵Fern Robertson, ed., "Your Goals and Objectives," *Young Teen Sponsors' Resource Book*, Vol. 1, (Wheaton: Scripture Press Publications, Inc., 1972), 4.

²⁶Elmer L. Towns, *Successful Biblical Youth Work* (Nashville: Impact Books, 1973), 141.

population. Without his special skills in youth-related programming and youth-related communication, the chances of a non-Christian young person hearing the message of Christ becomes even slimmer. The youth pastor must include evangelism in his programming along with communication, or else he is short-changing one of the main purposes of youth ministry.

After evangelism, the youth pastor's objective becomes a fatherly-like discipleship of young people. Just as it is a long and sometimes difficult process in growing up, so it is with growth as a Christian. There will be times of failure, discouragement, disappointment, and pain in watching the newborn young person develop as a Christian. Along with the negative are the positive times of joy, fulfillment, surprise, and amazement that will come with the new Christian's growth in life. The youth pastor must keep in mind that his young people are not perfect. He must love them even when they are unlovely.

Developing Christian habits in young people is an important objective. The majority of habits, both positive and negative, are formed in the teen years. If Christian habits are developed in the teen years, chances are that they will remain with them throughout life. These Christian habits include consistent church attendance. There is no better way to be encouraged and built up in the Christian faith than by other Christians. Young people need to be taught the importance of their presence in church. Not only is it good for the church, it is good for them. By being in the world all week long, a Christian can develop some spiritual wounds in the battle of life. The church should be the place where they can get spiritual recovery.

Young people need to develop the habit of personal daily devotions. They may have to be encouraged to become involved in some type of organized devotion book such as Word of Life's "Quiet Time Diary" or the Radio Bible Class's "Our Daily Bread." Along with daily Scripture reading goes constant communication with God. Prayer should be an intricate part of their spiritual life.

Another goal of youth ministry is to maintain an enthusiastic program. This enthusiasm has to start with the youth pastor. He must be enthusiastic about his program in order for his young people to be enthusiastic about it. Young people are drawn to excitement. If there is not excitement about the youth program, young people will not be attracted to it. There should be an enthusiasm about the spiritual results seen in the youth department. Enthusiasm is vital to success in youth ministry. The importance of enthusiasm is expressed in the following quote:

Enthusiasm!! That certain something that makes us great—that pulls us out of the mediocre and commonplace—that builds us power. It glows and shines—it lights up our faces—enthusiasm, the keynote that makes us sing and makes men sing with us.

Enthusiasm—the maker of friends—the maker of smiles—the producer of confidence. It cries to the world, "I've got what it takes." It tells all men that our job is a swell job—that the house we work for just suits us—the goods we have are the best.

Enthusiasm—the inspiration that makes us "wake up and live." It puts spring in our steps—spring in our hearts—a twinkle in our eyes and gives us confidence in our fellow men.

Enthusiasm—if we have it, we should thank God for it. If we don't have it, then we should get down on our knees and pray for it.

Upon the plains of hesitation, bleached the bones of
countless millions who, on the threshold of victory, sat
down to wait, and waiting they died.²⁷

A challenging goal in youth ministry that needs to be accomplished is that of developing a Christian peer group. A young person feels his greatest sense of acceptance in his peer group. He feels secure, not necessarily in what he is doing, but with whom he is doing it. Instead of persistent exhortation against the peer group, of whom he majority of the young group are a part, is to develop a youth department that is large enough numerically to influence everyone else in the youth group. It is difficult to exhort a handful of young people to righteous living. It is an easier task to convince a larger group to righteous living because the peer group is larger, thus involving more of their friends and acquaintances. With more young people involved in righteous living, the easier it is to encourage other young people to follow their example. An argument to this objective would be that the Christian youth should be able to stand alone when the situations demand it. This is true. Yet there will always be those young people who remain on the outer fringes of the total youth program. They are not totally involved but also are not totally outside the youth department. It is these teen-agers that need positive Christian peer group influence. This Christian peer group will do much to reinforce the youth program.

²⁷Gordon Luff, Vernon Brewer, and John Tice, *Get All Excited* (Lynchburg: Youth Aflame, 1973), 1

Sunday Morning Sunday School

In surveying twelve outstanding churches about their youth department, eight out of twelve said that Sunday school takes the number one position in terms of priority. There are different terms such as Sunday seminar, Sunday morning session, church school, etc. For our purposes, we will use the term Sunday school.

Sunday school is that hour or so before the church worship service. Sunday school has been used for deep Bible study, fellowship, or time away from parents. It is one of the hardest hours to generate any type of life with the young people. There is even biological evidence that teen-agers have a hard time getting up in the morning. Early morning is the worst time for concentrated learning. "It is still traditional in America to go to church. More people will go to church on Sunday morning in America than any other time of the week. More young people will be automatically available to start building a youth group on Sunday morning."²⁸ So with this traditional advantage, youth ministers need to make Sunday school more than what its name suggests.

Barely more than one-third of America's teen-agers are currently receiving religious training, according a 1979 *Associated Press*-Gallup Youth Survey, and in only one part of the country—the South—are more than 50 percent of the teens now getting

²⁸Opinion expressed by Gordon Luff, Youth Coordinator, Thomas Road Baptist Church in a taped lecture "Sunday School the Hub" in Lynchburg, Virginia, 1976.

some form of religious education. The kind of religious training half of the teen-agers . . . are receiving . . . is Sunday school.²⁹

Sunday school has been the center of all programming for many churches. Sunday school should be constructed so as to attract young people to it. Excitement will draw young people. With excitement involving promotion of various aspects of the program, the Sunday school will be successful. Announcements for special activities and events should be done with an impressionable fervor. The Sunday school program should include special music, guest speakers and personalities, along with humorous sketches and skits. The young people need to be taught that Sunday school is the place to be on Sunday morning and not at the beach, mountains, woods, etc. Promotion of the other areas of youth programs is vital during the Sunday school hour. It is here where you will get more exposure of the program than any other time during the week.

Reaching the non-Christian young person, along with teaching the Christian young person, is also a purpose of the Sunday school. Chances are, there are some involved in their youth department. The youth pastor would be wise to attempt to reach some through the Sunday school.

Along with evangelism, there should be teaching that is relevant to young people. Of course, Scripture is always relevant to any age. It is relevant to current subjects and issues that young people are interested in. Some may argue against using current topics

²⁹Jim Reapsome, ed., "Religious Training Reaches 39 Percent of Nation's Youth," *Youthletter*, December 1979, 1.

as a basis for teaching. Yet it would be detrimental to young people if they were subjected to a secular view only. They need the instruction from the youth pastor as to what the Scriptural viewpoint is.

Acting as a master teacher, the youth minister should pastor his young people during the Sunday school just as a senior minister pastors the congregation during the morning worship service. When a special need or problem arises among those in the youth department, the youth minister should use the Sunday school to convey what he needs to bring before them. Once the youth pastor detects the Sunday school being caught in the same routine each Sunday, he should break it down into small discussion groups or cell groups. A concerned adult teacher should lead these discussion/cell groups. An effective teacher/student ratio would be one to ten. This small group will encourage participation from the young people, along with improved interaction between adults and young people. It would be erroneous to sacrifice the small group ideology for the sake of large group convenience. Both the large group and small group teaching situations need to be used. Frequency will depend on the discernment of the young people's needs by the youth pastor.

No matter what you call it or when you have it, there is clear evidence that teenagers need a rallying time together with their peers. With the elements of interaction, strengthened relationships with friends and adults, worship, relevant topical discussions and teaching, and all done in a language that is coherent to adolescents, the Sunday morning (or Saturday evening or whatever) will contribute much to the spiritual welfare of teen-agers.

Conclusion

Youth ministers will differ on certain views of philosophy and agree on others.

The previous material is a philosophy of youth work that has proven itself in youth ministry after youth ministry. Philosophy in youth work will vary. Yet this philosophy is one that is the “back bone” of outstanding youth ministries. It would be an unwise decision to disregard these philosophical views on youth ministry. These views are based on Scriptural foundations. “The Christian cannot divorce his theology from his philosophy of life. One’s outlook on life will be determined by his understanding of God, His Word, and His world.”³⁰

³⁰Roy R. Irving and Roy B. Zuck, gen. ed., *Youth and the Church* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1970), 30.

CHAPTER 3

THE YOUTH MINISTER

Introduction

In order to do any kind of a job, the person must be qualified to do it. This undoubtedly applies to the youth ministry. The man that works with young people must have certain specific qualifications. In times past, local churches have given their youth ministry to unqualified personnel. Sometimes the declared youth pastor is a college student on his summer break; a single girl who has some counseling experience; a former football player who knows a lot of games to play; etc. The list of recruited personnel is full of variety.

What the Youth Minister Is Not

Before any specific qualifications can be presented, there must be an explanation of what the youth minister is not. Everyone has preconceived stereotypes of what a youth minister should be. Wayne Rice in his book, *Junior High Ministry*, explained some “unqualifications” of the youth minister among junior high young people. This can apply to all age groups of adolescents.

First, a word about some “unqualifications.” Take, for example, the stereotype of the junior high worker: a handsome, young, funny, athletic, single college grad who plays a guitar, owns a custom-built van with a stereo in the back, and has an apartment at the beach. Even with all these “assets,” this person could be hopelessly unqualified to work

with junior highers. It is possible, of course, to win the affection and admiration of junior highers for a while by having musical ability, good looks, the latest clothing styles, and so on, but the majority of good junior high workers possess few of these things. They really aren't necessary. That doesn't mean you cannot be young, beautiful, talented, but you certainly don't have to be in order to relate well and minister effectively to junior highers. Kids will like you and listen to you not because you happen to be "neat" or glamorous, but because you like them and listen to them.¹

Oftentimes, these stereotypes reflect our ignorance and the era we came out of. Once we understand what the youth minister is not, it will be easier to understand what his position should be.

The youth minister is not a coach. Simply because a person has athletic abilities and a knowledge of competitive sports does not make him qualified to minister to young people. Some think that the youth pastor runs around in tennis shorts with a whistle around his neck. Certainly there will be times that the youth pastor will have the attire of a coach. Coaching a teen-ager in some sport could be the initial contact for the youth minister. Yet, it must be remembered that coaching is only one aspect of the youth ministry, it is not the only one.

The youth minister is not a travel agent. Of course anyone who has had any experience in youth ministry knows that there is much travel involved. The details of

¹Wayne Rice, *Junior High Ministry*, (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1979), 27.

traveling with teen-agers are exhaustive. Along with the carrying out of details is the responsibility of the young people that travel with you. Once it is established that the young people travel certain times of the year and a particular number of times each year, the church will begin to expect it on a regular basis. There is nothing wrong with taking teen-agers on a trip. But when it becomes a habitual routine that involves a majority of the youth minister's time and efforts, priorities have been rearranged.

The youth minister has been mistakenly expected to be a baby-sitter. The youth minister is not a baby-sitter but his duties have been expected. Parents many times expect the youth pastor to provide an activity each weekend. Their excuse is, "It keeps the kids off the streets and out of the dance halls." That may be true, but it is not a primary reason for activities. Others may argue, "The church should provide an alternative." This also is true to a certain extent. The youth program cannot always provide a better alternative. This is due to finances, time, and personnel. There are times when Christian young people have to develop character by saying "no" even when there are no alternatives at the church. If an activity is held for the sake of entertaining young people for a couple of hours, the youth minister has become a baby-sitter for teen-agers.

There are top-level staff members in churches that hold to the opinion that the youth minister is to be a "yes man." Saying yes to every idea and whim they might have, is the reaction some top-level church staff members expect from their youth ministers. Of course, the youth minister is to be as cooperative as possible. But this does not mean that he cannot have an opinion of his own. As an overseer of the young people, he will have to express his thoughts and opinions, especially when decisions made by the pastor or Christian education director affect the youth program. If the decisions conflict with

schedules or even philosophy, the youth minister will need to express his ideas for alternatives to the top-level staff. This expression of a contrary opinion is not always welcomed. A conflict of opinions without compromise from either point of view could mean a “blacklisting” for the youth minister. As unspiritual as it may sound, it does happen. This type of action will not happen if men who claim to be spiritual leaders work out their differences in a diplomatic manner. Regardless of the consequences, if any, the youth minister should be free to disagree with his ministerial superiors. He can disagree without being disagreeable.

The Biblical Basis for the Youth Minister’s Position in the Local Church

“When the pages of the New Testament are examined, the position of minister of youth or youth pastor is not found.”² Yet, the Scripture is obviously aware of the crucial nature of an individual’s youth. Verse after verse either reflects a positive or negative aspect of the adolescent years .

“The intent of man’s heart is evil from his youth” (Genesis 8:21).³

“He was a warrior from his youth” (1 Samuel 17:33).

“Do not remember the sins of my youth” (Psalm 25:7).

“Thou are my confidence from my youth” (Psalm 71:5).

²Elmer Towns. *Successful Biblical Youth Work* (Nashville: Impact Books, 1973), 171.

³Bible verses are quoted from the *New American Standard Version* (LaHabra, California: Foundation Press Publications).

“Remember also your Creator in the days of your youth” (Ecclesiastes 12:1).

“I remember concerning you the devotion of your youth” (Jeremiah 2:2).

“This has been our practice from your youth” (Jeremiah 22:21).

“Moab has been at ease since his youth” (Jeremiah 48:11).

“It is good for a man that he should bear the yolk in his youth” (Lamentations 3:27).

“Let no man despise thy youth ” (2 Timothy 4:12).

“Flee youthful lusts” (2 Timothy 2:22).

There are schools of thought that hold to the idea that to be the pastor of a church is the highest calling that God could give. A look at Scripture will reveal that the youth minister is of an equal calling with the main difference being his adolescent congregation. The office of pastor is found in Ephesians 4:11, “And he gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers.” The offices of apostles, prophets, and evangelists were given to the universal Church. Apostles and evangelists had the responsibility of planting churches everywhere they went. Prophets exhorted the Church. The phrase “pastors and teachers” is linked together by the same Greek article. Pastor and teacher are ministers of the local church. Being equipped with the appropriate gifts, they were responsible for the day-to-day building up of the local church. The word “pastor” means literally “shepherd.” His duties are to feed the local “flock” with spiritual food and to protect them from spiritual danger.

I Peter 2:25 reads, “but now you have returned to the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls.” The words “pastor” and “bishop” refer to the same person. They are

alternative names to be used for men in the ministry of overseeing the local church.

Exercising pastoral care over the local flock is the responsibility of the bishop or pastor.

Acts 20:17 reveals that in one congregation there was more than one elder, “And from Miletus he sent to Ephesus and called to him the elders of the church.” In any given local church, there are various age groups of “flocks.” Once the senior pastor cannot minister effectively to the adolescent “flock,” he needs to find someone who can. This is where the youth pastor comes in. God did not designate by name every ministry that the Church was to engage herself. When specific and unique needs arose, men called of God would attempt to meet those needs. Just as God raises up individuals to specific tasks at certain periods of times, so also He raises individuals to minister to specific age groups. One biblical example would be Jesus Himself and children. This young age group was brought to Him, He touched them and He prayed for them. Then Jesus made a challenge that little children not be hindered to come to Him (Matthew 19:13-15). A second biblical example would be the book of Proverbs. Proverbs 1:4 says that the book is for giving knowledge and discretion “to the young.” The book of Proverbs was written largely in part to young people, especially young men. The youth pastor specializes in ministering to adolescents. His “flock” is adolescents in the local congregation. As their pastor, the youth minister has the same responsibility of day-to-day building up of the adolescent “flock” and their spiritual protection. This building up and protection is administered with the same dedication that the senior pastor ministers to his congregation. Being sensitive to the needs of the young people, the youth pastor should attempt to meet the needs of the congregation. The youth minister’s calling is as equal and just as important as the calling to be the senior pastor of a church.

Qualifications

It takes a special breed to work with young people. It is a ministry that is not for everyone. In order to establish what kind of person can minister to young people, we must establish some qualifications. If these qualifications cannot be met, then most likely the unqualified person should seek another medium of service.

The Scriptures give a specific list of qualifications for the person who would pursue vocational ministry of any type. It is found in I Timothy 3:2-12. This list includes: self controlled; hospitable; ability to teach; not violent but gentle; not quarrelsome; not a lover of money; not recently converted; has a good reputation; not overbearing; not quick tempered; respectable; not given to drunkenness; manages his own family well; his children obey him; does not pursue dishonest gain; keeps hold of deep truths; sincere; has been tried and tested.

Call of God

The call of God into the youth ministry is first and foremost. Youth ministry is not an occupation that an individual suddenly chooses because there is nothing else to do. Just as God calls people to the business, professional, medical, labor, and pastoral occupations, so God calls people to the ministry of adolescents. This calling into the youth ministry is not something that has the same characteristics with every youth pastor. For some, the call may have been via a special message from Scripture. For others, it may be a clear direction from the still, small voice of God. Others might have had a burning desire to reach young people and the only way to fulfill that desire was to devote

their life to the ministry of young people. No matter what the mode of God was, the individual must know that he has been called of God into the youth ministry.

A Leader

After the calling of God, the youth minister must be a leader. Volumes and volumes of books have been written on leadership, but what about Christian leadership? What is Christian leadership? It is leadership motivated by love and given over to service. It is leadership that has been subjected to the control of Christ and His example. The best Christian leaders exemplify to the utmost all those attributes of selfless dedication, courage, decisiveness, compassion, and persuasiveness that mark the great leader.

The true Christian leader has discovered that leadership begins with the towel and the basin—in the role of a servant. Selfless dedication is possible because the Christian knows that God has a grand strategy of which He is part. Courage is magnified by the power that comes through the indwelling Spirit. Decisiveness comes from knowing that ultimate responsibility does not lie with him. Persuasiveness is based on allegiance to a cause that transcends all causes. Compassion is the human expression of Christ's concern for the individual. Humility results from knowing that it is God who does the work.⁴

As the person responsible for the youth ministry, people will always be looking toward the youth pastor for leadership. If he cannot provide that leadership, the youth department will wander aimlessly. Sooner or later, the young people will find their own

⁴Ted W. Engstrom and Edward R. Dayton, *The Art of Management for Christian Leaders* (Waco: Word Books, 1976), 27-28.

leader to meet the need to be led. Not only does this undermine the youth pastor's position, but it also damages his credibility.

Spiritually Mature

In order to lead young people in spiritual development, the youth pastor should be spiritually mature. This maturity should be evident both publicly and privately. Some evidence of spiritual maturity is a fervent prayer life. Young people and their families should be brought to the throne of God. Their problems and needs should be mentioned. Along with prayer goes a meaningful Bible study. Just as the senior pastor has to prepare for his congregation, so the youth pastor must search the Scriptures to minister to the young people.

Being spiritually mature in private involves a consistency at home. Too often when Christians enter the domain of their home, they tend to let their spiritual guard down. Any level of success in ministry is directly related to success at home. God expects the Christian, and even more so with the minister, to minister to his family first. Once the youth pastor can meet the spiritual needs (along with other needs they might have including emotional or material, etc.) of his family, God can give him other people to aid in their spiritual development (see 1 Timothy 3:5). As a visible leader of the church, people in the congregation will be looking for an example to follow. That example can be the youth pastor's family, if he has kept their spiritual development a priority.

Vision

A vision is a vital qualification for a youth minister. The youth man has got to

have a vision and a plan to accomplish that vision. It must be communicated to the pastor, deacons, and parents. People should be committed to a vision not a program. This involves producing, multiplying, discipling students.⁵

Our vision in youth ministry should be so extensive that God is the only One who can fulfill it. Without a vision, there can be no direction. The youth minister should always be striving to see his vision fulfilled, "When you've reached every teen-ager in your city. Therefore your job never ends. You never 'arrive.'"⁶ A vision to reach every young person in a city can only be fulfilled by God Himself.

I believe that a man without a vision is a man without success. I believe that a youth director without a vision is a youth director who will not have good, Christian, dedicated teen-agers. You must have a vision.

You must have a vision of numerical growth and spiritual growth. The youth directors must constantly have a vision of someday growing and reaching many more teen-agers.

The youth director must have a vision for each teen-ager in his youth group, a vision of what he wants him to become, and the heights of success that he wants him to achieve. If a youth director can have a vision of reaching his teen-agers, developing them, turning them out to reach other teen-agers, and constantly has a vision in mind of goals he wants to reach that youth director will never be discouraged and will never run out of things to do. A man

⁵Randy Sykes, Youth Pastor, First Baptist Church of Lakewood, California, in a personal interview, 31 August 1979. Permission to quote secured.

⁶Doug Turner, Youth Pastor, Thomas Road Baptist Church, Lynchburg, Virginia, in a personal interview, 2 October 1979. Permission to quote secured.

with vision will have it rub off on his teen-agers and they will be much more excited about what is being done.⁷

Love For Young People

In order to have a ministry with young people, the youth pastor must have a genuine love for them. It is one matter to say you love them; it is another matter to prove you love them. Of course, young people need to be told that they are loved. The youth pastor needs to tell his young people that he loves them. Oftentimes, they have not been told that they are loved by anyone. To hear it from their youth pastor can be quite meaningful.

The youth pastor also needs to show his love for the young people. This involves being interested in what they are interested in. It could be their home life, school activities, athletics, or personal hobbies or interests. Once the youth pastor takes a genuine interest in these areas of the teen-ager's life, they will sense that love and concern for them. Being interested only in their spiritual welfare is not enough.

Listening is another evidence of love for young people. Too often adolescents are shoved into the background of adult involvements. Adolescents need an adult ear to talk to. Adults are too quick to fill the ear of a young person with unwanted advice. The youth minister can earn the privilege of giving instruction to young people by his ability to listen to them. Someone has said that God gave us twice as many ears as He did mouths, and that we should act accordingly.

⁷Dave Hyles, *Successful Church Youth Work* (Murfreesboro, TN: Sword of the Lord Publishers, 1976, 355.

Love for young people can be expressed by doing activities with them. These activities do not have to be elaborate, scheduled events. Obviously, these types of activities are needed, but impromptu, unscheduled activities are a part of the ministry. The fact that you take extra time to be with them is evidence of your love for them.

Educated

Ignorance has been blamed for a multitude of problems in youth ministry. This is why it is important for the youth minister to be educated. Anyone with conventional wisdom knows that he can never stop learning. It is vital that the youth pastor get as much formal education as he can get. It is difficult to say how far he should go in his training. For some, a Bachelor's degree is enough. Others may feel the need to complete a Master's program and possibly even further. Factors that determine how far the youth minister can go in his formal education are time, money, and proximity to a seminary or university. The youth minister who goes further than a Bachelor's degree will not only improve his own ministerial skills but will also build creditability before his adult peers and parents of his young people.

Education via informal means is equally important as formal education. To keep abreast of current trends in the youth culture, he should read news magazines. To keep abreast of current ideas for activities, programs, and communication methods for youth ministry, he should read periodicals that cater toward these particular items.

Informal education can come by means of conferences. Conferences are scheduled in almost every major city at various times of the year. There are youth, high school, and singles conferences. These conferences deal with current issues and

up-to-date methodology. Some conferences feature noted speakers and offer a “smorgasbord” of display booths. Being extremely profitable to his ministry, the youth pastor would be unwise not to attend one or more conferences a year.

Sense of Humor

Though it may sound insignificant, a sense of humor is needed in the youth ministry. There are numerous occasions when the situation may be tense. A good sense of humor can ease that tension. Situations do not always go according to plans. Many times when they do not, a number of other people are also aware. Instead of making everyone feel uncomfortable over an unscheduled blunder, the youth pastor can calm everyone with a humorous reaction.

A good sense of humor will aid in effective communication to young people. What non-Christian and Christian young people have in common is to have fun. When adolescents are laughing, you know they are having fun. Making young people laugh will cause them to lower their emotional walls they have erected simply because you are up front talking to them.

Do not take yourself so seriously that you can't develop the humor that is unique to you. Some people are very good at telling jokes. Others are good with puns. Some can make wisecracks without being in poor taste. And still others are able to insult without offending.

Know your “audience” too. Generally speaking, junior high kids respond to more physical obvious types of

humor: slapstick, pranks . . . high schoolers are ready for the more witty, subtle substance of repartee, puns, irony, and the like. So observe your kids' response to the humor that is tried on them.⁸

Enthusiasm

Often an overlooked qualification for youth pastors is enthusiasm. Being excited about the youth ministry is like the reaction of metal to a magnet—it will attract young people to your ministry. If any one thing can destroy a youth ministry, it is a lack of enthusiasm. The youth pastor should be excited about his faith, his family, his ministry, and his program. By seeing and following his example, the young people will become enthused about what is going on in the youth program. Enthusiasm must be reflected by the manner in which something is promoted, the way it is talked about, and the priority it is given.

Enthusiasm—what is it? How do you explain this mountain melting power? How can you get it? The word comes from two Greek words “n” and “theos.” Literally translated they mean “in-God.” We speak of such persons as inspired. In-Spirited people! Fill your life with the God Spirit and all kinds of power break forth. In the words of an ancient Hebrew prophet, “The zeal of the Lord will perform it.”

Feed your life with a happy positive faith and you'll find yourself:

1. Uncovering great opportunities;
2. Discovering beautiful solutions;

⁸Denise Turner, “Portrait of the Perfect Youth Worker,” *Youth Worker's Portfolio* (High Point, N.C.: Nido R. Quebin Associates, 1975), 231.

3. Overcoming impossible obstacles;
4. Unwrapping surprises God has in store for you;
5. Rolling back the dark clouds, until sunlight breaks through.

That's enthusiasm.⁹

Good Communication

The youth pastor must be able to communicate to adolescents. Young people need to have the Gospel translated into modern thought patterns. There is a difference between proclaiming the Gospel and communicating the Gospel. The reason for poor reception by adolescents may be due not necessarily to closed, shallow, or pre-occupied minds. It could be due to the failure of the youth minister to talk in terms that young people can understand. Communicating the Gospel is ineffective until it has been proclaimed in such a way that young people who listen can understand its meaning in the context of their own thinking.

Obviously, there is no certain way to prevent the adolescent mind from wandering. Translating the Gospel into an understandable language will help prevent it. It is easy to forget that the Bible is an ancient book. Even with all the work done in translating it, it still remains difficult. Its terminology, patterns of thought, manners, and customs need to be translated into the terms of this generation. This task requires two steps. First, the youth minister must study the biblical truths and what they meant to the

⁹Robert H. Schuller, *You Can Become the Person You Want to Be*, 2nd printing (New York: Pillar Books, 1976), 109.

people for whom they were first written. Secondly, he must make the transition from ancient to modern times, showing what these truths mean today.

Young people need to see how relevant the Scriptures are to their individual situations. This kind of communication deals helpfully with the practical problems and questions young people are facing. Discussion of current topics will aid in bridging the communication gap, get the interest of the hearers, and keep the youth minister in a realistic world. Every youth pastor should be sensitive to social problems and see how the Bible can be applied to the solution. While he does this, he should keep in mind that he is a minister and not a social reformist.

Communicating to young people should persuade them to believe the Bible and live by it. Every youth pastor should have the desire to see young people come to know Christ. He is to propagate the Gospel of truth and without apology. The Gospel should not be offered as hypothetical advice or something that has not yet been tried and tested. Instead, the youth minister's intense dedication is to convince young people to make decisions and commitments for Christ. Using his best skills, the youth pastor should persuade his young hearers to accept the Gospel. This is the youth pastor's sacred opportunity and responsibility.

Conclusion

The previous qualifications of a youth minister will help establish standards for him to reach. The qualifications are by no means conclusive. These qualifications are needed to insure quality both in the youth pastor's ministerial skills and his personality.

CHAPTER 4

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SENIOR PASTOR AND YOUTH PASTOR

Introduction

The relationship between the senior pastor and youth pastor is one that has rarely been expounded on sufficiently. If this author had known what he knows today about this relationship and its importance, it would have prevented a multitude of problems. It is easy for the young, eager, fresh-out-of-school youth minister to overlook this area. The youth pastor is ever so anxious to please his superior in the ministry that important aspects of this relationship are overlooked.

Downside Of The Pastor's Position

Vulnerable

Oftentimes, the senior pastor's position is held as an invulnerable one. New youth ministers sometimes have the attitude that the senior pastor can do no wrong. He maintains this attitude in an effort to make the working and ministering relationship work smoothly and diplomatically.

The pastor must recognize that his authority in leadership is the authority of his position—given by God—than authority of his person. He should exercise it carefully

and humbly. The assistants should be protected and not made a scapegoat.¹

It used to be a stereotype of our country to hold the office of the United States presidency in highest regard. It was an office that put the person who held it in the annals of history as one who had achieved the most important political office in the world. The President has been a person of high integrity, near flawless morals, and the highest of standards. Then came Watergate. More recently came the impeachment of President Clinton. Now all of this has scarred the office of the presidency. There will always be a note of mistrust when one thinks of the President.

Not Perfect

In like manner, the position of senior pastor is not error-free. Every now and then, an article in a newspaper will reveal the wayward flight of some minister who has had his morally wrong decision broadcasted to a gossip-hungry secular audience. There are those instances where pastors have simply made some bad decisions and as a result, have decided that God was “calling” them elsewhere. This “calling,” in more instances than we will ever be aware, is nothing more than a reluctance to follow through and live with those bad decisions.

Society does a sufficient job in making fun, criticizing, and tearing down the position of a pastor. Society surely does not need the help of other ministers to deface the position established by God Himself. It must be noted that all men, including pastors,

¹Paul Fosmark, “The Scriptural Office of the Minister of Youth, *Leader’s Guide of the Local Church Youth Ministry* (Lynchburg, Va.: Thomas Road Baptist Church, 1975), 10.

have “feet of clay” (by “feet of clay” we mean that all men are human and will make mistakes). No pastor or youth pastor experiences sinless perfection.

Equal Calling

There are some pastors who have entertained the ideology that their calling is the highest calling that God has to offer to man. It may be true that the calling to be a pastor is the highest for them personally, but it does not mean that any other calling is of a lesser degree. All callings of God are equally important to God. There are no degrees of callings. The call for a man to be a youth pastor is just as high as a call from God to be a senior pastor. Of course, if God has called one to be a senior pastor and he does anything else, then he does not have God’s highest calling for his life.

What to Look for in a Pastor

When it comes to finding a place of ministry for the youth minister, there are numerous opportunities, but only one is God’s perfect will. The most important factor that needs to be looked at is the senior pastor. What should a youth minister look for in a senior pastor? The following suggestions avoid the basic qualifications but they do deal with qualifications that will affect the level of effectiveness to the youth minister’s effort in the local church. These qualifications are not intended to be in any particular sequence of priority.

Education

The senior pastor should have some seminary training. Of course, this is not a hard, fast rule. There are some men who have only a college education and are quite successful in their ministries. One prime example would be the Rev. Jerry Falwell, pastor

of the Thomas Road Baptist Church in Lynchburg, Virginia. The church has approximately eight thousand people in services each Sunday.²

Upon completion of a Master's degree from Liberty Baptist Seminary in Lynchburg, Virginia, this author sees the value of seminary training. A senior pastor needs that smoothing of the rough areas in his ministerial skills. This comes either by years and years of experience in the ministry or during a concentrated effort for a short period of time in seminary. Obviously, experience is always a good teacher but it is equally as good to have professionals who have already been down ministerial roads. They know what works and what does not work. They can point out blind spots that a ministerial student has, for the purpose of correction and better development.

There are some leaders who possess the qualities of genius, but most of those who are actually doing the work of leadership are those of ordinary ability. In qualifying as a Christian leader, one's mental alertness should be considered. It is not necessary that a leader shine like a star, but he should be a little above the mental level of his group, if possible. He will have to be a bit quicker in thinking, more alert in acting. There are many successful leaders who do not hold college diplomas. They are keeping mentally awake by constant study, by using and therefore increasing the mental powers they have. Education is not limited to school, nor should it end with a diploma or degrees.³

²Gerald Strober and Ruth Tomczak, *Jerry Falwell: Aflame for God* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1979), 145.

³Mary Frances Johnson Preston, *Christian Leadership*, 1973 rpt. (Lynchburg, Va.: Old Time Gospel Hour Press, 1934), 28-29.

Seminary training is evidence that the senior pastor strives to improve himself and his ministerial skills. The pastor who lacks seminary training will eventually learn techniques and skills but it is a longer process. Many times this process is painful and accompanied by conflict with others, including staff members. Seminary training can prevent much of this.

The prospective youth pastor should look for a senior pastor who has equal education or preferably more than he does. This will help prevent the senior pastor from feeling insecure about his position. Insecurity leads to jealousy. Jealousy leads to rivalry. A senior pastor and youth pastor need to work in one accord and not in competition with one another.

Not Just Employer

The senior pastor should have the attitude of being your pastor and not just an employer. It is a difficult task to differentiate between pastor and employer. Yet, it is vital that the youth pastor have a pastor. The youth pastor will have to have someone to confide in and share his own needs and problems. The senior minister can have the opportunity to minister to his youth pastor when there is a pastoral relationship between the two. When the senior minister places an over-emphasis on being an employer, this restricts the youth minister from having spiritual needs met for him and his family.

The senior pastor who looks upon his youth pastor as another employee on his staff, is missing the purpose that God has for both of them. That purpose is for both of them to minister with equal callings to different groups of people.

From experience, this author knows that the senior pastor who considers you as an employee, will treat you as an employee. He might attempt to pawn other duties on you that have nothing to do with the youth ministry. Granted, the youth pastor should be willing to do menial tasks because of unique situations, but when these tasks are delegated simply because someone else does not want to do them, then a conflict could arise. Rational people have discovered that the only approach to conflict resolution that makes sense is cooperation. (Suggested resource: Brian D. Molitor. *The Power of Agreement*. Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1999, 223).

Accessible

The senior pastor should be accessible. The old adage says, "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure." Communication can prevent a battery of problems. Unless there is accessibility to the senior pastor, there can be no communication. Without communication, the problems of misunderstanding are inevitable. A senior pastor is not always conscious of the problems of inaccessibility. He can fill his schedule with counseling sessions, set aside important sermon preparation time, make crucial personal visits, and surround himself with dignitaries and public officials. All in all, these are important tasks and functions that he must do. Yet, it could appear to the youth minister that the senior pastor is hard to reach for communication. If a youth minister has the feeling that he is imposing upon the senior pastor's time, he, more than likely, will avoid any opportunity to talk. "Let me suggest that you take 100 percent responsibility for

communication. If you wait for other people to tell you, you're going to wait a long time in some cases."⁴

In order for a senior pastor to be accessible, he must portray an attitude of openness before his youth pastor. By being open, the youth pastor will feel confident that the senior minister will listen. There will be times when the youth pastor needs an on-the-spot opinion from the pastor and it cannot wait for an appointment. He should feel free to go to the pastor and get his response without being put down, or feel like he has broken some code of ethics.

Co-Worker Fellowship

The senior pastor should set aside weekly meetings with the youth minister for the sake of fellowship, discussion of past, present, and future programs and their results, along with personal needs, successes, and failures. This weekly meeting must not have the appearance of an interrogation room, complete with a single chair and bright lights. If it does, the youth pastor might feel intimidated. Sooner or later, the meeting will become a time where each party defends his own actions, instead of a mutual supporting effort. Once staff members do nothing but defend their own actions and decisions, it will not be long before the staff members polarize themselves and their programs.

⁴Bobb Biehl, *Master-Planning* (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1997), 163.

Sincerity

The senior pastor should be genuine and sincere toward the youth minister and his ministry. With all the hypocrisy in local churches, the last place it should ever infest is the pastorate. The youth pastor has to put his trust in the senior minister. It is up to the senior minister to earn and maintain that trust. If the senior pastor is not genuine and sincere, it is difficult for the youth minister to support his ministerial superior. The pastor cannot say one thing from the pulpit and portray contrary actions away from the pulpit. What happens behind the pulpit must be consistent with his everyday life.

In order to be genuine and sincere, the senior pastor must take a personal interest in his youth minister. Along with the youth pastor, a personal interest should be taken in his family. The two of them should do things together like golf, or go to a conference, instead of seeing each other only with the church facilities in the background.

Confidentiality

The senior pastor should be as honest as confidentiality will permit. There are some things that a senior pastor cannot reveal to his youth minister. Yet the senior pastor should not give the appearance that he is holding secrets from his subordinate. When the pastor is honest with the youth pastor, a healthy trust is built between the two.

This genuineness and sincerity can be detected from the pulpit. If the pastor uplifts his youth pastor and his ministry with the young people, the entire church will sense the pastor's support. The antithesis is also true. When the senior pastor omits saying anything about his youth pastor and his ministry, the church members will detect

that the pastor is not behind the youth ministry. Many times it is not what is said that is detrimental but what is not said that really hurts.

If the pastor does not talk about the youth minister and the youth ministry, his silence does more damage to the youth ministry than coming right out and publicly speaking against it. If the youth minister does not have the public support of the pastor, he should look for some place else to minister.⁵

Not Easily Threatened

The senior pastor should have a character that is not easily threatened due to jealousy. This does not refer to threatening situations or people because of stands against political or moral issues. Instead, this is referring to the relationship between pastor and youth pastor. When a youth pastor is brought on staff, he will be welcomed by the friendship of the people. That friendship, oftentimes, is expressed in tangible ways: invitations for dinner, gifts, favors, etc. Jealousy can creep in and destroy all fellowship between two men of God.

Loyalty

If a youth minister succeeds in his work, he will develop a loyal following of young people, parents, and other adults. There is nothing wrong with this. It is healthy for the church as long as the youth minister does not use his influence for selfish reasons or reasons that would tear down the character of the pastor. Yet, if the pastor is one who

⁵Statement by Mike Crooker, Youth Pastor of College Avenue Baptist Church in San Diego, California, in a personal interview, 23 August 1979. Permission to quote granted.

is easily threatened, the youth pastor could become the source of threat. Once a person is threatened, insecurity develops. A variety of problems can surface unless the root problem of jealousy is dealt with.

Obviously we could go on with a voluminous list of things to look for in a pastor. We have discussed only a few. Yet, these few are of much importance. When these factors can be found in a pastor, he will be a good man to minister alongside.

How Should a Pastor Handle His Youth Pastor?

Once a youth pastor is secured by a local church, the senior pastor is faced with the administration of another staff member. A pastor needs to know how to handle his new youth minister before he is acquired. The following are ways and means of managing a youth pastor.

Give the youth pastor the freedom and autonomy to carry out his ministry. The youth minister has been trained in youth ministry, he does not need someone looking over his shoulder, constantly giving unsolicited advice. With the freedom to operate as he feels the need, the youth minister will be much more effective in his ministry with teenagers.

Write a job description for the youth pastor. The job description will dictate exactly how much freedom and autonomy the youth minister will have. The following is a suggested job description:

General Qualifications

1. Be a professing Christian.
2. Have specific training in youth ministry.

3. Have experience in this field.

Responsibilities

1. To develop a program where the youth will be involved in soul-winning and visitation.
2. To develop leadership among those working with the youth.
3. To be an example in soul-winning.
4. To work with the Sunday school director in staffing the youth division of Sunday school.
5. To work with the Sunday night director in staffing the youth division.
6. To plan and implement youth activities such as camps, retreats, mission trips, etc.
7. To present to the Budget and Planning Committee his budget needs for each fiscal year.
8. In cooperation with the Youth Committee, to present, plan, and project goals for each church year.
9. To work with the church staff in strengthening the total program of the church.

The following is another type of job description:

The director of youth work is usually supervised by the minister of education and is responsible for working with church leaders of youth and staff members to develop a comprehensive youth program.

His responsibilities are listed below:

1. Counsel with church program organization leaders in the planning, conducting, and evaluation of a comprehensive youth program.
2. Counsel with church program organization leaders and nominating committee to aid in the enlistment of qualified youth workers.
3. Lead training opportunities for youth workers.
4. Counsel with youth and youth leaders in the planning and conducting of special projects, such as tours and retreats.
5. Counsel with youth leaders regarding curriculum, space, equipment, and educational methods.
6. Participate as a member of the church council.⁶

Job descriptions will vary from church to church. They can be detailed and extensive, or vague and general. The important thing is that the pastor and youth pastor have agreed on their contents. Several sample job descriptions can be found in Appendix F.

Team Spirit

Develop a team spirit and unity. Ecclesiastes 4:9, 10 says, "Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their toil. For if they fall, one will lift up his fellow; but woe to him who is alone when he falls and has not another to lift him up." A loyalty to each other will develop a unity that is difficult to divide. There are those

⁶Howard B. Foshee, *Broadman Church Manual* (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1973), 88.

people in local churches who will put much effort in an attempt to make the youth pastor go against the pastor or vice versa. Without team spirit and unity, a church staff is easily divided.

Acknowledge Appreciation

Give credit to the youth pastor when credit is due. We do not need to go in a long exposition about all the glory going to God. That should be understood. Yet, it should be remembered that it is not easy being a “second man.” The youth pastor is not always up front before the people. His efforts cannot always be seen by the members of the church. This is why it is edifying for the youth pastor to have the pastor show his appreciation publicly and compliment his work.

Provide Good Salary Package and Benefits

Pay the youth pastor a better-than-average salary. That figure can be reached by contacting denominational head offices or by contacting area churches of similar size. This is always a point of contention. Many churches try to get the best man for the least amount of money. The saying goes, “You get what you pay for.” If a youth minister is paid poorly, he will have added pressures to meet his financial needs. The church can take away this needless pressure by paying the youth pastor a salary that allows him to live comfortably and provide benefits, both short term and long term. Factors in considering how much the salary should be are: percentage of pastor’s salary package, education, years of experience, number of dependents, and achievements.

Give the youth pastor an office with adequate furnishings. It is hard to plan and prepare a youth program when your office is an old kitchen table in the middle of a hall.

As absurd as it may sound, there are many youth pastors who have been there. Of course, if it is all you have, then adjust. But when the opportunity arises, those office needs should be met.

What Questions to Ask

Prior to going to any church, a prospective youth minister needs to visit the church he is considering. When he goes, it is important that he ask the right questions. The answers to pertinent questions could mean the difference between going or not going. The following are some questions that will give the youth minister some background information on the church and the pastor. These questions will aid in his decision.

Regarding Past History:

1. Have there been previous youth ministers?
2. If so, how many and how long were their ministries at the church? What were their reasons for leaving?
3. What were the positive aspects and negative aspects of their ministries?
4. Have there been any splits in the church? If so, why?
5. How many pastors have served in the church and what were their reasons for leaving?
6. What is the church's attitude toward minority groups?
7. What have the growth and attendance patterns been the past five years?

Regarding the Pastor:

1. What is your educational background?
2. How long have you been ministering at this present church?

3. Do you have any goals or objectives with the present ministry?
4. Do you have any written or unwritten rules of conduct regarding areas of separation?
5. Do you approve of the youth director being called a youth pastor?
6. What is your philosophy of youth ministry?

Regarding the Locale:

1. How many schools are in the area?
2. What is the population?
3. What is the general source of employment?
4. What is the medium for annual incomes?
5. What sources or means of recreation are in the area?
6. What are the percentages of minority group populations?

Regarding Personal Items:

1. Will I be expected to fill in specific office hours?
2. Is there a particular day that is to be taken off?
3. How many weeks are allowed for vacation and is there a time of the year that it is to be taken?
4. Does the church provide health insurance?
5. What kind of housing is available?
6. What will be my total annual salary?
7. Is there time allowed for conferences and is it budgeted by the church?

The prospective youth pastor should also be prepared for questions directed towards him. The following questions and their categories are questions that have been asked of a candidate in a prospective youth minister's interview:

Personal Philosophy of Ministry

1. What is your philosophy of youth ministry?
2. Please describe the major tasks that you believe a youth pastor should perform.
3. As the youth pastor, what might your major short-term goals (3 months - year) be for your group?
4. As youth pastor what would be your major goals for years 2-5?
5. What type of major events would you like to see on the church's annual calendar for youth ministry?
6. What methods would you use to grow a youth ministries Sunday school?
7. What is your philosophy of student discipleship? How do you measure spiritual growth in a teen?
8. What methods would you implement to build a strong individual and corporate discipleship program?

Recruitment, Staffing, Training

1. How do you recruit teens?
2. Describe your understanding of a campus ministry to teens.
3. How do you go about enlisting, training and leading lay workers?
4. Describe your philosophy of motivating people.
5. How do you handle conflict within your lay staff?

6. How would you handle conflict between you and a member of your lay staff?
7. What would you do if a member of your lay staff came to you with a criticism of a church staff member?
8. Describe how you initiate change.
9. How would you go about implementing a system of accountability within a volunteer organization (e.g., your lay staff)?
10. What methods or programs would you use to train others in evangelism?
11. Describe what your in-service training for lay staff would look like.
12. Describe and explain how you would organize your ministry, i.e., job descriptions, charts, etc.
13. Describe how you would shepherd your lay staff.
14. How would you handle having to release a lay staffer from his responsibilities?

Personal and Family

1. Please describe your personal devotional life.
2. What are your stewardship beliefs and practices?
3. Outline your personal beliefs on the major doctrines of the faith: Salvation, Sin, the Bible, the Church, Eschatology, the Trinity, God, Christ, the Holy Spirit.
4. Everyone has weaknesses. What are your areas of weakness?
5. What are your major strengths?
6. What are your predominant spiritual gifts?

7. What motivates you?
8. What would you like to be doing in three years?
9. Please describe your two most satisfying ministry-related successes.
10. Describe your most recent witnessing experience.
11. Outline your favorite method and source for your own continuing and personal development.
12. Describe your predominant personal style of "leading" and "supervising."
13. Are you a well-organized person?
14. Describe in detail your method of daily personal/ministry planning.
15. Describe your method of long-range planning.
16. How punctual are you?
17. Please describe yourself as a manager.
18. How important to you is personal recognition as a staff member, why?
19. What type recognition are you used to?
20. What type of supervision do you like best from your superiors?
21. What kind of supervision do you like the least?
22. How often do you need to meet with your supervisor?
23. How do you respond when given a task you consider unreasonable?
24. Are you a person who will express his feelings to his supervisor or will have to be asked?
25. What single major factor could hinder your ability to do your job effectively?
26. How well do you handle criticism?

27. What do you see as the major needs of adolescents today?

The prospective youth pastor would be wise in articulating these questions. By thinking these questions through he will be mentally prepared to give well thought out answers.

How to Treat Your Senior Pastor

The youth minister should do whatever he can to make his senior pastor a success. When the senior pastor is succeeding, the whole staff is succeeding. In order for the pastor to be a success, the youth minister must be a positive factor toward that success.

Fairly

The youth minister should represent the pastor fairly. The pastor is a human being. He has "feet of clay" and will have some weaknesses. Instead of talking about his shortcomings, talk about his strengths. Lift up the positive aspects. Stay away from the negatives. A person who constantly dwells on the negative breeds nothing but contention.

With Understanding

The youth minister should attempt to understand the pastor. The consistent factor about people is that they are all different. The pastor will be different. He thinks a different way. He has a style all his own. There are some areas that he excels in and other areas that he is weak in. The youth minister must learn all he can about the pastor so he will understand him better.

Keep Informed

The youth minister should keep the pastor informed. If the pastor is not aware of what is going on, there will be a communication gap. There will be some decisions that the pastor has to make. There will be problems that the pastor needs to know about. He needs to know what the youth minister's plans are so he will not be surprised. This will also prevent doing anything that may be in conflict with church policy or previously scheduled activities.

The youth minister should give the pastor alternatives. There will be times that the pastor will have to say "no." The youth minister should be prepared with creative alternatives. This will prevent any disappointment from both sides. By having alternatives, an idea is not totally discarded.

Some youth pastor may be thinking, "The pastor I'm working for is not worth treating good." That may well be the case. If so, then the youth pastor should make every attempt to resolve the problem. Instead of letting the problem increase, the two men should discuss it frankly and confidentially. If the problem continues to exist to the extent that the youth pastor has a negative opinion of the pastor, the youth minister should leave.⁷

⁷Steve Vandegriff, "How to Resign from a Church," *Church Administration* (Nashville: Broadman Press, December, 1979), 23.

Conclusion

Making any type of a human relationship work requires a lot of give and take. In the world of ministry, it is easy to put on plastic facades and fool each other. The youth minister and senior pastor need to be open and honest with each other. Once a wedge is driven between the two, people and circumstances will continue to drive it in deeper and deeper. The relationship between pastor and youth minister is one that must be worked on and developed. By applying these suggestions, the relationship will be one that cannot be easily divided.

CHAPTER 5

THE PROGRAM-CENTERED MINISTRY VERSUS THE INDIVIDUAL-CENTERED MINISTRY

For some time youth pastors and their ministries have had emphases on two major aspects. The two major aspects are program and individual-centered ministries. It does not take long for an observer to detect what type of ministry a youth pastor is following. Each has its own distinctive characteristics.

Characteristics of a Program-Centered Ministry

The program-centered ministry does activities on a regular basis. A regular basis would be interpreted a traditional basis. (For example, going to the same summer camp every year, an annual banquet, or a seasonal activity such as an all-night New Year's Eve party that takes place each year at the same place.) These activities are done, not because there is a real interest but because it has been done that way for years.

Frequency

Activities on a regular basis also means frequency. A program-centered activity will have activities a certain number of times a month. The young people can almost predict when an activity is scheduled. Once there is a slacking period in activities, the young people and their parents get the premonition that the youth ministry is not doing its job.

Program-centered ministries are constantly in search for new and contemporary ideas. The youth pastor will try almost anything that is new and innovative. Most often, the activities that are put on have been borrowed from another youth pastor who saw some results with it.

Scriptural Standards

The weakness behind attempting new activities is that sometimes biblical standards are sacrificed. For the sake of something new and fresh, some youth pastors have ignored Scriptural exhortation and gone with an activity that was questionable in regard to good Christian taste and character. The program-centered young people may participate in questionable activities in their personal life because of the example that is placed before them in their youth program. There is little distinction between the Christian young people and the non-Christian young people of this ministry.

Media

Being program-centered, the youth ministry makes a futile attempt to compete with the media. Obviously, there is no way to compete with the major networks. The youth minister can bring in a celebrity or noted personality occasionally, but to maintain a consistent program that surpasses anything that Hollywood sound stages can produce is not possible. Not only is it impossible, it is impractical, financially unreasonable, and improbable.

Attendance

The program-centered ministry is preoccupied with attendance. Unless a large number are in attendance, the activity has not been a success. Usually the youth pastor

encourages his young people to bring as many of their friends as possible. If they do not come, the youth pastor makes them aware of it via guilt from messages he gives publicly. Sooner than later, the young people will quit trying to fill up an empty room for the sake of numbers.

Philosophy

The philosophy of a program-centered ministry is simple. The social aspect of a young person's life is equally important as his spiritual life. This philosophy believes that the local church is providing for the needs of young people by providing activities for them. This ministry holds to the belief that Christians can have an equal amount of fun and amusement as the secular adolescent population. Any kind of devotional thought or evangelistic appeal somewhere in the format at an activity is avoided.

Entertainment

After a steady diet of "fun and games" given to the Christian teen-ager, his life will still have a spiritual void. The vacuum in his life will have to be filled by decisions. One decision is to leave the youth group for more involvement in worldly pleasures and amusements. The youth program can entertain and amuse to a certain point. Once it reaches its maximum capabilities if the young person wants bigger and more extravagant entertainment, he will move on to what the secular world has to offer. This decision usually leaves the Christian young person's spiritual life ineffective. The teen-ager becomes disillusioned with church in general. The local church is no longer a lighthouse in a spiritually dark world. It has become nothing more than a social institution—no different than a rotary club, sorority or fraternity house, or a dating service. Often this

teen-ager becomes embittered toward church and will have no part of it. His excuse for not going back to church is because of the hypocrisy in it. Even though his previous youth leaders are a major influence for his straying, the young person, unaware of it, has become a part of that hypocrisy.

The other decision that the Christian young person may make is that of going where he can be spiritually fed. In search for spiritual food, the young person will start attending where he will be fed. The major danger in this is susceptibility toward false teaching and doctrine. His spiritual hunger needs to be filled but many times, the young person is led unaware by false teachers and preachers. An extreme of this falling into false religions is the Jonestown Massacre and the Branch Dividian in Waco, Texas.

Even with the danger of cults deceiving some of these program-centered young people, most of them who decide to be spiritually fed will find a church that meets their need. The main characteristic of the youth ministry is that it teaches the Bible. It may have a program that is lackluster but by the simple fact that they can be taught the Bible will usually keep them there.

Drawing A Crowd

The youth ministry that is program-centered will draw a crowd-temporarily. The inquisitive youth pastor who is looking for success in his ministry may observe a successful numbers of teen-agers flocking to a program-centered youth ministry. In the youth minister's desire to be a success, he may reproduce the techniques of the program-centered ministry. He, too, may experience temporary success. But when the program is over, the young people will be gone. The ones that do remain will be

spiritually shallow young people. Without a solid foundation, they will experience a crumbling away of their life's foundation when they are faced with adversity or worldly pressures to go against Scriptural principles.

Week after week youth workers are constantly trying to cater to their students' whims and nothing is happening. This shouldn't be your position. This is the first thing wrong with a program-centered approach. You shouldn't try to meet their wants; you should be trying to meet their needs.

There are two types of needs: real and felt. *Real need* is something we need, but may not realize it. *Felt need* is when we come realize this is what we really need. For instance, you can say to someone, 'You need to come to the youth group.' But unless that student *feels* the need himself he will never understand his *real* need to attend. It is only when he's having problems in his relationships with others or in his relationship with himself that he realizes God could possibly be a solution. It is then that he decides that his attendance might be a good thing.¹

Characteristics of An Individual-Centered Ministry

On one end of the philosophical scale, there is the program-centered ministry. On the other end is the individual-centered ministry. Instead of programs getting all the energies of the youth pastor, it is the young people.

¹Pat Hurley, *Penetrating the Magic Bubble* (Wheaton: Scripture Press Publications, Inc., 1978), 13.

Discipleship

The individual-centered program puts much emphasis on personal discipleship. The youth pastor usually discipless a handful of young people. They in turn get a handful of Christian teen-agers to disciple and so on. The main drawback for this activity is that what is usually produced is a group of disciples of their own leader. The drawback comes when the youth leader leads "his disciples" in unscriptural ways. His negative characteristics can be copied as well as his positive.

Bible Study

Individual-centered youth ministries involve their young people in much Bible study. The study of Scripture is in every aspect of the ministry. Youth Sunday school centers around studies from Scripture. Topical studies are discussed more by accident than on purpose. When they are discussed, it is because of Scripture's obvious reference to them.

One of the highlights of the youth program is a weeknight Bible study. The central purpose is to glean from the Scriptures. This is done via verse-by-verse exegesis. Usually there is one main leader who has properly prepared for the study. But his main responsibility is to guide the study. The students are the ones who are encouraged to express their thoughts and feelings about certain Bible verses.

Quality

An emphasis on quantity of young people is not a priority of the individual-centered ministry. The youth ministry does not make any special drives or programs to attract masses of young people. Instead they depend on the attractive life that

the Christian young person portrays. With this attraction, non-Christian young people will be drawn because of curiosity, friendships with Christian teen-agers, or personal desire for spiritual fulfillment. The numerical growth of this type of ministry does not tend to be rapid. Instead, it tends to be a slow but steady growth. At times, this kind of ministry can be exclusive, in a sense that the members have no desire to grow numerically. The young people are preoccupied with learning factual information about the Bible. It is to the extent that they become disinterested in taking the responsibility of reaching other young people with the Gospel. Their growth rate is almost nil. The negative aspect of this type of ministry is that they are satisfied with their exclusive group. There is no real concern to expand numerically. The main thrust is to expand their biblical knowledge. The danger in talking about "Christian practices" is that we might delude ourselves into thinking that our salvation has more to do with human initiative and goodness than God's initiative and goodness towards us.²

Piety

Becoming spiritually pious is a negative trait of the individual-centered ministry. By knowing various types of doctrine or knowing some stray fact about a phrase in the Scriptures can result in prideful knowledge. This kind, of knowledge says, "I know something that you don't know." These kind of young people are able to intelligently discuss or debate with other believers and non-believers. Usually this debating leads to

²Kenda Creasy Dean, Chap Clark, and Dave Rahn, eds., *Starting Right* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2001), 84.

nothing more than argument supported with memorized Bible verses. These quoted Bible verses are sometimes canned replies to statements they have already memorized. These young people are sadly neglectful of an individual's personal or spiritual needs. They are more interested in displaying their biblical knowledge and being mentally superior to their acquaintances.

Which Extreme Should Be Followed?

After knowing the characteristics of these two extremes, the youth pastor will ask, "Which one should be followed?" The answer is, "Both of them." Each extreme has its positive points along with its negative points. An intelligent youth minister should take the positive aspects of both and activate them in his ministry. There are those youth ministers who know how to draw a crowd but do not know what to do with them spiritually after they get them. There are those youth ministers who know how to develop a teen-ager spiritually but would not know what to do if a crowd came to one of their infrequent activities.

Evangelism

By incorporating program-centered characteristics into his ministry, the youth pastor should be planning programs that attract Christian and non-Christian young people. An attempt to reach hundreds via major activities should be made, the purpose being an opportunity to present the Gospel in simplistic manner to young people who normally would not enter the doors of a religious institution. This provides an evangelistic opportunity for the Christian young people to invite their non-Christian friends.

Obviously, there are innumerable other areas of outreach. All of them are simply methods of putting into action concern for the unsaved and a desire to share the Gospel. Not only will the quality of the youth program improve through an outreach ministry and through their expressing an active witness to the unsaved, but after the outreach training provides a resource for future youth group leaders and officers. Young people have more fun and feel more purposeful in an outreach ministry which fulfills the Great Commission, than they do in merely meeting together for a social once a month.³

Attendance

The youth pastor should put a priority on Sunday school and church attendance among his young people. To make it attractive to attend, the youth pastor should make his Sunday school an exciting place to be. The Sunday morning time should be one that is alive with music, activity, and fellowship. To have any kind of spiritual development, the young person must be physically and mentally awake. An atmosphere that wakes up the teen-ager in this manner would be spiritually advantageous.

After using program-centered methodology, the youth minister should begin using individual-centered methods. Once the crowds have come and the Gospel presented, those who have made decisions should be contacted for further spiritual growth. Assisting a young person to be born again is a small step in relation to the many steps he will have to take throughout his spiritual maturity. If there has been a weakness in youth ministries, it has been the spiritual follow-up of new teen-age believers.

³Jim Klubnik, "Outreach Ministry of the Local Church," *Leaders' Resource Book*, Vol. 2, Fern Robertson, ed. (Wheaton: Scripture Press Publications, Inc., 1971), 74.

Follow Up

The problem with following up on new adolescent believers is not with methods. There are canned follow-up programs to satisfy the spiritual qualifications of any youth pastor. The real problem has been with the attitude of follow-up. Follow-up is not a method; it is a life-long process. Instead of it being a series of booklets to read and fill out, it is a daily process of growth and development. Of course there are principles that must be learned such as confession of sin, forgiving others, witnessing, consecration of years of a life, etc. Yet just as an infant has to learn how to walk, eat with a fork, and drink out of a cup over a period of time, so the new-born Christian must learn principles of growth over a long period of time.

Spiritual Growth

Just as a baby needs adult assistance in learning, so the new Christian will need the assistance of spiritually more mature Christians. This task falls into the hands of the youth pastor. Of course, he cannot do this vital task by himself. He should train others to assist him. Follow-up should consist of letters that encourage the new believer; phone calls and personal visits are also important. Yet it should not stop here. It is equally important to show that the Christian life is an everyday experience, not just for Sunday morning. The youth pastor and leaders should set an example that portrays Christian maturity in every aspect of life including family, school, occupation, recreation, and religious life. This maturity should also be evident in relationships, decision making, and reactions to problems. The Christian life should be portrayed to the effect that if it is sufficient enough for dying, it is sufficient enough for living. The psychological make-up

of an adolescent is preoccupied with living in the present tense. A life that exemplifies the abundance that only *Christ* can give, would do much to reinforce the adolescent's new life in Christ.

It is important to remember that they are babes in Christ and have *much* to learn. Some of the adults in our church fail to realize that their ideas, standards, and convictions may be completely different than their own. We should not judge, criticize or condemn them but rather accept, love, and pray for them. Rather than telling them to have devotions it would be better for us to show them how. For the first few days, we could supervise their reading and study of the Bible with them. We should help them establish a prayer life. Study some of the prayer passages together and discuss the mechanics of prayer. Guide them into formulating a prayer list and then spend time praying with them. They will learn much from our example. Maybe it would be possible to take the individuals with us when we do visitation and let them see how witnessing can be done.⁴

Effective follow-up of young people also involves building friendships. Too often youth ministers and youth leaders are quick to provide spiritual guidance and at the same time be neglectful of personal needs and problems that have no connections with spirituality. The youth pastor should not be afraid to develop friendships with those he helps to grow spiritually. He should be involved and interested in other areas of an adolescent's life. Through these friendships, the youth pastor can teach alternate life styles via his example. A young Christian will always have peer pressure. He will need

⁴Elmer Towns, "Evangelism and Teens," *Leader's Guide of the Local Church Youth Ministry* (Lynchburg: Thomas Road Baptist Church, 1975), 10.

the instruction and encouragement of his youth pastor and youth leaders to strengthen a life that is lived by Scriptural principles.

Level of Holiness

While the program-centered ministry sacrifices biblical standards, the individual-centered ministry takes pride in its holiness or separation. There must be a medium for the youth pastor and the instruction of his young people. There are two extremes that can be taken. One is expressed in Dave Hyles' book, *Successful Church Youth Work*, published by Sword of the Lord Publishers in Murfreesboro, Tennessee. In Chapter 27, Hyles presents a copy of the youth department's "Code of Behavior." Rules covering dress codes, dating regulations, transportation rules, youth center regulations, driving rules, and general rules are listed. Dan Webster of Garden Grove Community Church in Garden Grove, California, has no major emphasis on separation. Separation is secondary.⁵

There are those youth ministers who take holiness or separation from the world to the limit. There are also those youth ministers whose Christian young people are no different from non-Christian young people. Separation can be the point of conflict for many Christians. The majority of people cannot agree on every area of separation. As a result, there can be no dogmatic conclusions on areas of holiness.

⁵Based on a personal interview with Dan Webster, 21 August 1979.

Holiness must not be viewed as a list of do's and don'ts. Instead, it is the attitude of holiness. There are youth ministers who use separation as an instrument of discipline. (Some use it for material to preach against). Being verbally battered into a guilt complex because the youth pastor has a personal hobbyhorse against a specific area of separation is not the best way to get young people to act differently.

A further pointer is to encourage positive reinforcement. Studies show that while punishment (negative control) can indeed suppress undesired behavior for a brief period, it cannot develop new behavior in a desired direction. In addition, punishment, punishment leads to unpredictable side effects—hostility, hostility, depression, inferiority, etc. Adult leaders can encourage positive reinforcement among youth both by example and by rewarding any positive control when it happens in the group. Whenever the youth pastor instructs his young people not to do something, he should also provide or suggest an alternative. If old things are passed away and all things become new, (according to 2 Corinthians 5:17), youth ministers need to provide these new things. It is simple to take something away from a young person but it is difficult to always provide an alternative. Yet a youth minister would do much to reinforce the Christian life of an adolescent when he provides an alternative.⁶

No doubt there are dogmatic principles in Scripture regarding certain areas of holiness. Immorality, lying, habits that harm the body, stealing, and the like are all definitely contrary to Scriptural instruction. Yet, whether we like it or not, there are areas of separation that Scripture alludes. Some areas of separation are geographically dictated. An example would be in the area of dancing. In the Bible Belt of the South,

⁶Gary Barmore, "A Behavior Modification Approach to Developing Group Discipline," *Respond*, Vol. 5, Robert Howard, ed. (Valley Forge: Judson Press, 1977), 102.

there are those churches that would abhor the thought of guys and girls dancing together. On the contrary, on the West Coast, youth ministries are not even knowledgeable of there being a problem with dancing. An attempt to implement a rule against dancing on the West Coast would be sheer absurdity.

Instead of attempting to give young people pat answers to their questions on holiness, the youth pastor must understand that problems of holiness are surface problems. The root cause is the problem of the sinful human nature that every young person must deal with daily. The root problem of sin can only be remedied by the power of Christ in a life. After that, it is a daily decision for a young person to consecrate their life to God. The youth pastor cannot always be there when a troubled young person has to make a decision about a questionable activity. This is where Christian character will become evident or not. This will also reflect whether the youth pastor has stressed outward appearances or inward qualities and abilities to decide between right and wrong. As Randy Sykes of the First Baptist Church in Lakewood, California, expressed it, "Young people must be independently dependent on Christ."⁷

Conclusion

The key word that would unite the program-centered ministry and the individual-centered ministry is balance. Balance is also needed in the area of holiness. A Christian young person should not be known for what they do not do. Instead they should

⁷Ibid., Sykes.

be known for what they do for the Lord. A second key word would be purpose. "By revealing a purpose statement, you'll take away the mystery of your ministry. A clear purpose statement will help you make sense of your programs, utilize your volunteers more effectively, and provide direction for your students' spiritual maturity."⁸ For a youth program to be well rounded, accomplishing its stated purpose, there must be some kind of programming that meets the needs of students at various levels of commitment. This would include those who are not into religion at all, and those who need to be motivated to move forward in their faith.

⁸Ginny Olsen, Diana Elliot, and Mike Work, *Youth Ministry Management Tools* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 2001, 71.

CHAPTER 6

PHILOSOPHY OF ACTIVITIES

A major part of the youth ministry is the planning and executing of activities. This is a major expectation of any church youth ministry. If this task is not done well, the youth minister is setting himself up for considerable criticism from parents as well as young people. Some people would argue that Jesus never used activities during His ministry. It is argued that He did not use flashy events and games and as a result, youth ministry should not use them either. Yet, Jesus did use food and miracles which seemed to always draw attention, if not a crowd (although it could be argued that His intention was not to draw attention or a crowd). To do an effective job, the youth pastor must have the right kind of philosophy toward activities. There must be reasons and objectives behind his programming of activities. These objectives will vary with each activity. Regardless, objectives should be established prior to an activity. The previous chapter presented the program-centered and individual-centered ministry. The philosophical quandary has always been quantity vs. quality in youth ministry. Activities simply must have purpose. They are mere tools to accomplish ministry. When purpose is mixed with the ingredients of direction and creativity, it will make for an exciting youth program.

The Evangelistic Activity

One of two primary purposes in activities is that of evangelism. It is much easier to attract an adolescent to an activity geared for him than to a traditional Sunday morning

church service. This is where the evangelistic activity reveals its effectiveness.

An evangelistic social is an exciting time of fun and fellowship for the purpose of sharing Christ with young people who do not know Him. It may take a variety of forms, where the Gospel is clearly presented in a natural, casual and social atmosphere. The value of an evangelistic social is that it draws a group of young people (who would never come to a church) to a meeting where Christ is shared. It also gives believers an opportunity to share and bring unbelieving friends to a fun non-threatening activity where they can come to know Christ. Also it is an opportunity for non-believers to see that Christians know how to have a good time.¹

The Objective of Evangelism

The evangelistic activity must be geared to attract the unregenerated adolescent mind. That young mind has some preconceived ideas. First of all, they see the church as archaic and irrelevant. Youth activities are in a strategic position to change the young unregenerated mind. Most adolescents are seeking moral direction in their lives. They are morally adrift but desire an anchor. Adolescents will respond to reason, not rules. They do not like being told what to do. Evangelistic activities must make it a priority that young people are making decisions based on their own volition and reasoning, not by any pressure or manipulation. The objective of evangelism is to bring unregenerated young people into an encounter with God, not just give them information about God. They do not want to be somebody's project, but would like to be somebody's friend. Unregenerated young people feel that the main reason for friendship is because we want

¹Barry St. Clair, *Joy Explosion: Evangelism Socials*, Field Test Edition (Atlanta: Home Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention, 1973), 1.

to convert them. They do not want friendships that have "strings attached." The friendships they are desiring are those that are based upon closeness, mutual interest, concern for each other, and keeping confidences. For unregenerated guys, they are more desperate for meaningful relationships (this is perhaps one major reason for the surge in men's ministries).

To find out what attracts the unsaved young person, the youth pastor should take note of what the secular teen-ager is watching, listening to, and doing. He can be sure that humor and laughter are a part of his attraction. A vital part of any evangelistic activity is something that will make young people laugh. This activity needs to involve as many, if not every young person that attends. The reasoning is that peer pressure is stronger for the unsaved adolescent. Therefore, everyone needs to be involved.

Public Speaking

How is evangelism accomplished at a youth activity? One method is that of a single speaker scheduled during the program. The speaker should be able to communicate to young people and simultaneously present the Gospel in a precise but simple way. The speaker should not talk long because he will discover that the attention span of active young people is limited. A general rule for speaking time is ten to twenty minutes.

A good place to schedule a speaker at an activity is some time in the middle of the program. This will allow time for any counseling that needs to be done for those young people who make decisions. When asking for decisions, young people should know without a doubt what the speaker is asking for and what kind of response he wants. In

making young people respond to spiritual decisions, the speaker can have them stand up and be met by a counselor or come to a designated place and meet with a counselor there. Sometimes a speaker can simply ask those who have made decisions to raise their head and look at him or simply raise their hand. Decision cards are another effective way of knowing what decisions have been made. Regardless of the method, the speaker or person who concludes the speaking, should give serious thought to the formal part of the conclusion. It should be explicitly clear as to what the young people are to do, if they are to indicate what their decisions are. Ambiguity on directions will only result in an ambiguous response.

Personal Evangelism

Another method of evangelism at an activity is that of personal witnessing. This is less effective due to the number of people to do personal evangelism compared with the number of potential converts. Difficulty is also increased due to the aesthetics of the involved activity and enjoying themselves. It would be difficult to hold a young person's attention long enough to present the Gospel.

In using methodology that attracts the unsaved young person, the youth pastor needs to be careful in compromising biblical standards. He needs to take into consideration what kind of group will be involved. He should plan a program that projects a positive lifestyle, filled with enthusiasm for living life to its fullest.

With some of the previously listed activities, it would be difficult for a youth pastor to gather his people together and speak to them. This could be done if he took his group to a neutral location, such as a home or the church. But this method is anti-climatic

for the teen-ager. It also creates a psychological imprint that separates God and having fun. The most effective method would be to secure the entire facility (such as an ice rink, roller rink, bowling center, gym, etc.). This is advantageous because the youth pastor can control the aesthetics and environment of the activity. He can play his own music and plan his own particular program that will be geared for what he feels are the needs of the group. He will also be the authority of the activity and not the management or other young people who may want to disrupt any kind of organized program.

In getting the information to a young world, there are many avenues that are available. In using the newspaper, advertisements should be placed in sections where young people read such as the sports, entertainment, or comic sections. In using radio spots, be sure it is a station listened to by teen-agers. If flyers or posters are used, they should be sharp enough and creative enough that a young person would not be ashamed to carry it or put it up. As mentioned in a previous chapter, Web pages and e-mail are quickly becoming the media of choice.

In planning special events such as snow or water ski trips, the drawing card obviously will be fun in order that young people will want to be involved. Yet this is an excellent opportunity for a large number of unsaved teen-agers to hear the Gospel. The emphasis should be on the activity they will be engaged in. But there is one mandatory rule. Everyone is required to be at meetings held in the evenings. These meetings should have contemporary music to capture the attention of the young people. Immediately following the music, there should be an evangelistic message geared specifically for the young people.

Any field trip—long or short—requires patient, detailed planning, such as the following guidelines:

1. Work out an itinerary first.
2. Find out transportation costs.
3. Get an estimate of group interest and how funds can be raised.
4. Line up enough adults (and alternates) to chaperone before you proceed further.
5. Set a date to accommodate the majority.
6. Study and work toward D-Day (departure day).
7. Make certain you have adequate insurance coverage.
8. Have permission slips signed by parents, worded to put all responsibility in their hands.
9. Work out a set of rules and regulations that must be followed, and make sure that all who are going understand that they are on their honor to obey these rules.²

To have the least amount of conflict with a young person's time, scheduling must be made wisely. The youth pastor should secure a calendar of events from the local schools. It would be a mistake to plan and schedule a major evangelistic activity on the night of a major social or athletic event of the schools. A suggested activities schedule for a youth department is included in Appendix D. Obviously, certain activities will need to

²Shirley E. Pollock, *Youth Worker's Success Manual* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1978), 74.

be rearranged due to personal preference, convictions, geographical location, and individual philosophy. It should be noted that when an activity is preceded by the word "youth," it entails both the junior high/middle school ages and senior high ages. Once a youth department grows numerically to the point where it needs to divide the junior high/middle school from the senior high, activities will need to be separated. At this point instead of having one major youth activity, the youth pastor will need to have individual activities for the junior high/middle school ages and the senior high school ages.

Discipleship Activities

A second and equally important purpose in activities is that of discipleship. After the young person has been regenerated, he will need spiritual development. This development should not occur just on Sunday morning. It should take place at any and all activities, whether it is related to the mental, physical, or social being of the adolescent. The mental being involves the adolescent's thoughts, attitudes and actions. The physical being involves his appearance, body, control, and discipline.

Service

An important development in the discipleship of the adolescent is service. This gives opportunity for the Christian young person to give back to others what he has learned through the youth ministry. Service opportunities are available at children's homes, convalescent homes, hospitals, psychiatric institutions, juvenile detention centers, and in many other areas. The Christian teen-ager will learn more by action than by passive observation or listening.

It is no secret that one of the worst ways to teach is to depend solely on the lecture method. The best way for a learner to learn is not by merely sitting and listening, but by also actively participating in the learning process. Today there is a growing interest in the church in what is commonly termed "experiential education." This gradual shift in educational methodology has been a healthy one. Traditionally the emphasis has been on teaching: training teachers to teach. Today there is more concern for learning itself, finding better ways to encourage the learner to learn. Teaching is something that teachers do, learning is something that learners do.³

Mission Excursions

Another means of discipleship via activities is that of mission excursions. The local church has been attempting to expose young people to the mission field by means of a visiting missionary who shows slides and asks for financial pledges. The best means of exposure to missions for young people is to give firsthand experience. Taking them to a mission field can only do this, whether it is home or foreign. The planning and executing of a project like this is extensive. It also requires the best of leadership and large sums of money. (In this author's own experience, he has found that people in and outside congregations are much more enthusiastic to fund a mission trip, even if it is in the several hundred dollars range, in order to see young people serve others). The element of hard labor or service mission trips seems to have greater appeal. It no doubt has a much broader appeal for young people, than a trip that was strictly evangelism or some kind of platform ministry.

³Wayne Rice, *Junior High Ministry* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1978), 165.

A youth program should seek to develop each youth to his/her full potential as a mission-minded, trained Bible student and witness. Youth must have equal exposure to all aspects of Christian growth. He cannot develop concern for the needs of people unless he is made aware of these needs and the potential he has for meeting and relieving them.⁴

To make any kind of mission endeavor, the youth pastor will have to make contact with a missionary who has need of assistance by a group of young people. This can be done either by referral or by contacting a denominational mission board. After a need has been discovered that can be met by a youth group (the need could range from construction of a building to the distribution of evangelistic literature), the youth pastor must evaluate whether he has the young people to attempt such a task. The young people expressing a desire to go must exhibit spiritual maturity. A young person does not necessarily have to be called into missions. The mission trip should confirm whether he or she is called to missions or not. The local church and the individual teen-agers can raise finances. Other details that will have to be considered are available dates for the mission trip, food, transportation, foreign laws and regulations, visas, and other adult leaders who can make the trip.

Discipleship needs to use those ministry models that foster individual and personal discipleship. Some critical issues of discipleship would also include accountability, spiritual self-feeding, and spiritual reproduction. The ministry of small groups or cell groups has been the model of choice. Cell groups is an effective model

⁴Helen May, *Impactivity: Youth Program Resources* (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1974), 15.

that makes the large group smaller. It is in these small groups of common interests where deeper spiritual involvement can take place. The main rule in these groups is confidentiality. The method of measuring effectiveness is accountability.

Youth Camp

A major activity that combines the purposes of evangelism and discipleship is that of youth camps. Youth camps are usually held in the summer and winter. The length of a camp can range from a few days to a few weeks. The most common length of stay for a youth camp is one week in the summer and two to three days in the winter. Removing young people from their everyday surroundings and environment is not only therapeutic, it enhances the opportunities of concentrated challenge and thought. Simply removing adolescents from their usual stresses and pressures will give them opportunity to refocus on what is important, what needs to change in their lives, and what action steps they need to take upon returning from camp.

Out-Trips

One type of camp is that of stress camping or out-tripping. It may take the form of backpacking, glacier hiking, bouldering, rappelling, spelunking, white-water canoeing, or wilderness trekking. This type of camping involves a limited number of young people. The maximum number would be approximately twelve to twenty. Any kind of out-tripping is a very specialized type of camp. Only an experienced guide should be allowed to lead such a group. The wisest method in planning is to operate through an organized out-trip club or organization. They will be able to plan trips, gather food, and make arrangements for needed equipment, and better insure the safety and enjoyment of the

young people. Out-tripping provides an excellent opportunity for a youth pastor to get acquainted with his young people and to be able to provide personal guidance and counseling.

Institutional Camping

Another type of camp is that of institutional camping. This style of camping takes place at a permanent facility that is especially designed for large groups of campers. The number of campers that can participate is limited to the facility's capabilities. These camps are usually situated away from urban communities. They are either in the mountains, deserts, near lakes, rivers or oceans. A youth pastor can locate a camp that provides its own program. The youth pastor's main responsibility would be to arrange for transportation and counselors. Some examples of youth camps that provide their own program are Word of Life Camps in Schroon Lake, New York, and now Florida; and Hume Lake Christian Camps in Hume Lake, California.

Personal Camps

If a youth pastor has the capability of providing a program, he can operate his own camp. The advantages of this are in operating the camp to his own personal preferences. Camp policies and regulations would then be his decisions. The camp could be planned to meet specific needs of his young people. Speakers and special music would also reflect his choices.

Several capabilities are needed to provide your own camp program. Among these are exclusive access to a camp facility, lay leadership to execute the programs with a knowledge to provide a fast-moving activities program, be able to bring the minimum

number of campers required, and provide an exciting, spiritually-decisive chapel program.

Athletics

An area that is an excellent opportunity for evangelism among young people is athletics. The local church, as a whole, has left the athletic abilities of its young people to be used in community intramural leagues, recreation departments, and public skateboard parks. With adolescents as physically active as they are, a youth minister would be wise to channel that energy through a local church-sponsored athletic program. Sports have an appeal for the able person conditioned by experience and culture to participate. Sports call upon total power, concentration, and commitment. It demands planning and calls for elected appropriate action and concerted or continuous effort.⁵

A Language They Understand

In order to reach the sports minded adolescent; it will take sports, both traditional team sports and extreme sports, to reach him or her. It is a language they understand. Evangelism can be accomplished through coaches, supervisors, and other volunteers. It should be the goal to see that every young person involved is presented with the message of hope through Christ. This can happen individually or through special sessions with a guest speaker or even by one of the coaches or leadership that are speaking. Discipleship and church involvement will have a natural progression. Young people tend to follow the

⁵Leon Holbrook, "Women's Participation in American Sport," *Athletics in America*, Arnold Flath, ed. (Corvallis: Oregon State University Press, 1972), 43.

relationship or at least someone they are connected with. In this case, it would be the coaches or volunteers who come from the local church. This would give familiarity to the adolescent who begins to assimilate into the local church.

Ministry To Parents

Athletic or sports programs have several other benefits. Beyond adolescent ministry will be ministry to parents. Many parents are thrilled that someone has taken the time and effort to get their young person in something that is constructive and beneficial. They are equally concerned about the moral upbringing of their teen-ager and a youth sports program is a culturally acceptable program in their eyes, as well as their adolescent. It is not nearly as threatening as going to an unfamiliar church building or service. A sports program would also lend itself to getting church laity involved in something that they would otherwise not get involved. It is a user-friendly ministry opportunity for those who simply love sports and want to use it for the Kingdom of God.

Conclusion

Regardless of the activity, it must be planned and executed with professionalism and precision. The quality of the activity should outclass anything local "attractions" could offer (always being within your means). With this quality, the objective of influencing numerous young people with the message of evangelism and discipleship will be there. With these philosophical combinations, activities will accomplish their purposes.

CHAPTER 7

REACHING THE UNREACHABLES

They have been labeled incorrigible, juvenile delinquents, and characterized as unreachable. Yet, they are still adolescents. They are adolescents that can be reached through a local church youth ministry. There are probably more juvenile delinquents than realized. The abuse and/or neglect of children is costly for individual children and families, but also has a greater social cost. Protecting children from abuse and neglect is a key in crime prevention strategy. Research shows that persons who have been abused or neglected as children are more likely to commit crimes, including crimes of violence. Maltreated children are significantly more likely to commit delinquent acts. Seventy percent of young people in juvenile court have a history of abuse or neglect (1990 Annual Child Abuse and Neglect Report).¹ Seventy to eighty percent of prison inmates have a history of abuse or neglect (1990 Annual Child Abuse and Neglect Report).² The consequences of maltreatment extend beyond the likelihood of delinquency: Maltreated children are more likely to become pregnant during their teen years, abuse drugs and

¹U. S. Department of Health and Human Services, *Child Maltreatment 1990: Reports from the States to the National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System* (Washington, D. C: U. S. Government Printing Office. 1990). 1.

²Ibid.

alcohol, earn a lower grade point average, and have mental health problems than non-maltreated youth.

According to statistics prepared by the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration, there are as many as five and a half million men and women who are in jail in the course of one year. Of those arrested for crimes of violence, about twenty-two percent are young people under the age of eighteen. Of those arrested for property offenses, fifty percent are young people under eighteen. While these last figures may seem high to some people, it is often said that young people represent about fifty percent of all people arrested.³

Studies recently completed by the Children's Defense Fund of the Washington Research Project reveal that more than 900,000 American children (between the ages of 12 and 17) are jailed in the course of a year. New York State alone had almost 6,000 juveniles in jail in 1970. As shocking as these figures are, they clearly amount to an underestimation, since there is no way of knowing with precision the number of children in detention centers or held in jail, although they often are not so considered in official surveys. Indeed, the Children's Defense Fund, through interviews, learned that many jails, which detained juveniles, did not report these children when the National Jail Census of 1970 was conducted. Furthermore, some prison officials did not consider a child held for several days in police lockup to be an official case of incarceration.⁴

The Census of Juveniles in Residential Placement (CJRP) provides a one-day count of all juvenile offenders

³Available from <<http://merrimack.nara.gov/guide/rg423.html>> National Archives and Records Administration, (accessed 15 July 2000).

⁴Thomas J. Cottle, *Children in Jail* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1975), vii-viii.

in public or private residential facilities in the United States. Responses to the CJRP identified 125,805 young persons assigned beds in 1,121 public and 2,310 private facilities nationwide. Of these, 105,790 (84%) met the inclusion criteria for the census: under age 21, assigned to a bed in a residential facility on October 29, 1997, charged with delinquent or status offense, and in residential placement because of that offense. Youth charged with delinquency offenses were 93% of the juvenile offender population; those charged with status offenses were 7% of the population.⁵

There are many reasons offered why young people become juvenile delinquents. Juvenile delinquency has been blamed on a bad childhood, peer pressure, parental neglect, child abuse, just to name a few. No matter what the reasons, juvenile delinquency will always be a major problem.

Observes Paul A. Strasburg, Associate Director of the Vera Institute for Justice in New York City and author of the study: "If we can be sure of anything, it is that juvenile violence will continue at some level in our society in spite of our best efforts to prevent it."⁶

Strasburg says that little is known about why a particular youth commits a crime, although there are indications that such actions are linked to poverty, breakups of families and school failure.⁷

⁵Adapted from H. Snyder, & M. Sickmund, "Juvenile Offenders and Victims" in *1999 National Report* (Washington, D.C.: Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, 1999), <<http://ncjrs.org/html/ojjdp/nationalreport99/index.html>> (accessed 18 November 2000).

⁶Paul A. Strasburg, "Upsurge in Violent Crime by Youngsters," *U.S. News and World Report*, 17 July 1978, 31.

⁷Ibid.

Following is an excerpt from a care and treatment manual of the San Fernando Valley Juvenile Hall, located in Sylmar, California:

Provide professional treatment for detained minors by offering:

- A secure, creative emotionally growth producing institutional climate.
- 1. A program of constructive work, recreation, education, *religious training* (author's emphasis), counseling and group living experience designed to foster and promote constructive social attitudes and wholesome personal adjustment.⁸

This facility has recognized the importance of religious training in its program. Here is an opportunity for the youth minister to expand his ministry and reach young people who have been labeled "unreachable." There has always been of the question of "how?"

Fear

The first reaction toward any juvenile hall facility is a reaction of fear. Fear has to be overcome. This is not easy when you are walking up to a detention facility that is heavily guarded and have to explain your reasons for being there. There is a fear of the facility itself and those who are confined within its walls. The young people inside have stolen, broken into homes, assaulted innocent people, fought in gang wars, and have killed people. To come face to face with these young people can be an uneasy experience.

⁸*Care and Treatment Manual*, Directive 150.01 (Sylmar, California: San Fernando Valley Juvenile Hall, n.d.), 2.

These young people are frightened too. They do not know exactly what is going to take place regarding their court case. They are looking for "handles" in life that they can grab on to. Being in juvenile hall is evidence that they tried another avenue of life that has proven to be disastrous. These young people are lonely. Sure, they are with other delinquents, but they too are lonely. Many of these young people have committed crimes for the sake of gaining attention. Sad but true, many of these young people have received absolutely no attention except when they broke the law. The young people in the facility want someone to be their friend; someone they can talk to and someone who will listen to them.

Time

One factor that needs to be considered is the time factor with juvenile delinquents. There is a tendency for movement and relocation within the justice system for juvenile delinquents.

Among juveniles detained while awaiting adjudication or disposition, 70% had been in placement in the facility for at least 7 days, 50% for at least 15 days, and 28% for at least 30 days. By 60 days, only 14% of these detained juveniles remained in placement; and by 90 days, less than 10 % remained.

Among juveniles awaiting placement elsewhere, 69% had been in the facility at least 15 days, 48% for at least 30 days. By 60 days, 25% remained; and after 90 days, 15% remained.

Among committed juveniles (those adjudicated, disposed, and placed in the facility), 90% had been in the

facility at least 15 days, 81% at least 30 days, 68% at least 60 days, and 57% at least 90 days. After a full year, 15% of committed juveniles remained in placement.⁹

In order to make a good attempt at getting something started at a nearby juvenile hall, the youth minister needs to contact the chaplain of the facility. Explain to the chaplain your desire to impact the young people there in a positive way. Make sure you are genuine in your interest. The chaplain will be looking to see how faithful and consistent you will be in your ministering. He has seen many individuals and groups come in the facility with varying agendas. They have attempted to evangelize the entire facility in one meeting and then never return (or are not invited back). The chaplain is looking for someone who is willing to establish a working relationship, not only with the housed young people, but also with the staff members of the facility. He will also be looking to see that there is a desire for you to meet the emotional needs of the young people and not just their spiritual needs. Their emotional needs include friendship, someone to confide in, and someone to take a genuine interest in their life. Child victims of abuse or neglect often have great difficulty establishing trusting relationships, are more vulnerable to illness and stress and are less able to successfully cope with adversity (results based upon studies of adults who were abused or neglected, 1990 Annual Child Abuse and Neglect Report).¹⁰

⁹From Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, *Census of Juveniles in Residential Placement 1997*, <<http://ojjdp.ncjrs.org/pubs/generalsum.htm/#fs9996>> [machine-readable data file], Washington, D. C.: OJJDP, 1998, (accessed 28 November 2000).

¹⁰Ibid., U.S. Department of Health and Human Resources, *Child Maltreatment 1990*.

There may be a problem of an unsympathetic ear on the part of the chaplain's office. In such a case, the youth minister should take his objectives and desires to a higher office. The next office would be the superintendent of the juvenile facility. If that office proves to be unsympathetic, then the next step would be to contact Prison Fellowship Ministries (founded by Chuck Colson) or a local Youth for Christ chapter with their ministry called Youth Guidance. Youth Guidance is a ministry geared for young people who are detained or incarcerated in juvenile detention centers.

Once the youth minister has expressed his desire to people who can assist, he needs to offer the right kind of program. The chaplain will want to know exactly how you plan to minister to the young people. Not just any program will work in a juvenile facility. It cannot be a program where nothing but Gospel tracts are passed out. A program or effort like this will result in an addendum that was issued February 28, 1976.

Because of a recent incident at one of the Los Angeles County's probation facilities, the following rules and regulations are being added to the list issued 2-28-76.

1. No literature (tracts, Bibles, testaments, etc.) may be distributed by any volunteer on L. A. County property or within any juvenile facility. ONLY the chaplains are authorized to distribute literature.
2. If you have literature that you feel would benefit the wards in the juvenile halls, give it to the chaplain in charge of the facility to distribute.

Counseling Services

One suggested program would be that of providing religious counseling. If a chaplain is employed by a juvenile facility, he or she may welcome the volunteer efforts

of a fellow minister who has a love for young people. Sometimes the resident chaplain is viewed by detained adolescents as part of the "system." This can hinder any sincere efforts by the chaplain's office. The visiting youth minister can be perceived in a different and more accommodating manner. He may not be as threatening as a volunteer from the community than his professional counterpart. There will be young people who will want to talk about their situations and problems. Many want religious counseling. The youth minister will need to set aside a routine or schedule so as to keep consistency in his time to talk to kids and also with the facility personnel.

Sponsoring Program

Another program that has worked is that of sponsoring a dormitory or ward. (There may be different terms used.) A dormitory usually involves approximately twenty or so young people. Sponsoring a dormitory involves providing a program either weekly or every other week. The continuity is important in establishing relationships with the young people and a rapport with the deputy probation officers (D.P.O.) who work regularly in the facility. If a program cannot be performed as frequently as suggested, then it will not be worth the time of the youth minister or time of the facility's staff. The facility staff, on most occasions, is looking for activities that would break up the monotony for the young people.

The youth minister will not be able to perform an effective program by himself. A number of people will need to get involved. A group of five adults per dormitory can be quite active in a sponsoring program. To prevent over usage of these volunteers, an alternative group of adults would be helpful. They would perform the same duties and

program. Not only does this prevent over usage, it would also build a larger and stronger support team among the involved volunteers.

As a sponsor, the youth minister must have the right kind of volunteers. These volunteers must have certain qualifications to be able to minister in a juvenile facility. They must have a respect for the young people but not a fear. These young people have obvious needs but a sympathetic ear should not mean making yourself vulnerable. The young people are in the facility for the suspicion of a crime. That fact needs to stay in the back of the volunteer's mind as he or she works with them.

All juveniles who appear in juvenile court are not merely helpless victims of an unfair system, of course. As previously mentioned, in 1975 there were 132,016 girls under 18 arrested for serious crimes, compared to 581,904 boys in the same year. And, as with adult criminals, the rate of increase of girls' crimes is far higher than that of boys'. From 1960 to 1975 serious crimes by boys under 18 increased by 117.4 percent, but those committed by girls jumped 425.4 percent. So, despite the fact that boys committed nearly four and a half times as many serious crimes as girls that year, the gap is steadily closing.¹¹

A listening ear is a vital part of being a volunteer in a detention center. The young people inside need someone to talk to. They want to tell someone their needs, their fears, their frustrations, and their story. The majority of them come from broken homes. They are either missing one parent or have more than one set of parents. This puts up an emotional wall that prevents effective communication. The volunteer needs to be ready

¹¹Richard Deming, *Women, the New Criminals* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1977), 108.

for a battery of questions. They will ask frank questions while expecting frank answers. They will want to know your age, if you have ever been arrested, your moral life, and what does God have to do with anything.

A volunteer needs to be able to communicate to the young people in the facility. Most of these young people have no concept of church or its surroundings. A Christian volunteer cannot always use words that are familiar within Christian circles. They will be vague and misunderstood by the young people. Vocabulary will have to be clear, explicit, and free from any words that are only understood among Christian people.

The program put on by the sponsors should last approximately one hour to an hour and a half. It should contain four elements. The first should be an informal time of getting acquainted with the young people. This is critical in gaining rapport. Secondly, there should be some type of activity. This activity can be as simple as playing a table game. Interaction with the young people should be the goal. Obviously, showing a videotape would not be as interactive, unless it was tied into some kind of interaction. An activity may be the distribution of personal items that young people might need (personal grooming items, appropriate magazines, games, crafts, stationery, etc). Activities can be personalized by giving birthday parties, using seasonal themes (Thanksgiving or Christmas), or giving tutorial type lessons (i.e., musical instruments or songs).

The third part of this program should be a short but to the point devotional or message. It should always be evangelistic and should always be in the form of a story. The individual who gives the talk should not preach to the young people but talk to them in a casual and confident manner. This devotional time depends on decisions made by

the administration of the facility. The fourth part of the program should consist of refreshments provided by the sponsors. Be sure to have enough for the officers present. This is an excellent opportunity to do personal evangelism. The young people will be even more receptive after the program. The program proves to them that you really do care for them. You will have earned the right to be heard.

Sponsorship Program Rules

Each juvenile facility will have its own set of rules and regulations for any volunteer efforts. Depending on the institution, the rules will be hard-fast and inflexible. The youth minister might have to write some of his own regulations if there has never been a previous sponsorship program. The following sponsorship program regulations reflect a general appropriateness among juvenile facilities.

1. The religious aspect is to keep a low profile. The fact that you are from a church will arouse questions.
2. This is a ministry in which ego is left out. Faith will be evidenced through the life of the volunteer, as evidenced by attitudes, actions, and conversation.
3. At no time is this program to be used predominantly for an individual church's agenda.
4. The volunteer group should not exceed the number allowed by the facility. All volunteers must be registered and oriented to the program services of the juvenile facility and the chaplain's office.

5. Either the senior Protestant chaplain or the Catholic chaplain must clear all religious material such as tracts, books, etc.
6. If at any time, for special programs, a larger group than the maximum allowed is needed; the senior chaplain and the officer of the day must clear this action.
7. The team leader is to familiarize the new volunteers with the program and its ministry.
8. Volunteers are never to ask for additional programs or special favors.
9. Volunteers are never to give out home addresses or phone numbers.
10. For special programs such as a movie, special meal, etc., submit the program planned to the senior chaplain's office. That office will have it cleared by the proper office.

(A set of regulations, written by the San Fernando Valley Juvenile Hall, can be found in Appendix A).

Conclusion

The opportunities of reaching young people in juvenile detention facilities are almost endless. These young people have been forgotten because they are out of our visual range. There is almost no better opportunity to minister to young people than those who are uncertain about their future.

First offenders are usually sent to one of the three hundred detention centers, where approximately thirteen thousand kids sit an average of twelve days with nothing to do, awaiting the court's decision on their fate. Because the police and most juvenile

workers fear they'll run away, they are detained behind locked doors. Most detention centers I have visited throughout the country are situated in or near the same building that houses the juvenile court. To the casual observer or group on tour, given by the personnel, these facilities look rather harmless and almost like college dorms. But behind the public relations' veneer, a penitentiary atmosphere prevails; guards, heavy iron doors, countless keys, and closed circuit TV give paramount security and control. Solitary confinement is readily employed for the slightest infraction.

According to the National Counsel on Crime and Delinquency, fifty percent of the youngsters in detention centers have committed no crime and forty percent will be released from custody after their court appearance.¹²

Someone has said that it is cheaper to build a fence at the top of a hill than a hospital at the bottom of a cliff. There is significant truth to this. Yet it is the juvenile delinquent that has come "crashing" to the bottom. Youth ministry is overall a preventive ministry. Youth ministry tries to reach young people and give them direction and moral strength before they make decisions that might lead them over the edge. Rehabilitative or recovery work has always been harder, more expensive, more time consuming, and demands a tremendous amount of involvement in putting the pieces back together of a shattered life. The love of Christ needs to be shown in both preventative and

¹²Kenneth Wooden, *Weeping in the Playtime of Others* (New York: McGraw Hill, 1976), 27.

rehabilitative ministry. The uniqueness of this ministry is that these young people have finally "hit bottom" and have no place to look, except "up."

CHAPTER 8

THE YOUTH MINISTER'S WIFE

Introduction

An aspect of the youth ministry that definitely affects the success or failure of a youth minister is his spouse. There is a trend among churches to employ female youth workers and some have even used the term of "youth minister" for their female staff. This chapter will deal with the youth minister's spouse from the perspective of the youth minister being male. There will be some aspects of this writing that will be applicable to the spouse of a youth minister or worker, whether they are a husband or wife. Of course, an assumption is being made that marriage is a requirement of youth ministers.

The state of celibacy does not make the Christian life easier or more difficult than the state of marriage. There are obvious difficulties: it puts a man or woman outside the conditions of ordinary life, namely heterosexual relations and parenthood; it puts the celibate in a spiritual position where he may become subject to pride or martyrdom; and the celibate may become isolated and mechanically inhuman as a bachelor or spinster sometimes does. But there are also creative possibilities in the single life in that one is free and unattached in a vocation of service; one can enjoy an untrammelled prayer life and a single-minded commitment to Jesus Christ . . . the commitment to celibacy is voluntary and can be relinquished.¹

¹Charles W. Steward, *Person and Profession* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1974), 95-96.

Qualifications of a Youth Minister's Wife

In suggesting qualifications, a single youth minister should not proceed in his fulfillment of a wife with a prescribed list in his hand. If a youth minister is married, he should not think that his lifelong partner is unqualified if she is lacking in any of the following areas. Instead, he should use the qualifications as an opportunity for spiritual and character development.

Spirit-Filled

Probably the most important qualification of a youth minister's wife is that she is a Spirit-filled Christian woman. An emphasis on the term "Spirit-filled" is needed. Just because she is a Christian is not enough. The youth minister's wife should be at the same spiritual level as that of her husband. Of course, the husband is responsible for spiritual development. There needs to be encouragement to participate in the disciplines of the Christian faith, along with spiritual nourishment and community in the local congregation. The youth minister's wife who is spiritually immature will cause embarrassment to the youth pastor and his ministry by means of actions, attitudes, and conversation. A youth pastor's wife must realize that, upon taking residence in a local church's youth ministry, she is suddenly thrust forward on a perceived pedestal for public scrutiny. Usually this type of scrutinizing offers no opportunity for rebuttal or defense.

When you begin a life in a parsonage, you and your family become the goldfish inside the parsonage bowl. The onlookers are the parishioners who love to gaze and exaggerate the parson's family. Every detail of your life is going to be known and what isn't known is imagined. How often you will wonder why it looks so golden and rosy to the onlookers.

Like the goldfish, you, too, are imported, as you did not grow up in the town in which you are now living. When lawyers and doctors come to town, their families are taken for granted. You and your family, ordinary carp, to be sure, have a special glow because of the curiosity and publicity, which surround you; and you cannot avoid exposure to the public gaze.²

Therefore it is important that the Christian character of the youth minister's wife be such that it encourages. It should never discourage those who are attempting to follow the same lifestyle.

An Example

Not only does the youth minister's wife have the attention of the adult women, she also has the attention of the adolescent girls. This kind of attention is looking for an example to follow. A youth pastor's wife with a healthy Christian character will reflect this in every area of her life, whether it be in her mannerisms, style of dress, opinions, or her treatment of other people.

For those young people who have been isolated and neglected by their own parents, she becomes a mother figure or big sister figure, depending on the age difference. The youth pastor's wife can be the healthiest of influences in the life of a young girl who has come from a chaotic, emotionally cold home. Her example could provide a model that shows what it is to be a woman, a wife, a mother, and what a home life is all about.

²Welthy H. Fisher, *Handbook for Ministers' Wives* (New York: Women's Press, 1950), 23.

Rapport With Youth

Just as establishing rapport with young people is vital to the youth pastor, it is also vital with his wife. Young people will be the center of his ministry. The youth pastor's wife should have the ability to converse and establish friendships with the young people. There will be activities, trips, conferences, and the like, centered around young people. This life will be dull for the youth pastor's wife if she does not learn how to get along with young people.

One ability that aids in establishing rapport with adolescents is humor. If the youth pastor's wife can get an adolescent girl to laugh, she automatically relieves any kind of tension that may have existed. Humor can be the method that reveals to the adolescent that a youth minister's wife is just as human as anyone else, including adolescents. There will be some tense moments in the ministry. Without a sense of humor, such moments would become emotional fiascoes.

Flexibility

An important qualification to accommodate her husband's schedule would be flexibility. The youth pastor's wife will know immediately upon arrival at their place of ministry is that this job is not a typical nine to five office shift. A better term to describe the youth ministry schedule is "impromptu." It may be that the youth pastor needs a second opinion about some piece of publicity or an idea for an activity. It may involve a family that wants to discuss a matter confidentially. An appointment of this nature, when qualified as being important, will need to be plugged into a day's schedule. There will be places to go that need to be inspected for potential youth activities. There will be times

that a youth pastor and his wife will have returned from a multi-day camp or retreat, just in time to scurry off to another scheduled youth activity. Other church activities and community affairs, along with regular family activities, will exhaust the schedule. Many times a calendar will need to be rearranged because of scheduling conflicts. There will be times that the youth pastor's wife will have to be ready at a moment's notice. Now this does not reflect the complete lifestyle of a youth minister. Nor does it mean that the youth pastor is inconsiderate in his varied schedule demands. It does suggest that these types of incidents will invariably come and there is nothing that the youth minister can do to avoid them.

Another part of being flexible is the willingness to share her husband with others. Young people need much time and attention. It takes time for the youth pastor to win their friendship and respect. He will always be attempting to gain rapport with other young people. While keeping up with the young people, he will also need to maintain a relationship with the parents and other adults. The cycle is endless. Yet if a youth pastor's wife does not understand this, it could put a strain on the family unit. There will be times when her husband could put something off and spend time with the family. A youth pastor's wife would do well to guard regularly scheduled family days and outings. A gentle reminder to her husband is a good preventative measure.

Personal Family Involvement

When the opportunity is available, the family should go along on youth trips and activities. Adequate planning will be needed regarding transportation, food, and lodging arrangements for the family. There will be some obvious added costs but they are well

worth the investment of any church congregation. By bringing the family along, the young people get an image of their youth pastor and how a family should be cared for. For those who do not have a healthy family situation, this gives them a positive example for them to strive for. This kind of involvement also gives the youth pastor's family an opportunity to see his ministry in action, with all the responsibilities and benefits.

Counseling

Counseling is a significant part of involvement by the youth pastor's wife. There will be those situations in which the youth minister would be wise and discreet in letting his wife handle certain counseling situations. There will be times when an adolescent female wants to talk to the wife, instead of the youth pastor. Many times, these incidents are unscheduled. When an adolescent wants to talk to someone, they want to talk at that moment. The majority of the youth pastor's wife's counseling will be of a casual nature. She should have a layman's knowledge of counseling techniques, along with a working knowledge of Scripture to give appropriate Scriptural answers to a distressed teen-age girl. Many adolescents place their confidence in another person ahead of their own parents. This "place" cannot be taken lightly and must be treated with all the respect and seriousness of a formal counseling situation. The youth pastor's wife will have numerous opportunities to minister to young people in counseling situations.

Mother Substitute

The pastor's wife may also be a mother substitute for adolescents in the church from reasonably adequate homes. A certain amount of alienation between the adolescent

and his parents exists even in good homes. This means that the teen-ager needs someone in whom to confide.

Though this may be a desirable goal of parents, we should also realize that parents and children are emotionally involved with each other, which may make it very difficult for them to listen to each other.³

Domestic Qualities

Domestic qualities are a part of being a youth pastor's wife. She should be able to manage her home to the extent that it is a reflection of her attitude toward her family.

One also wonders whether those wives who had difficulties with work in the home were able to make a distinction between housework—washing, cleaning, etc.—in the perspective of its effect upon family relationships . . . wives who equate housekeeping with homemaking have difficulty achieving a sense of fulfillment in the home. But, he continues, those who are able to view work in the home in its larger context are the “ones who truly make homemaking a profession.”⁴

A youth pastor's wife will be called upon to entertain guests at her home or host various activities. Being able to entertain properly is a valuable asset when it involves leaving favorable impressions on those who visit their home.

Even though she is not employed by the church or given any specific duties or given any special authority, the youth pastor's wife is still an important leader in the

³Wallace Denton, *The Minister's Wife as a Counselor* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1955), 57.

⁴Wallace Denton, *The Role of the Minister's Wife* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1952), 16.

organization of a church. For this reason, it is important that she is appropriately attired for all occasions. It may be a formal gathering or a high school gymnasium. Regardless of the occasion, the youth pastor's wife should fit in without purposely being obvious.

False Expectations

For some time there have been local congregations who have held onto erroneous ideas about a minister's wife. Some congregations feel that the employed youth minister comes with a "package deal." That "deal" is the idea that the youth pastor's wife is to become heavily involved in as many areas at the church as possible. They do not ask her to be a part of the ministry but expect her to be a part. If she can play the piano, she is expected to play on a regular basis. If she can counsel, she is expected to become a counselor. Whenever there is a church function, she is undoubtedly expected to be in attendance.

The fact of the matter is that she is not the second part of a "package deal." If she were, she should be paid a salary, too. When a local church hires a youth minister, they are paying for his talents and ministerial skills, not necessarily hers. Of course, if his wife wants to be a part, then she will voluntarily do so. Yet the church should not place a guilt feeling on the youth pastor's wife who chooses to omit certain church activities out of her schedule. She will be busy enough with both her schedule and the schedule of her husband.

A local church must not expect the youth minister's wife to be perfect in her attendance to church functions. She will have circumstances arise that will prohibit her from attending. Obviously this should not be a habitual occurrence. It does emphasize

the fact that she is human and will not make it to church every time the “doors are open.” Some of the reasons for being unable to attend are sickness, scheduled youth trips, and recuperation from youth activities.

Priorities

Spiritually Fit

Keeping spiritually fit should be her number one priority. She needs to be that encouragement when her husband is discouraged. She needs to be that spiritual guide when the husband cannot be there physically. Maintaining a personal devotional life is vital for the wife to be a spiritual help to those who need assistance or for those who simply need an encouraging word.

Physical Well-Being

Her own well-being should be number two on the priority list. This is not to be equivalent to a prideful ego. Instead, it involves maintaining a strong self in order to be able to minister to her family and others. Taking care of her physical well-being is important to the youth minister’s wife. She needs to stay healthy so she can keep up with her other responsibilities. Without being relatively physically fit, her physical condition will affect her abilities, both mentally and spiritually.

Needs of Her Husband

Next on the priority list is the husband. She should consider her husband as her ministry. It is up to her to assist in keeping her husband looking neat in appearance and in relatively good health. The youth pastor who is dressed inappropriately and needs

personal attention to his appearance will reflect adversely upon his wife. Not only is his character somewhat maligned, but also his wife's.

The wife needs to be there when her husband needs an emotional sounding board. Working in a local church situation can create human conflicts. In youth ministry, the youth pastor will be caught in the middle of numerous disagreements, whether someone else or himself causes it. This will result in a need to talk to his wife. He has to be selective in whom he chooses to release his emotional reactions, whether it involves personalities or situations with which he is in conflict. His wife needs to be that confidential person. Problem situations will arise in which the youth minister will need a second opinion. These problems need to be reflected off another person for a second opinion. Sometimes these problems are serious enough to be concerned about confidentiality. The youth minister will occasionally share the problems with his wife, knowing that it will remain in her confidence.

Family Needs

Next on the priority list should be the family. There has been one stereotype that has been given to those children of ministers, "the preacher's kid." Church members seem to think that the children of a minister are to be in perfect behavior at all times. The youth pastor's wife needs to see that her children are well behaved, but she should not expect them to be beyond reproach. She should allow them to be human to the point that they are just as normal as any other children in their age bracket.

Many times the wife will have to assume all the family duties due to activities and engagements by her husband. Circumstances will persist that will not facilitate bringing

the entire family. The youth pastor's wife needs to be able to handle the family by herself when her husband is off on a weeklong backpacking trip, summer camp, or weekend retreat. These kinds of activities are more frequent for the youth pastor than for any other church staff member.

Home Responsibilities

The youth pastor's wife's priority list should include her home. Keeping and maintaining a home is in essence, a full-time job. It may not sound as glamorous or appealing as other jobs, nor is the pay very good. Yet without this kind of personal attention to the details of keeping a home, her husband will soon reflect her attitude in his ministry. If a man knows that he can come home to a place where the atmosphere is relaxed, he will desire to spend as much time as he can there. If his home is a place that is in complete disarray and no relaxation can be experienced, he will avoid spending time there. There is a difference between housekeeping and homemaking. Anyone can keep a house but it is the personal touch that differentiates between a homemaker and a housekeeper.

Besides young people dropping by, members of the congregation tend to drop by unexpectedly. Being the youth pastor's wife, she should expect the unexpected. The impression left with those people who visit her home is related to establishing rapport with them. If a home is the perfect portrait of a public dumping ground, people will tend to disassociate themselves. The opposite is also true. When people find the home attractive, they will be more than happy to be associated or identified with the youth pastor's ministry. Even though the youth pastor's wife should not be preoccupied with

making an impression on people, she can be sure that favorable impressions will make the ministry and the relationships associated with it progress much smoother.

Local Church

The local church and the work that is involved are next on the priority list. It is easy for the wife to become deeply involved with duties in the church. If she is not careful, they will conflict with her family responsibilities and household duties. Only when she can adequately perform her duties at home, along with the added responsibilities at the church, should she attempt to do both. If anything needs to be dropped from her schedule, it should be excess voluntary service at the church. This can be taken to the extreme of personal alienation from the church. This would be wrong. Instead, a healthy balance between maintaining family responsibilities and voluntary service for the church is necessary.

Conclusion

The most important aspect that will determine a successful youth ministry, other than the youth minister, is the youth minister's wife. He should hold her in high esteem and do whatever he can to maintain a healthy relationship between the two of them. Being a youth pastor's wife is a difficult task. Yet with divine assistance and support from her husband, she will be a human trophy for all to admire. Her example will be followed by many.

Young people—like the little girl with the little curl—can be very, very good. But when they are bad, they can be horrid! Ironically, these are the ones who need our help

most: the sour ones, the bitter ones, the rebellious ones. We need Your help to love the unlovely.⁵

⁵Carol Wilson, "The Role of the Youth Minister's Wife," *Leader's Guide of the Local Church Youth Ministry* (Lynchburg: Thomas Road Baptist Church, 1975), 15-16.

CHAPTER 9

WHAT THE FUTURE HOLDS IN YOUTH MINISTRY

Now that a new decade, century, millennium is here, the questions of what the future holds in youth ministry will need to be answered. The answer is not one that can be absolutely certain. Yet based on projections, specific trends and changes, some forecasts can be determined that are directly related to the executing of a youth program and the effectiveness of ministering to young people. Someone has said that God did man a favor by putting a veil over what will take place tomorrow. There is tremendous amount of truth there. So forecasting the future can be similar to forecasting the weather. Man does not always get it right. But there are some occasions when all the elements and conditions are in place for a relatively accurate forecast, give or take a few degrees. That is the intention here.

A Historical Background

Some historicity needs to be mentioned in order to track where youth ministry has been and hopefully where it is going.

1950 shows American religion for what it has been since colonial times and probably will be for a good while to come: diverse, pluralistic, frustrating in its inability to find a common voice or any significant unity—yet for that very reason an indispensable protector of individual freedom and nurturer of civil rights. For unless American religion were itself quieted and forced into conformity, all freedoms could not be lost. The seeds of fresh dissent, capable of taking root and crumbling the foundation of any

state church or totalitarian superimposition will always be present, awaiting water and sun.¹

It was out of this 1950s era that youth ministry began to come of age.

After the war, this mood (evangelicalism) was continued or created anew by the Youth for Christ organization, and above all by Billy Graham, the greatest evangelist of the postwar who had earlier worked for Youth for Christ.²

In the 1960s, rebellion and rising unrest against the norms and values of society were rampant among young people. It was during this time that fundamental churches and their youth groups seemed to flourish.

The largest churches in America are unashamedly fundamentalist in doctrine. Youth groups in fundamental churches appear to be large and vibrant. Fundamentalist churches have the capacity for the fastest numerical growth and the largest youth groups.³

In the 1970s, para-church ministries plateaued and the era of entrepreneurial youth ministry began. In the 1980s, Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development calls the decade an era of “massive cuts” in denominational support for youth ministry. The 1990s saw a return to the seriousness of youth ministry, not only as a ministry but also as a profession. Seminaries and Christian colleges began to integrate youth ministry into their

¹Robert S. Ellwood, *1950: Crossroads of American Religious Life* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2000), 225.

²*Ibid.*, 191.

³Elmer Towns, *Successful Biblical Youth Work* (Nashville: Impact Books, 1966), 28, 30.

academic curricula.⁴

Trends in Society

The tracking of trends can be a highly sophisticated skill because businesses are constantly trying to crack the tastes, preferences, and styles of elusive and fickle young people. In youth ministry, this trend tracking can mean the difference between being relevant and archaic.

Trend. Such a small word for all the power behind it. A word, a label that often identifies a movement . . . trends can affect our lifestyle and our purchasing decisions, and eventually give us a new outlook. The visible manifestations of trends—the ones you can spot easily on the streets—often start with the youth culture.⁵

In 1980, this author made some observations and predictions about society and the impact on future trends in youth ministry.⁶ They included the godless direction of society, the negative downturn of the economy, energy concerns with an emphasis on the costs of fuel, media, and the cooperation of churches and Christian youth organizations with an emphasis on the churches cooperating with Christian youth organizations. The economy and energy are no longer trends to be reckoned with, even though there are indications that they could resurface.

⁴Information based upon a historical graph in *Starting Right*, edited by Kenda Creasy Dean, Chap Clark, and Dave Rahn (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 2001), 84.

⁵Janine Lopiano-Misdom and Joanna De Luca, *Street Trends* (New York: Harper Business, 1998), 3.

⁶See doctoral thesis, *Factors for Successful Adolescent Ministry in the Local Church Today*, by Steve Vandegriff, submitted to the California Graduate School of Theology, 1980, Chapter 10.

Godless Direction of Society

One trend that will continue into the next decade is the godless direction of society. Eric Harris and Dylan Klebold have seared their images into the conscience of society because of a cold-blooded act of anger at Columbine High School. Young people can get guns from the arsenals their parents keep. They can fill their minds with violence and ill-advised sexuality via television and movies. They can download all the pornography imaginable to feed a depraved mind. Young people continue to be blamed for a lot of social ills but the harsh reality is that much of this misbehavior has been conjured and marketed by adults to teenagers. Maybe it is not a teenage problem we have, but an adult problem. Example after example can be cited that reflects the godlessness of society.

One of the most challenging problems facing society today is the use and abuse of chemical substances by teenagers.

The number one drug problem, without a doubt, is alcoholism Alcohol is clearly the substance with which adolescents have the most experience. Statistics vary but the best estimates indicate that there could be more than four million American alcoholics under the age of eighteen.⁷

Suicide is a raging epidemic in America. Each year the national statistics on suicide climb—especially for adolescents. Suicide is the third leading cause of death for ten to twenty year olds, after car accidents and homicide. Because many suicides, however, are disguised as

⁷Dr. Les Parrott III. *Helping the Struggling Adolescent* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 2000), 124.

accidents, it may be the number one cause of teenage death. Between 1962 and 1996, the teenage suicide rate increased 155 percent.⁸

Morals of Young People

Not only will social ills continue to increase at a rapid rate but also the morals of young people will continue to degrade. The following shocking statements reflect this:

It is estimated that 2.5 million teens are infected with STDs (Sexually Transmitted Diseases) each year. That means that every thirteen seconds a teen in the U. S. contracts a sexually transmitted disease The risk of infection with STDs increases enormously in relation to the number of different people with whom they have had sexual contact.⁹

Break-Up of the Family

The generation in this decade will be a "hurt" generation. This is primarily due to the break-up of the family. The breakdown of the family is considered the most significant factor that has negatively changed the sociological landscape in our culture. Divorce has forced young people to choose between parents.

Even with the divorce rate leveling off, about one million U. S. marriages will still be breaking up each year. That prospect has led to calculations that up to forty percent of all children and youth will live in a single parent family at some time before they reach the age of eighteen.

There are an estimated ten million stepchildren in America today, whose livelihood and loyalties are often

⁸Ibid., 430.

⁹Ibid., 349.

divided between the parent they live with and the one they visit when the divorce contract allows. There are about five million couples living as stepfamilies.

Census Bureau demographer, Dr. Paul G. Glick, estimates that one out of seven children under age eighteen is a stepchild; that one out of fourteen married couples has stepchildren.¹⁰

The Sheer Numbers

According to *NBC Nightly News* on August 16, 1999, more than fifty-three million children enrolled for school in the fall of 1999—the greatest number in U. S. history. Several states including California are scrambling for teachers, enticing them with “fast-track” teaching degrees, higher pay, and signing bonuses. Even investment firms, i.e., Fidelity Investments, are using television advertisements showing how investors can retire from their present jobs with supplemental income from their investments, and then take on teaching positions. School systems are trying to find funds to build more schools and improve the existing ones. The United States government is putting more money into education for the express purpose of hiring 100,000 more schoolteachers.

The teen population is expected to grow at twice the rate of the rest of the population during the next decade, peaking in 2010 with approximately 30.8 million teenagers. This is 900,000 more teens than ever before. In fact, it's 4.1 million more than in 1969—when Woodstock woke up mainstream America to youth culture's existence.¹¹

¹⁰Jim Reapsome, ed., “Children and Youth Face Severe Trauma Because of Divorce,” *Youthletter*, December 1978.

¹¹www.Youthworker.com/Youthworker, January/February 2000.

The Disappearance of Adolescence

Besides the volume of adolescents, there is another phenomenon that has been subtly taking place: Adolescence is disappearing.

In the 1800s, social historians tell us the average girl began to menstruate at 15; now the average age is 12. The next distinction to vanish will be social. One thing that used to make teenagers teenagers was the postponement of family responsibilities, but these days even 30 and 40 year olds are postponing family responsibilities, often permanently. Teenagerhood as preparation for life makes no sense when the life being prepared for resembles the one you've been living all along. What will a world without teenagers look like? Like the adult world does now. Adolescents will feel the same pressures as their parents do: to succeed financially, to maintain their health, to stay on society's good side. What's more, adolescents will field these pressures using their elder's traditional techniques: spending money, taking medication, contracting for professional advice.¹²

Sociology teaches us that each successive generation is more mature than the previous one. Everything is better, faster, and easier. But as the rate of maturity decreases, the time kids have time to be kids also dramatically decreases.

The question for the new century is, how much longer will teenagers exist, at least in the form that James Dean made famous? Twenty years, tops, is my guess. Teenagers, as classically defined, are already dying out, or at least changing into something different. The buffer zone they once inhabited is being squeezed out of existence for

¹²Walter Kirn, "Will Teenagers Disappear?", *Time*, 21 February 2000, 60.

two reasons: children are growing up faster than ever before, and adults are growing up more slowly.¹³

The Disappearance of Markers

What has exacerbated the problem is the disappearance of markers in teens' lives. A marker is a sign that indicates the direction a person is going on this highway we call life. When these markers are approached or reached, there is societal fanfare that indicates this individual is prepared for the next wave of privileges, responsibilities, and freedoms (i.e., getting a driver's license). Some of these disappearing markers that distinguish adolescents from childhood would include something as simple as clothing markers. Case in point: Have you ever been to a GAP KIDS store lately? How about doing some demographics of the crowd at the latest boy band concert? The distinction between childhood and adolescence has blurred. There are some activities that used to be reserved for adolescents, including organized sports. Yet, over-zealous parents continue to push their elementary aged child into organized sports, complete with uniforms, referees, and the occasional parental fisticuffs. Is it any wonder that interest and involvement on traditional team sports is on the decline among adolescents? Even religious markers have disappeared.¹⁴ This would argue that ordinances such as the

¹³Ibid.

¹⁴In one particular Lutheran church I was speaking in, I participated in the observance of the Lord's Supper. For me, this ordinance is a serious one. The Scripture is quite clear in what our attitude and actions should be when we enter into this sacred moment. I was shocked when elementary and pre-school children were invited to come to the front of the church and take of the bread and wine. I am not sure if a young child can grasp the true meaning of this ordinance. Yet parents observed, admiring their child as they did this religious activity.

Lord's Supper, along with others like the ordinance of baptism is reserved for those who can grasp the magnitude of these ordinances, more specifically adolescents.

There is even a more looming disappearing marker. It is the marker of innocence. For some unknown reason this present society has opened the floodgates of information (educators and intellectuals would argue that we can never get too much information). It does not matter how crude, depraved, or explicit that information is, the better we are informed, the better off we will be. The exception this author would make here is that much of this information is being disseminated to individuals, regardless of their age. There seems to be a societal propensity to expose anything to anyone. This marker needs to be identifiable for those who can handle such information responsibly, particularly older adolescents. Public education has championed sex education, for the most part, with an emphasis on the mechanics of sexuality. Somewhere along the way, at the very least, the mystery and surprises of sexuality have been exposed. It would seem that attitudes and values in this area, along with responsibility, would be the focus, not mechanics. A married couple has a lifetime to figure out the mechanics of sexuality. Yet society continues to expose, or at the very least, insinuate the how-to to younger and younger age groups.

It would be quite a bit idealistic to prevent adolescents from being exposed to any and all of society's "dirty little secrets." What our society is doing is assuming that adolescents are fully capable of handling any and all of this information, no matter how graphic, explicit, or emotionally disturbing. This assumption discourages adolescents from seeking adult support, counsel, and experience, which they desperately need. Others have taken markers that should belong to the teenager, whether they are younger children

or older adults. Teenagers have been left with nothing in place that is special and exclusive to them.

The Digital Generation

A study of future trends would be incomplete without consideration of the Internet. Some would say we have a problem. Anything in excess could be a potential problem. Technological excess would be an understatement. This generation is experiencing technology overkill. Technology is everywhere, from faceless banks to fast-food restaurants. The Internet has an almost supernatural omnipresence. It seems that this digital lifestyle is making more demands on our jobs and in our homes. Yet there still is an obsession to get the latest high-tech gizmo that comes on the market. For some, surfing the Internet has become an obsession. E-mail has become an onslaught. Add the mind-numbing complexity of the latest software or hardware, and the moral issue of dot.com greed, you have a considerable bandwidth of problems. Technology and the Internet have invaded our lives, chained us to our computers, and most seriously, these tools are draining us of our humanity. Psychologist Francine Toder of Palo Alto said, "Technology was supposed to free us and make our lives easier, but it's done the opposite. It's creating havoc in our lives. Everyone is overwhelmed and stressed out."¹⁵ Visiting scholar Cecile Andrews of Stanford University said, "We have to live in balance with all this technology. If we're always hurrying to have the latest computer or the best

¹⁵Edward Iwata, "Tech's Tyranny Provokes Revolt," *USA Today*, 21 August 2000, 1.

new job, we're going to miss our lives. We need to ask ourselves: What is really important?"¹⁶

Post-modernity

Churches have been somewhat caught off-guard with this next wave of culturalism. It seems that just as the church got settled in some relatively effective ministry models, culture changed. The church, for the most part, has been embarrassingly out of touch. There is either a subtle or even blatant disregard or hostility towards popular culture. (There are certainly some things we can be hostile about, with regards to cultural tastes and practices. But our hostility has been misinterpreted as hostility towards the people of that culture.) Post-modernism is an all-accepting, truth is relative, and "whatever makes you happy" kind of thinking. The only two exceptions here are: don't impose your beliefs on someone else, and don't harm Mother Earth. Even though there exists a Christian worldview in some parts of the United States and Canada, (for the U. S. it's the southeast; in Canada, it's the province of Alberta, particularly the central part), the remaining religious landscape is ambiguous. One would only need to take a visit to England and then on into Canada to get a taste of what a post-modern culture looks like. Post-modern culture is suspicious of religious institutions and bureaucracy. Post-modernists are no longer passive observers. They want to be participants. The church that demonstrates a fear of popular culture will forfeit its opportunity to have an

¹⁶Ibid.

audience with a post-modern culture. (This is clearly where the dividing line between churches and Christian youth organizations is.)

Marketers have been notorious in giving certain people and people-groups labels. From Boomers to Generation Xers, we now have Generation Y or Millennials. (Many sociologists identify the first of this new generation, the Millennials, as the high school class of 2000, or children born in and after 1982).¹⁷ Even more important is that Millennials are important to this study because they represent the next wave of adolescents. They are distancing themselves from the “slackers” of Generation X. They multi-task with ease. Their literacy rate is higher, along with possessing a media-friendly mindset, even though that includes an uncomfortable acceptance of vulgarity. Millennials have blended with the previous generation by being pluralistic and tolerant of everyone and everything. They do not want to intellectually access anything but instead want to feel it or at least be emotionally connected. They also carry with them, a deep interest in spiritual matters. Most important though would be relationships. They want relationships that have longevity and permanence (they are still living with the consequences of broken relationships, whether it is fractured friendships or fractured families).

¹⁷Dawson McAllister. *Saving the Millennial Generation* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1999), 6.

Future Trends And Changes In Youth Ministry

Christian Lifestyle

As the local church strives to portray a sensible and responsible lifestyle and teach Scriptural principles that have always been the same, society continues to move away from those lifestyles and principles. As a result, the Christian lifestyle will become more and more noticeable. The Christian young person will be increasingly recognizable. The peer pressure will be much more acute to conform to the ways that society attempts to dictate. It may just require using a vocabulary that is free of all the vulgar terms and double-meaning connotations that have become commonplace in broadcast, print, and computer-related media.

It is quite evident that the youth pastor will need to prepare his young people for the difficult years ahead. Christian martyrdom reenters the adolescent vocabulary.¹⁸ They will have to be taught how to handle the demands of their peer group. Being able to stand alone with their Christian faith will be a spiritual characteristic that must be indoctrinated into young people. Without these spiritual instructions, Christian young people will be enveloped in a societal wave of secularism that will result in a church that cannot be differentiated from any other aspect of society.

Be Relevant

Because of the increase in peer pressure, youth ministries will have to be relevant.

¹⁸Creasy, Dean, Clark and Rahn, *Starting Right*, 84. Information based upon a historical graph found in this reference.

Youth ministries will have to be more service-oriented with their Christian young people. Christian service will give young people the practical abilities they will need in coping with societal pressures. Too often, youth ministries deal with religious abstracts that have nothing to do with living in today's world.

Entertainment has replaced the instruction of Scriptural principles for daily living in many youth ministries. This has and is producing a group of young people who are observers and not participants. They sit back in their comfortable world and let the few people up front do all the Christian activity. As a result of this entertainment-style program, the young people in these churches are becoming spiritually callused. Because of their numbness, they cannot and would not know how to minister to someone who had a need or problem when confronted with them. "When youth ministry focuses on playing into the entertainment culture, it encourages passivity and reduces it to just another consumer item," says Greg Jones, minister of discipleship at Arbutus United Methodist Church in Baltimore.¹⁹

Young People's Participation

To remedy this problem, the youth minister has to develop a program that involves the young people's participation.

Don't overlook the fact that there is a treasure in your young people. Each one has something significant to say. Youth leaders who don't equip young people to do ministry are missing the joy of seeing what's inside of

¹⁹Wendy Murray Zuba, "The Class of '00," *Christianity Today*, 3 February 1997, 20.

them, not to mention cutting off some of the effectiveness they can bring to a group.²⁰

Remedy would include student participation in Sunday morning instruction. Instead of a single instructor, teaching sessions should facilitate student response. Student response would encourage young people to conceptualize Scriptural principles and help to relate them to everyday life. There has to be more student involvement, even if it means that it may not attain more adult-oriented expectations. Young people need to be encouraged to identify their spiritual gifts and when those gifts are not as obvious, young people need to be taught to “stir up the gift” that is within them. This would take the form of working or ministering with these gifts in mind. By the simple act of practicing spiritual gifts, young people might discover one gift and uncover another.

Growing Focus on Praise and Worship

Youth ministry has a growing focus on praise and worship, along with young seeker-friendly worship. This has been a point of contention as far as worship styles go. “True worship can indeed lead to controversy. The first murder in human history seems to have taken place between brothers in a disagreement over worship.”²¹ Some have even encouraged non-Christian young people to participate in worship. This could be argued as to the emptiness of a non-Christian young person participating in worship and if

²⁰Wayne Rice and Chap Clark, *New Directions for Youth Ministry* (Loveland, CO: Group, 1998), 111.

²¹Elmer Towns and Warren Bird, *Into the Future* (Grand Rapids: Fleming H. Revell, 2000), 134.

worship is really taking place. This author would argue that millions of people around the world participate in some form of worship each Sunday, without having a personal relationship with the one they worship. This author would also argue that the worship experience for the seeking young person might be a large step in his progress towards a personal relationship with Christ. This author still believes in single date salvation, but also believes in a salvation experience that is at the conclusion of a process of searching. At the end of that process begins the start of another process, the process of discipleship.

This step has been misinterpreted as the next step in entertainment-based worship. What these trends reflect is a move away from a centralized professional ministry to empowered young laity. Praise and worship allow students to take ownership, and seeker-sensitive services allow young people to minister where they feel called, no matter what it looks like, even if it is a bit unorthodox. It is not the role of a ministry to help young people adjust to their programs. It is the role of a youth minister to help adjust the programs to fit their young people. It is a necessity that we move the focus off of our professional selves and on to the work of the Holy Spirit. We can only do this if we truly believe in the priesthood of every believer, even if they happen to be a bit young.

Christian Service

The idea of Christian service is a necessity. In fact, we need to introduce service projects and ministry experiences at the earliest stages of adolescent ministry. One of the predominant challenges of effective ministry is to see students more as vessels of ministry than objects of ministry. The church today must move away from ministry aimed at

students and focus on ministry with students. Service projects will need to increase to provide an opportunity for young people to give application to their spiritual instruction.

At every level of schooling, youth participation in service is at an all time high. Distrustful of politicians and adversarial politics, young people are the vanguard of a new politics of participation and voluntary service. Fueled largely by renewed interest in national service and citizenship, the service-learning movement demands nothing less than reconceptualizing the role of young people.²²

Authenticity is job one in youth ministry. That's why ministry trips and service projects offer such a powerful ministry punch—they involve kids in real-life experiences in which their actions and beliefs make a real-life difference.²³

We must see them as partners in the Gospel ministry and not solely the products of our ministry. This type of focus forces a “fleshing out of the Gospel” that creates a grounded personal theology built upon guided personal discovery. Young people need fewer lectures and more ministry experience. They need to get “dirty” for Christ’s sake if they are to develop lives of personal holiness.

Mission Field Openings

With the possibilities of new mission fields opening, youth ministers will need to encourage their young people to become involved in mission work. Instead of just preaching challenging messages about mission fields, the youth pastor needs to give his

²²*Phi Delta Kappan*, May 2000, 652.

²³Rick Lawrence, *Trend Watch* (Loveland, CO: Group, 2000), 22.

young people specific opportunities and means of being practically involved. One specific opportunity that has opened in this decade is Mainland China. According to former President Carter, he has talked to leading China officials about the possibilities of bringing missionary work there.²⁴ Once that missionary door opens, there have to be prepared missionaries to take on this global task. English as a Second Language or ESL may be one method of opportunity for young people of this decade to use. As visas for vocational missionaries become more difficult, young people will have to “offer” more services to foreign countries besides the Gospel. With the explosion of the Internet and the shrinking world through modern technology, it is both practical and necessary to cross international boundaries, just as it was years ago, to cross state lines. The IMB (International Mission Board) of the Southern Baptist Convention has set and broken recruiting records for their Journeyman Program for the last several years. Through this program, college students are volunteering for two to three year experiences overseas for little or no money. They are volunteering in mass because they seek a real viable faith. This same attitude is found among middle schoolers and high schoolers. It would be hard to imagine an effective youth ministry without an active international mission component to it.

Public School Campuses

A major function of a relevant youth ministry is to develop a contemporary

²⁴Based on a public speech by President Carter at the National Religious Broadcasters Convention in Washington, D.C., 21 January 1980.

program that reaches the public school campuses.

There's no shortage of complaints about public schools in America. Tests scores are slipping. New schools are expensive. Teachers don't seem to be able to care the way they did back in the good old days. This list goes on, and Christians often add a few more items to the list. Schools don't encourage prayer or Bible study. They teach evolution as fact. Drugs, sex, and rock 'n' roll have overrun middle and high school campuses and turned them into cesspools of sin.

However, the public school remains one of the finest ideas God ever put into the hearts of people. Why? Because every school day, schools are packed with students.²⁵

There needs to be an attraction that catches the secular mind and hold his attention long enough to present the Gospel to him. If a person wants to see an active "mission field," simply walk the halls of any middle or high school public campus. If youth ministry is to have any significant impact among an adolescent community, it must be actively involved in some aspect of campus ministry and outreach. One's attitude must not and cannot be one of antagonism and arrogance towards a public school. Instead, there must be an attitude of service and cooperation. Strategy would involve becoming a part of the school through such avenues as coaching, substitute teaching, helping with a campus club, chaperoning, etc.

What Contemporary Really Is

There has been much debate on what contemporary really is. Instead of arguing

²⁵Rice and Clark, *Directions for Youth Ministry*, 117.

over what others say it is, a look at our perfect example, Jesus Christ, will provide some answers. When Christ walked upon this earth, He used illustrations taken from the known culture of that day. This included fig trees, grapes, vines, seeds, fish, sheep, and the like, which permeated His illustrations. Much of His time was spent with publicans and sinners trying to reach them. Ironically, local churches have attempted to take the Gospel around the world with different languages, dialects, and cultures. Yet when it has come to reaching the youth of America, the church as a whole has remained traditional and almost orthodox.

My question is: why the hang-up when we begin conversation about contemporary programs and music or programming to youth? The argument is always, “we don’t have to resort to their music and ideas to win them to Christ.” However, we accept contemporary color schemes and designs in other media. We use ideas of interest to women to attract ladies, and Christian sports personalities to attract the sports enthusiast. Why not use the contemporary to attract those who can identify the most to the contemporary—the youth?²⁶

Attendance

With all the social ills and their effects, what will happen to attendance in youth ministry? There are mixed opinions. Ralph Torres, Youth Pastor at Church-on-the-Way in Van Nuys, California, believes that there will be an upcoming revival in the church. If a strong movement does not take place, we can consider ourselves in a post-Christian

²⁶Roger Van Loan, “What is Contemporary?”, *Religious Broadcasting Sourcebook*, ed. Ben Armstrong, (Morristown, New Jersey: National Religious Broadcasters, 1978), G-9.

era.²⁷ Bill Randolph, Executive Director of San Fernando Valley Youth for Christ in California, believes that the Jesus Movement in the late 60s and 70s was false labor pains of a future revival among young people.²⁸

On the other end of the opinion spectrum is Gary Smith, Youth Pastor at Grace Community Church in Panorama City, California. He believes that local church youth groups will decrease in size but will grow in spiritual depths. This is the result of lowering societal norms. These norms will inevitably result in Christian young people becoming more and more persecuted. This persecution, whether it be actual physical harm or a type of social discrimination, will cause many to separate themselves from Christian circles.²⁹ Shooting tragedies in the United States and Canada have glaringly revealed that Christian young people have been singled out. Normal adolescent rebellion has been tragically redefined. Regardless of whose opinion he follows, the youth pastor needs to make the necessary preparation and adjustments.

Sheer Numbers

The sheer numbers of adolescents are going to have significant ministry implications. With a somewhat faceless adolescence because of growing up digital, the simple gesture of acknowledging and recognizing a teenager will have impact. In his

²⁷Based on comments by Ralph Torres during a personal interview, made in response to this author's sample survey questions in 1979, located in Appendix E of this thesis.

²⁸Based on comments by Bill Randolph during a personal interview, made in response to this author's sample survey questions in 1979, located in Appendix E of this thesis.

book, *The Circle of Innovation*, business guru Tom Peters recalls an experience he has noticed in Ritz-Carlton Hotels. Each time he has stayed at the hotel, Peters has noticed that every employee, from doorman to bellhop, gives him a few seconds, eye-to-eye, and asks how everything is going and if there is anything they can do to make his stay more pleasant. Peters has dubbed this, the Ritz Pause. It is that pause that makes him feel recognized and important.³⁰ The ministry application is obvious. Someone needs to acknowledge that those teenagers who happen to grace our ministry, exist and someone has noticed. In a sea of teenagers nudging along in public school hallways, the simple fact that someone knows their first name will go a long way towards feeling connected. Whether it be the professional youth minister or concerned adult leader, does not matter. What does matter is that someone has personally connected with this teenager.

The sheer numbers of teenagers will bring cries from civic and community leaders as what are to be done with all these teenagers. Churches and Christian youth organizations have an opportunity to address this issue with creative means of ministry. The youth center will become more of an accepted ministry model. The challenge here will be to design programs and activities that make the large crowd seem small. The connectedness with a concerned adult leader is critical here. Community and relationships need to be of utmost priority. Another challenge will be the method or plan in which the message of Christ's life-changing love be presented, whether subtlety or

²⁹Based on comments by Gary Smith during a personal interview, made in response to this author's sample survey questions in 1979, located in Appendix E of this thesis.

³⁰Thomas J. Peters, *The Circle of Innovation* (New York: Vintage Books, 1999), 460.

overtly. Great care and planning need to go into this. If not, the youth center will become no more than a communal hangout, with no spiritual distinctives.³¹ The sheer numbers will also bring about a renewed emphasis on youth ministry. Congregations will put more money into the youth budget, enabling multiple youth staff and interns. A side benefit of this would be the number of youth ministers needed to fill these positions. Many churches are beginning to see the value and wisdom of mature older youth ministers being on staff. Energy and enthusiasm are giving way to experience and steadiness.

Disappearing Markers

The whole matter of disappearing markers, more particularly life's markers, has biblical evidence. Luke Chapter Two describes the story of a twelve-year-old Jesus. On this particular annual trip to Jerusalem, Jesus finally reaches some significant markers in His life. Not only is He left on His own for three days (partly due to parental negligence), He made His way to the right place (the Temple), and was "hanging out" with the right kind of people (older and more mature religious types). The Scripture makes it clear that in spite of the misunderstanding Jesus' parents had, He was "obedient to them."

³¹On a personal visit to Tipp City, Ohio, a small rural community of 6000 people, I toured Ginghamburg United Methodist Church. This church has over 3000 people attending five services on a weekend. Over 45% of their present congregation would be considered community-reached people. They have an obvious need to build a larger facility to house their congregation. This church opted to do something for the youth of the community. They built a 35,000-sq. ft. youth center, complete with staging, basketball, weight room, game room, coffee shop, etc. Their youth center has become the place to be for hundreds of teenagers in the community. The church readily admits that they are struggling with ways to present the Gospel to the many teenagers who enter their building. Ministry is happening, but not as organized and structured as they would like.

Luke 2:52 identifies the markers that Jesus reached, “And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men” (NIV). First Corinthians 13:11 gives us another indication of markers. “When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put childish ways behind me” (NIV).

There should be concern as to the disappearance of these markers. Markers are meant for the protection of adolescents. They protect teenagers from unnecessary stress and lessen the impact of stress they will inevitably encounter. Markers provide rules of behavior, limitations to certain activities, and prohibit teenagers from making age-inappropriate decisions. When markers continue to disappear, teenagers will be left alone to decide on matters that will have consequences that are life-long and irreversible, or at the very least, confined to inexperienced advice and counsel from their peers.

Safe Zones

These “disappearing” numbers have left adolescents in somewhat of a quandary. This “disappearance” will generate even more anti-social behavior. Adolescents will find some behavior or activity that distances them from other age groups. Striving for independence does that in a teenager. The ministry implication for youth ministers will be to develop and build “safe zones” for teenagers. “Create safe environments. Start by creating an environment where your child feels safe because she is safe.”³²

³²Jim Hancock, *Raising Adults* (Colorado Springs, CO: Pinon Press, 1999), 108.

These “safe zones” may take the shape of a regular youth activity or an identifiable location. Whatever the shape or ministry model, this “safe zone” must take on a minimum of three characteristics. Firstly, the teenager is safe from bodily harm. There must be zero tolerance for anything or anyone who would want to hurt someone else. This kind of policy will add assurance to parents who may be a bit wary of your “religious” youth group, knowing that the youth minister will look after the physical well-being of their teenager. Our society continues to debate violence, guns, and freedom of expression. Within the walls of our churches, the physical safety of teenagers is not something that can be taken for granted. There must be a conscious effort to insure that young people are protected. Another related area of safety would be the issue of sexual harassment. The family of God is the perfect context in which the proper treatment of the opposite sex can be taught. The teaching and modeling of respect, responsibility, proper behavior, and the protection of members of the opposite sex is paramount. Many adolescent females face a daily barrage of sexual innuendoes and many times, blatant comments or advances at school. The place of youth ministry must discourage it. It cannot tolerate it. It must deal with it with the same vigor and seriousness of any other type of abuse.

Secondly, a “safe zone” is a place where teenagers are safe from being emotionally or socially abused. When this author was in junior high school, home was my safe haven. Junior high students can be cruel in the best of times but it increases exponentially when you are a new kid in class. As a result, home was a safe place for me because I knew I was accepted, loved, and embraced. My parents did not have harsh words for me nor did they hurl harsh words at me. With the fragmenting of the family,

the home will become less and less a safe place for teenagers. For many teenagers, they will be going from one unsafe zone (school) to another unsafe zone (home). For many teenagers, the ridicule, harsh words, and social out-casting do not let up, even at home. Others will experience domestic hazing (demeaning and belittling behavior). Some teenagers are good at masking unpleasant experiences or circumstances they are enduring. But for the most part, they are easily recognizable. Their body language alone gives them away, with a “beaten down” look that accompanies a discouraged and withdrawn behavior. The youth ministry model must be a place where every teenager is accepted, imperfections included. Anything that even resembles sibling or peer rivalry must be dealt with immediately and firmly. Any teenager walking into a youth program of any type must be assured that no one will berate him and neither will he berate anyone. Loving instruction in this area will give the necessary social skills adolescents need, in order to be well-adjusted individuals who get along well with others.

A “safe zone’s” third characteristic must be a place where a teenager can be a teenager. There is adolescent behavior that is typical of adolescent behavior. Teenagers are in those awkward years of development. Energy levels go from World Wrestling Federation to that of a sluggish tortoise. They have outbursts of emotions and behavior. They say one thing and do another. But the two main areas of differences between adolescents and adults, are age and experience. The safe youth ministry model will accept adolescents with all their peculiarities and idiosyncrasies. In fact, the safe youth ministry model will find delight and joy in watching these adolescents grow, develop, mature, make mistakes, and eventually make the right choices about life. Safe youth ministries will still be present and supportive when their adolescents make these

mistakes. They are not surprised by the shortcomings of adolescents. They recognize them as necessary steps along the way towards maturity and assimilation into the adult world. It is the role of the youth minister to be a part of this process, so as to prevent teenagers from making decisions that would be damaging and irreversible.

Meaningful Relationships

These young people will always be skeptical of the future because of the failure of their parents to remain together. The youth pastor will need to minister to these young people by helping them to heal the emotional wounds they have suffered. They will have to be taught how to forgive and how to establish meaningful relationships. Most of all, they will need to be taught and be given an example of God's ideal for a marriage relationship. Even the social skills of parenting, whether it be raising children or raising parents, will need to be taught and modeled. For some young people, they have had to endure the prolonged onset of adolescence with their own parent(s). There will be parents who have yet to grow up and accept their adulthood, with all its uniquenesses and responsibilities. In the meantime, their own teenagers gaze in disbelief, confused as to what their adulthood should look like. In mid-1997 about nineteen million children (one in four) under the age of eighteen lived with only one parent.³³ Teenagers have an attitude like their parents had of them when they were in their childhood, that they should be seen but not heard, except they have added: parents should not be seen nor heard.

³³U. S. Census Bureau, *Vital Statistics Report* as of October 1998 and U. S. Census Bureau Brief. CENBR/97-1, September 1997.

Youth ministry programming needs to include those activities that encourage inclusiveness of families, especially parents and their teenagers.

Luckily the majority of kids cope successfully with these stresses, and they owe that in large part to the adults in their lives. A recent National Institute of Health study found that kids who feel connected to home, family, and school are better protected from violence, suicide, sexual activity, and substance abuse. Adolescents also fare better if their parents are home at key times of the day—in the morning, after school, at dinner, and at bedtime.³⁴

Parental involvement in lay leadership or volunteering also needs to be encouraged, (obviously some discretion and qualification would be needed here. A personal inquiry should be made to the related teenager if having their parent(s) involved met with their approval. You would not want any obvious family discord being displayed).

The Internet

The ministry implications of the Internet are simple as well as profound. Youth ministry cannot deny the Internet or the use of the Internet. Youth ministry has always been at the forefront of embracing technological advances, mainly because the young people we are trying to reach are embracing these technological advances. Youth ministry will have to remain at the forefront of any future technological waves. E-mail, chatrooms, webpages, video-conferencing, and the like, will be a mainstay of youth ministry. These will provide the convenience of informing and staying informed. The

³⁴ Angie Cannon and Carolyn Kleiner, "Teens Get Real," *Cover Story*, 17 April 2000, available from <http://www.usnews.com/issue/000417>; (accessed 12 August 2000).

Internet will continue to provide instant communication and response, something even parents of teenagers appreciate.

Another ministry implication of this digital generation would be the challenge of youth ministry to enhance, build, develop, and nurture relationships. Even though there is interaction taking place on the Internet in real time, it is still faceless and emotionless. It may mean that youth ministry takes the initiative of getting back to basics: listening, talking, reacting, waiting. Youth ministry must get back to personal contact, face-to-face meetings, hanging out (with purpose), and simply getting together. Society is beginning to react against all of this technology and even businesses are getting the message that people want to deal with people. Youth ministry must take the lead here. It may take the initiative of challenging teenagers to simply “turn it off.” With all the peripheral sights and sounds teenagers input into their lives, it becomes more of a challenge to “hear” the voice of God. The discipline of silence, combined with a new form of fasting, fasting from technology, will bring a new appreciation to seeking God and His “still small voice.”

I don't believe ancient disciplines and contemplative practices of the church will ever be as widespread and popular as game nights, ski retreats, and those models of ministry that imitate the surrounding culture. But in the next 10 to 20 years, more youth workers will recognize that, in this period in the life of the church, it's silence that proclaims good news, stillness that brings justice, fasting that feeds the hungry, and prayer that trains the heart to hear the quiet beckoning of the living Christ.³⁵

³⁵Mark Yaconelli, “Seven Trends to Watch in the Next Decade,” *YouthWorker Magazine*, January/February 2000, 29.

There simply is more to give up, for God's sake. Teenagers will meet this challenge. Technology will remain commonplace in their lives, but with a Spirit-led challenge to keep it in its proper place, teenagers will master technology and not visa-versa. There will be a renewed commitment to friends and youth workers, when adolescents begin to decide for themselves, what really is important. With proper guidance, they will see that God places His highest priority on people and relationships. Youth ministry must develop and introduce those ministry models that enhance the relationships between teenagers, their parents, and other adults.

Cooperative Ministries

This decade will see a cooperation between youth ministries and youth-oriented organizations or Christian youth organizations. Youth pastors will begin to realize that other ministries and organizations do have something to offer. This could involve special programs, communication techniques, ideas for activities, or just knowing that they are a part of a ministry or organization that involves other people. Attempting to be exclusive and isolated will no longer be advantageous. It is clear that the Gospel can be taken to more young people when there is a coordinated, cooperative effort. Small youth ministries should be uniting with other local youth ministries in order to execute youth programs that would attract a large crowd. This kind of cooperative effort will be needed when it comes to securing a facility for exclusive use and being able to produce their own program. It would be expensive and impractical for the smaller youth ministries to attempt certain activities alone, (i.e., renting an entire skateboard park, ice skating rink, etc.).

Local church youth ministries will see the value of youth organizations such as Campus Life (Youth for Christ), Word of Life, Campus Crusade for Christ, and the like. There has been sharp criticism of these organizations because of the fact that they are not affiliated with a local church. Christian youth organizations have been labeled as para-church organizations. This author has not always been fond of this term because it implies that Christian youth organizations are outside of the norm, similar to para-normal or para-psychology. Christian youth organizations are a part of the overall church family, without all the peripherals of local church maintenance.³⁶ Youth ministries need to be aware that these organizations do extensive research in finding methods that would market their programs to young people. This research reveals, for the most part, what the young people are attracted to. If they were not in tune with the adolescent mind, these organizations would not be able to propagate their programs. The youth pastor too needs to know what the adolescent mind is in tune with.

The youth minister can learn from these organizations and use whatever methods or programs he thinks will aid his ministry. These Christian youth organizations will see the value of working with local churches. The relationship between Christian youth organizations and local congregations will be nurtured and developed. Instead of

³⁶Being a former Executive Director of a Youth for Christ ministry for thirteen years, I know the strong mandate we had as a Christian youth organization. Our mandate was simple. Youth for Christ existed to reach teenagers with the Gospel of Christ. What made Youth for Christ "unique" is the fact that we could be as creative as we wanted, provided we could demonstrate ministry effectivity and financial responsibility. Our staff and Board of Directors were all focused on our mandate. As a Christian youth organization, we could move quickly and change directions quickly if it would enhance our mission. Bureaucracy was kept at a minimum. Many churches and youth groups looked to Youth for Christ, and organizations like us, for leadership, ministry initiatives, and creative ideas.

avoiding them, these organizations will realize that the perpetuation of their programs can be increased significantly with cooperation among local churches. Both local church youth ministries and youth organizations will exhibit a genuine cooperation between the two of them.

From the perspective of what Christian youth organizations can learn, Peter Ward, author of *God at the Mall*, says,

. . . this means that para-church youth ministries need to start to consider how they can bridge the gap between church and the young people with whom they have significant contact. All of this inevitably means that some kind of understanding needs to be reached with local church leaders, church communities, and denominations. How this is done will depend on local church relationships and politics.³⁷

Post-Modernity

Post-modernity has several ministry implications. Firstly, these young people need to be heard. Our ministry models need to move from a “talking head” or monologue, to more dialogue. Young people have a lot to say and at times, it might be profound. Whether it is or not is irrelevant. Their story must be heard. It will, for the most part, be more complex and consequential than previous generations. Part of this “hearing” will help youth leaders and adults identify what is the problem or the issue. Youth ministry has been quick to say that “Jesus is the answer” but we need to know, at the very least, what is the question.

³⁷Pete Ward, *God at the Mall* (Peabody, Massachusetts: Hendrickson Publishers, 1999), 138.

Secondly, young people will need to be “engaged.” Being engaged or endeared by youth ministry will require involvement. Ministry models must be participatory, even if it means taking a few risks with adolescent inexperience. It has been previously mentioned about the importance of nurturing and developing relationships. But this can be taken a step further. There will be a larger number of adolescents who are disconnected and disenfranchised with the church as a whole. It will be that group of teenagers who will need aggressive effort in building relationships. More and more teenagers will fall into a category of being socially disadvantaged, whether it is due to cultural stereotyping, church irrelevancy, their own behavior, or the behavior of significant others in their lives (siblings or parents). The ingredients of these relationships, if they are to work, must include honesty, transparency, listening skills, respect, time, and permanence.

Because Millennials are media-driven and street-wise, a third ministry implication would be to practice discernment in our selectivity of popular culture. Media is an amoral medium. It is the content that makes the difference. Young people consume the content without giving a thought about the values being propagated. Whether it is sexuality, violence, profane linguistics, or substance abuse, adolescents are like young children who learn by putting everything into their mouths. Sometimes it is all right, but for the most part, it leaves a bad taste, at its very least; and at its most damaging, it could choke the life out of them. What is even more disturbing is when something is in their mouth that should not be there and they do not have the conventional wisdom to spit it out. (In a somewhat similar vein, when my own children were off to a public school after eight years of private Christian school education, I explained to them that there would be

a number of “manure piles” in public education. The difference between them and other kids in school would be the fact that when they stepped into a “manure pile,” they would at least know they had stepped in one and know what to do next. The tragedy would be that many of their classmates would step in them and not even know it).³⁸ Youth ministry will need to help young people make sophisticated choices about the content they subject themselves. Youth ministers will have to be able to stealthily maneuver among popular culture, gleaning what he can and identifying the values that are contrary to Scriptural truth or even contrary to common sense. There are plenty of messages being presented, both subliminal and blatant (spend an hour watching MTV or scan the CD covers at your local music store). Youth ministry will have to use a tightly-woven filter, looking beyond the entertainment value, in its selectivity of popular culture usage. Music and movies are here to stay. If one argues style, they will lose every time. But one can always dialogue about content and the values being propagated. Once there is open and honest dialogue, the defining lines of right and wrong will materialize. The wise youth minister will have to develop a “listening ear” as to the messages or cries of youth that come through popular culture. This will lend itself to the relevancy to faith in Christ among this generation.

A fourth ministry implication will involve the importance of spirituality among this generation. Birthed by Generation X as an irreverent search for spirituality, it will

³⁸ Author’s personal experience.

continue with the next generation as post-modernity continues its demagogue-like progression.

In spite of many common cultural experiences, there is no singular expression of GenX religion. In broad strokes, there are individuals with a generic interest in spirituality, but who find it a bit confining to attend a church Then there are the religious dabblers, who appropriate various elements from this religion and that one, and may even get serious for short periods of time as they do yoga, practice meditation, or revert, like good romantics, for a short dip back into the religion of their heritage. From the dabblers, we get many interesting hybrids of new religious combinations, but authority is vested in the individual, not in any particular tradition.³⁹

Spirituality will have to be taught and experienced with clarity and straight talk. Worship will be something that is participatory in nature, involving the arts and the artists. A modest lifestyle, with a Christian sense of time, not the “normal” frenetic over-commitment that so many adults find themselves into, will have to be modeled and exemplified. (Keep in mind that relationships are paramount. So there must be a sense that a particular teenager is not “bothering” us or infringing upon our time). Faith in Christ will have to present itself as an easy, thoughtful decision to make but a difficult and unique lifestyle to follow. The benefits as well as the responsibilities (service) and consequences (suffering) of faith in Christ must be presented. Young people must know and understand what they “are getting into.” To know even better what young people want to get into, *Group Magazine* surveyed 10,000 Christian teenagers attending their

³⁹Richard W. Flory and Donald E. Miller, eds., *GenX Religion* (New York: Rutledge, 2000), 9.

work camp program, filling out a “Cool Church Survey.” The survey asked them to rate the importance of 10 factors that influence their commitment to church. They are as follows:

“#1-A welcoming atmosphere where you can be yourself-73%

#2-Quality relationships with teenagers-70%

#3-A senior pastor who understands and loves teenagers-59%

#4-Interesting preaching that tackles key questions-53%

#5-Spiritual growth experiences that actively involve you-51%

#6-Fun activities-51%

#7-Engaging music and worship-50%

#8-Quality relationships with adults-36%

#9-Multiple opportunities to lead, teach, and serve-35%

#10-A fast-paced, high-tech, entertaining ministry approach-21%”⁴⁰

Youth ministers need to take notice if they are to be successful in this profession called youth ministry.

Conclusion

Regardless of the changes, both seen and unseen, and the adjustments that will face youth ministries to come, a prepared youth minister will have to be able to cope and adjust to them. Culture will change, sometimes for the better, usually for the worse.

⁴⁰Rick Lawrence, “The Cool Church,” *Group Magazine*, 6 May 2001, 37.

Methodologies come and go. Ideas are born and produced for the times and places they were intended. They will eventually run their course and their usefulness. There is nothing sacred about them. It is the message of hope to this generation that will never change. Youth ministry is in an enviable position to change with the times with an unchangeable message.

APPENDIX A

Volunteer staff regulations of the San Fernando Valley Juvenile Hall

1. Volunteer staff are allowed to come into the institution only with permission of the Protestant chaplain.
2. All Protestant volunteers must have their I.D. card issued by the Protestant chaplain's Office. Those cleared to carry keys must also have a key card issued by the Juvenile Hall Volunteer's Office.
3. Persons carrying Juvenile Hall keys are to wear them attached to their clothing or body by a cord so that they cannot be lost or snatched.
4. Volunteers are not to give their home address or phone numbers to juveniles. Juvenile Wards may answer letters c/o Protestant chaplain's Office—never directly to the volunteer's address.
5. Do not carry a message, written or verbal, to or from any juvenile.
6. Do not take anything into the institution for juveniles and do not take anything out of the facility from juveniles.
7. No one is permitted to go into the institution who is related to a juvenile in the institution where he or she serves.
8. In order to be a Sunday school teacher, the minimum age is 20; to be involved in a music group, the minimum age is 18, (there can be some allowance here).
9. Volunteer staff must be a Christian for at least one year—in good standing with a church which is approved by the Board.
10. No volunteer staff is allowed to arrange for additional services.
11. A staff chaplain of the Christian jail workers visits regularly at all institutions and counsels each juvenile who requests an interview on the form provided in your service. Counseling requests should be passed on to the chaplain's office for follow-up.
12. All literature given out shall be cleared through the Protestant chaplain's office.

13. All volunteers must be able to work non-denominationally and work harmoniously with those who differ doctrinally.
14. No controversial or denominational doctrines shall be taught.
15. No visitors are allowed in with the volunteer staff, except those who are vitally interested in working in our program and who have been cleared with the chaplain's office.
16. Attention of teen-agers wanders after a short span of time. Sermons in chapel and camp services should be short (10-15 minutes).
17. Volunteer workers should not overstay their allotted time.
18. Counselors are always to be supported in the presence of juveniles. Juveniles will at times criticize counselors' problems or strategy. Therefore, while accepting the young person's feelings, volunteers should be supportive of the counselor and his role. Great harm can be done in a unit by a volunteer who fails to support the counselor or who personally rejects the authority of the counselor.
19. Unit rules and regulations must always be supported. Talk over questions or problems with the chaplain's office staff. Volunteers may not stay in a building visiting a juvenile when the rest of the unit goes outside.
20. Make few or no references to the imprisonment of your audience. Avoid highly emotional appeals.
21. Be certain your attitude does not suggest that the young people are inferior human beings. The wards are just as human as yourself.

APPENDIX B

A Suggested List of Web Sites for the Youth Minister

(The author does not necessarily endorse, support, or condone these organizations. Some have been listed for informational and research purposes, only as they are prevalent in youth culture today.)

www.muchmusic.com

The Canadian equivalent of MTV. Highly creative and cutting-edge, the network and the site feature news, a listening lounge, online music videos, reviews and more.

www.yubm.org

This site strives to bridge the gap between the church and urban hip-hop culture by a ministry that focuses on “maturing, mentoring and ministering” by “investing in Black futures through strategic leadership development.” Offers ideas, insight and information on urban youth ministry.

www.ccojubilee.org/cards.html

Looking for greeting cards marked by theological depth? You’ll find them here at a site that is well worth the visit! Part of the ministry of the Coalition for Christian Outreach (an evangelical campus ministry), all proceeds benefit the ministry of CCO.

www.teenmusic.about.com

Designed for teens, this site offers insight into the pop music world with news, reviews, concert info, lyrics, videos, MP3 and midi downloads, charts, links, etc.

www.wallofsound.go.com

This online music site is updated daily with news, CD reviews, release dates, features, charts, videos and artist information. A good place to visit if you want to stay up-to-date on the pop music world.

www.gospelcom.net/yfc/

The YFC site offers daily devotions for teens, info on YFC mission trips, a chat room, and info on YFC's DC/LA triennial student evangelism and training experience.

www.eyouthministry.com

A resource designed for youth pastors by youth pastors to provide a format where youth pastors can share ideas. Lots of ideas for retreats, lessons and administration, as well as interviews and useful links.

www.youthleadership.org

Another valuable site for youth ministry training resources from Tiger McCluen and the staff of YL. A gateway to an organization that's been offering quality insight, resources and training for several years.

www.younglife.org

The online home of the campus ministry that's been ministering to teens in their changing cultural context since 1940.

www.reachout.gospelcom.net

Founded in 1977 by Barry St. Clair, Reach Out strives to equip leaders of youth around the world for strategic youth ministry through the church in order to see as many teen-agers as possible become devoted followers of Christ. A growing site with lots of good information and material.

www.goosehead.com

The story is that this site is created and maintained by a 14-year-old. Designed for teens and full of advice, entertainment news, horoscopes, news, poetry, teen art, games, etc. Worth monitoring since so many teens spend time here.

www.certerforyouth.org

From Dean Borgman and the youth ministry crew at Gordon-Conwell Seminary, this is the online home of The Center for Youth Studies and their database of articles on contemporary youth culture. Valuable for parents, pastors, and youth workers.

www.hiphopsite.com

Want to know more about rap, urban and hip-hop music? This site offers news, reviews, and audio bytes of the latest hip-hop music releases. A great way to stay up-to-date on the latest developments in rap music.

www.parentsoup.com

Perhaps the most extensive parenting site on the net. Updated daily, it offers tips, tools, chats, news, message boards, reviews and more on all things parenting.

www.gospelcom.net/navs/NP/ctt/index.shtml

A monthly summary of articles from over 75 magazines that keeps readers abreast of what's happening in the world. Includes a cumulative index and searchable archives from this valuable printed periodical.

www.juniorhighpastor.com

This site exists to equip junior high youth workers for the 21st century. Includes reviews, resources and discussions of matters related to junior high ministry.

www.growingupdigital.com

The online home of Don Tapscott, author of the book *Growing Up Digital*. Loaded with lots of info and analysis of today's media-savvy and emerging net-generation. Deals with the influence of technology on society and today's youth culture.

www.radiodiaries.org/teenagediaries.html

Hear firsthand about life as a teen from the group of teens National Public Radio sent around the country for a year to interview family and friends, keep an audio journal, and record the sounds of daily life.

www.youthworkers.net

The online home of the National Network of Youth Ministries. Visitors can find out about training events and programs, read articles by youth ministry experts, purchase resources, locate a youth worker network in their local area, etc.

www.cymnet.org

CYM's mission is to build a youth ministry network and provide resources, encouragement, opportunities and support to its members. Offers training, resources, reviews and lots more.

www.antithesis.com

A phenomenal site offering info and cultural analysis from a thoughtful Christian perspective in response to the challenges of thinking, living, and understanding that characterize our postmodern age.

www.gospelcom.net/mattingly

The web site for Mattingly's syndicated column offers cutting-edge cultural commentary from a Christian perspective. Includes an archive of columns and additional writings from Mattingly.

www.aecf.org/kidscount

A project of the Annie E. Casey Foundation, this site offers statistics, reports and a variety of other information on the economic, educational, social and physical status of children in the United States.

www.u.arizona.edu/~dpc/about.html

Resource for those interested in the cinematic dialogue of our day addressing the spiritual issues flowing through our culture. Offers reviews, commentary and discussion guides for current films.

www.e-vangelism.com

A site devoted to promoting the use of the Internet as a tool for evangelism created by Andrew Careaga, author of *E-vangelism: Sharing The Gospel In Cyberspace*.

www.pastor2youth.com

The home page of youth pastor Ryan Nielsen, the site offers several resources created by Ryan, along with a very extensive listing of links to a variety of youth ministry-related organizations and sites.

www.musicstation.com/musicnewswire

A guide to online music news from Global Music Information Network. Offers music news, music industry stories, music feature stories and music reviews from many print and online music magazines.

www.childstats.gov

The official site of the Federal Interagency Forum on Child and Family Statistics. Provides access to federal and state statistics, and reports on children and their families. A good source for current demographic statistics on today's youth culture.

www.ivyjungle.org

The Ivy Jungle Network is a loose association of men and women who minister to collegians. The site offers insight into understanding and responding to the campus culture along with lots of helpful articles, information and links.

www.youthpastor.com

Started as a class project, the unique features of YouthPastor.Com's E-Mail and White Pages include the most youth pastor names, the easiest and fastest search, and the most accurate list of youth ministry related organizations and addresses on the Internet.

APPENDIX C

A Suggested List of Periodicals for the Youth Minister's Reading

Baseline, The

A San Bernardino, CA music newspaper.

Christian Education Counselor

A bi-monthly Christian education journal dedicated to training and informing pastors, teachers, and Christian education workers.

Cross Fire Youth Ministry Magazine

Serving Christian youth, youth ministers, and clergy involved in the good work of bringing the young people of the world to Christ our Lord.

Crumbs Youth Ministry Magazine

Crumbs is an online youth ministry magazine full of resources from Aotearoa, New Zealand, in the South Pacific. They've been going for 11 years in print, distributing four times a year to 1,000 subscribers.

Faithstep Youth Ministry Magazine

Its purpose is to equip youth workers with knowledge where they need it most—on the front lines of youth ministry; to encourage youth workers in the often unsung business of youth ministry; and to inform youth workers on cultural happenings and news that will enable them to make the most of their time. *The Faithstep Youth Ministry Magazine* is a free resource on the Web.

Freedom Within

A Christian newsletter ministry from behind prison walls.

Group Magazine

Group Magazine is the most widely read idea resource for youth ministers designed to empower youth leaders for real-life ministry.

New Attitude Ezine

New Attitude started as a magazine but also conducts conferences for teens and parents across the U.S. Both the quarterly publication and the one-day live events are dedicated to challenging young adults to be fully committed to Jesus Christ. This magazine was designed as something that would link together fellow home schoolers.

Plugged In

There's always a new band, movie or TV show. How are you supposed to keep up? With *Plugged In*, a no-nonsense newsletter devoted to helping parents and youth leaders guide teens through the world of popular youth culture. It delivers reviews, news and comments. It even has advice from youth specialists.

Purpose: The Newsletter for Ministry in the Age of Information

Just like the Industrial Revolution and the Space Age, the Information Age is changing the very nature of our world—and not necessarily for the better. Mark Matlock and WisdomWorks Ministries present a new tool to help maximize your time and ministry. Introducing *PURPOSE*, the newsletter designed to enable youth pastors and teachers to communicate truth in the Age of too much information.

re:generation quarterly (RQ)

re:generation quarterly (RQ) provides commentary, critique, and celebration of the church and emerging culture. Their primary audience is college-educated Christians beginning careers of influence in the academy, the arts, business and the professions, the home, media, politics, and the church.

Takin' it to the Streets - TTTS

TTTS consists of a bi-monthly newspaper, a music ministry, feeding the homeless, street witnessing, teen talk, musicians' kinship, breaking the chains of addiction, Breath of Life Dance and Drama, and Sonlight Productions.

The Calling

A newsletter for full-time staff of religious organizations, and every three months you'll receive helpful information about personal and professional issues—management, finances, health, special ministries—from experts who understand the needs of clergy. Best of all, the subscription to *The Calling* is free.

The EDGE

Journal of cutting edge youth ministry for the 21st Century. New resources and reviews for today's youth minister. An on-line and e-mail journal.

The Trumpeter

The Trumpeter is a bimonthly publication and has a readership in excess of 60,000. It is distributed through churches, bookstores, businesses, direct mail and drop spots in area restaurants and malls in South Florida.

You! Magazine

A multi-award-winning Catholic youth magazine read by over 100,000 people worldwide.

Youth Focus Magazine

The mission of *Youth Focus* is very simple. To spread the good news of Jesus Christ to the perishing world. They focus on the younger generation.

Youth Ministry Newsletter Exchange

YMNE provides a variety of ideas for your youth ministry newsletters, and more. Youth ministries trade newsletters, jokes, articles and more.

Youthwork Magazine

This magazine is from the United Kingdom. Each month this magazine is packed full of features, interviews, reviews and news relevant to youth workers and is an essential way to keep up-to-date with the latest resources for your church's youth work.

YouthWorker Journal

The contemporary professional journal for youth ministry. Geared toward youth group and team leaders, each journal presents research and offers practical help with staff training, stress, management skills, ministry development and discipleship.

*Magazine and e-magazine subscription information can be found by entering the magazine name on most search engines.

APPENDIX D

Miscellaneous

1. Program Priorities (based on 1979 survey)
2. Profile of the Youth Minister (based on 1979 survey)
3. Average Church and Sunday school Attendance (based on 1979 survey)
4. Calendar Activity Schedules by Individual Months

CENTER FOR
CYM
YOUTH MINISTRY

Dear Evaluator,

Greetings from Liberty University. I am presently working on my Doctor of Ministry degree and I need your assistance. After reading Chapter Ten "What the Future Holds in Youth Ministry," of the dissertation, "Successful Adolescent Ministry in the Local Church Today," (written by Steve Vandegriff in 1980), please give a brief evaluation of the chapter. In order to be more specific, please cite in your evaluation: **five** topics/issues/suggestions mentioned in the chapter AND any future trends of ministry you foresee. Even though I am looking for more affirmation than condemnation in this writing, please do not hesitate to include disagreements of any kind. It would be much appreciated if your evaluation was mailed, at your earliest convenience to:

Steve Vandegriff
105 Old Country Rd.
Monroe, Virginia
24574

or email your evaluation to svandegriff@liberty.edu

Your effort in this project will hopefully move youth ministry forward, not only for the writing of this project, but also in the classroom setting of this professor of Youth Ministries at Liberty University and even more so, in the lives of teenagers. I appreciate the use of your valuable time. Upon request, I would be happy to provide you a copy of my summarization. If you would like to talk with me, my phone numbers are: Home-804-929-0646/office-804-582-2328/cell-804-426-0627. Each of these numbers has voicemail in case I miss you.

Sincerely,



Steve Vandegriff

PROGRAM PRIORITIES

(based on 1979 survey)

Ranked Numerically with Number One Being Top Priority

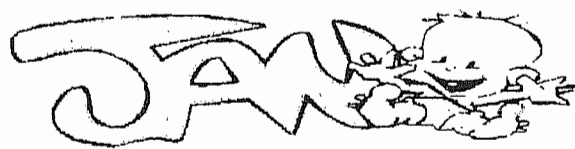
Name/ Location of Church	Sunday School	Church Services	Sunday Evening Program	Week Night Bible Study	Scheduled Activities	Music Groups	Campus Outreach
Bellevue Baptist, Memphis, Tennessee	1	1	3	2	4	4	N/A
First Baptist, Lakewood, California	1	5	3	2	7	7	4
Peninsula Bible, Palo Alto, California	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
College Ave. Baptist, San Diego, California	1	4	5	2	6	6	N/A
Grace Community Church, Panorama City, California	2	3	5	1	6	6	N/A
Scott Memorial Baptist, El Cajon, California	1	2	4	3	6	6	N/A
Church on the Way, Van Nuys, California	3	2	N/A	1	N/A	N/A	N/A
First Baptist, Modesto, California	1	2	3	4	N/A	N/A	5
Thomas Rd. Baptist, Lynchburg, Virginia	1	4	7	5	6	6	3
Garden Grove Community, Garden Grove, California	6	2	2	N/A	N/A	N/A	1
Hollywood Presbyterian, Hollywood, California	1	1	3	4	N/A	N/A	N/A

PROFILE OF THE YOUTH MINISTER
(based on 1979 survey)

Name/ Location of Church	Age	Marital Status	Annual Salary	Education	# of Youth Ministries Involved	Years of Service @ each	Ordained	Reasons for Leaving
Bellevue Baptist, Memphis, Tennessee	36	Married	Above 21,000	Bachelor's Degree	6	1-2-15months- 2-2-3	Yes	Called elsewhere
First Baptist, Lakewood, California	30	Single	19-21,000	Bachelor's Degree	3	3-3months-5	Yes	Frustration w/pastor
Peninsula Bible, Palo Alto, California	28	Married	16-18,000	Bachelor's Degree	1	5	No	N/A
College Ave. Baptist, San Diego, California	30	Married	16-18,000	Bachelor's Degree	2	7-3	No	Wanted new challenge
Grace Community Church, Panorama City, California	26	Married	10-15,000	Bachelor's Degree	1	5	No	N/A
Scott Memorial Baptist, El Cajon, California	32	Married	16-18,000	Master's Degree	3	2-5-3-4	No	Called elsewhere; church financial problems
Church on the Way, Van Nuys, California	30	Married	10-15,000	Bachelor's Degree	3	2-2-5	Yes	Called elsewhere; couldn't work with pastor
First Baptist, Modesto, California	23	Married	Under 10,000	Bachelor's Degree	1	6	No	N/A
Thomas Rd. Baptist, Lynchburg, Virginia	24	Married	16-18,000	Master's Degree	1	7	Yes	N/A
Garden Grove Community, Garden Grove, California	27	Married	16-18,000	Bachelor's Degree	1	5	No	N/A

AVERAGE CHURCH AND SUNDAY SCHOOL ATTENDANCE
(based on 1979 survey)

Name/ Location of Church	Average Church Attendance (past 12 months)	Average Jr./ Middleschool Attendance	Average Sr. High Attendance	Average College/ Career Attendance
Bellevue Baptist, Memphis, Tennessee	5000	150	150	200
First Baptist, Lakewood, California	2500	180	180	150
Peninsula Bible, Palo Alto, California	4000	60	120	100
College Ave. Baptist, San Diego, California	1800	120	160	230
Grace Community Church, Panorama City, California	7000	160	200	650
Scott Memorial Baptist, El Cajon, California	2380	110	300	130
Church on the Way, Van Nuys, California	4000	120	55	100
First Baptist, Modesto, California	2000	125	225	180
Thomas Rd. Baptist, Lynchburg, Virginia	8000	260	380	190
Garden Grove Community, Garden Grove, California	5000	50	50	80
Hollywood Presbyterian, Hollywood, California	3000	55	45	105



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 College & Career	2 High School Outreach	3 Snow	4 Camp	5 
6 Looking on the Cross	7 Lay Staff Meeting	8 College & Career Cell Group	9 High School	10 	11 JuNurz Cell Group	12
13 Looking on the Cross	14 	15 College & Career	16 High School Cell Group	17 	18 JuNurz	19  Community Service Project
20 Looking on the Cross	21 	22 Lay Staff Meeting	23 	24 	25 JuNurz	26
27 Looking on the Cross	28 	29 College & Career Campus Ministry	30 High School	31 AEC Student Ministries exists to REACH non-believing students, to connect them with other Christians, to help them grow in their faith, and to challenge the growing to discover their ministry and honor God with their life.		



February 2001



Reckless Passion Student Ministry

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
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AEC Student Ministries exists to **REACH** non-believing students, to **connect** them with other Christians, to help them grow in their faith, and to **challenge** the growing to discover their ministry and **honor** God with their life.

				1	2 	3
4 Looking on the Cross	5	6 Lay Staff Meeting	7 High School	8	9 JuNurz	10
11 Looking on the Cross	12	13 College & Career	14 True Love Waits Rally	15	16 JuNurz Cell Group	17
18 Drawing the Line	19	20 College & Career	21 High School Cell Group	22	23 JuNurz	24 Child Care Services  Comm Service
25 Drawing the Line	26 Lay Staff Meeting	27 College & Career Campus Ministry	28			

March 2001



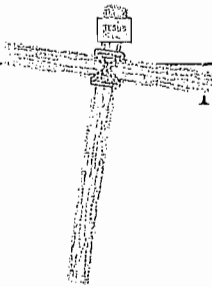
Reckless Passion Student Ministry

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<p>AEC Student Ministries exists to REACH non-believing students, to connect them with other Christians, to help them grow in their faith, and to challenge the growing to discover their ministry and honor God with their life.</p>				1	2	3
4 Drawing the Line	5	6	7 High School Cell Group	8	9 JuNurz	10  Braveheart
11 Drawing the Line	12 Lay Staff Meeting	13 College & Career	14 High School Outreach Project	15  Prayer for City	16 JuNurz	17 
18 	19	20 College & Career Campus Ministry	21 High School	22 Lay Staff Meeting	23 JuNurz	24  Comm Service
25 Drawing the Line	26	27 College & Career Cell Group	28	29	30 JuNurz	31

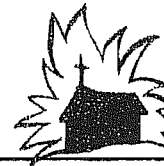
April 2001




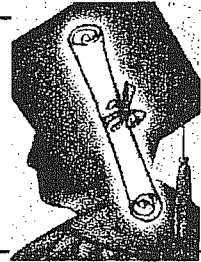
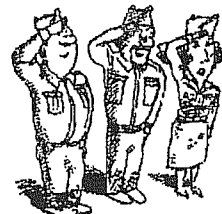

Reckless Passion Student Ministry

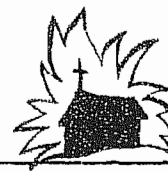
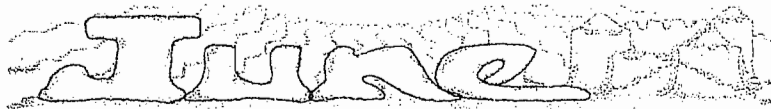
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 War on the Floor	2 Lay Staff Meeting	3	4	5	6 JuNurz	7
8 War on the Floor	9	10 College & Career Cell Group	11 High School Outreach	12 Breakfast & Prayer	13 	14 Spreading the Good News
15 <i>Happy Easter</i>	16	17 College & Career Campus Ministry	18 High School	19	20 JuNurz Cell Group	21
22 War on the Floor	23 Lay Staff Meeting	24 College & Career	25 High School Cell Group	26	27 JuNurz Outreach	28 All Day Prayer
29 War on the Floor	30	<p>AEC Student Ministries exists to REACH non-believing students, to connect them with other Christians, to help them grow in their faith, and to challenge the growing to discover their ministry and honor God with their life.</p>				

MAY 2001



Reckless Passion Student Ministry

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 College & Career Campus Ministry	2	3 Lay Staff Meeting	4	5
6 War on the Floor	7	8 College & Career	9 High School Cell Group	10 Breakfast and Prayer at Pastor Jabez's	11 JuNurz	12 Witnessing at Seaside Park
13 	14 Lay Staff Meeting	15	16 High School	17 	18 JuNurz	19
20 The Blessings of Abraham	21	22 College & Career Cell Group	23 High School Outreach Project	24 Breakfast and Prayer at Pastor Jabez's	25 JuNurz	26 Community Service Day
27 The Blessings of Abraham	28 	29 Showers of Blessing	30	31 	AEC Student Ministries exists to REACH non-believing students, to connect them with other Christians, to help them grow in their faith, and to challenge the growing to discover their ministry and honor God with their life.	



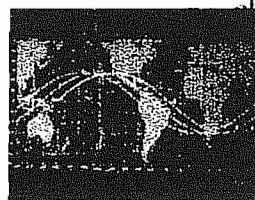
Reckless Passion Student Ministry

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
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AEC Student Ministries exists to **REACH** non-believing students, to **connect** them with other Christians, to help them grow in their faith, and to **challenge** the growing to discover their ministry and **honor** God with their life.

1 JuNurz	2
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3 The Blessings of Abraham	4 Lay Staff Meeting	5	6	7	8	9
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COMMISSION




10
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12
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16
1 Corinthians 15:3

17 The Blessings of Abraham	18 Lay Staff Meeting	19	20	21	22	23
24 The Blessings of Abraham	25	26 College & Career	27 High School	28 Breakfast and Prayer at Pastor Jabez's	29 JuNurz	30

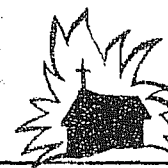
July 2001



Reckless Passion Student Ministry

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
 <div>1</div>	<div>2</div> <div>Lay Staff Meeting</div>	<div>3</div> <div>College & Career</div>	 <div>4</div>	<div>5</div> <div>Prayer and Breakfast</div>	<div>6</div>	<div>7</div>
<div>8</div> <div>The Blessings of Abraham</div>	<div>9</div>	<div>10</div> <div>College & Career</div>	<div>11</div> <div>High School</div>	<div>12</div>	<div>13</div> <div>JuNurz</div>	<div>14</div> <div>Community Service Project</div>
<div>15</div> <div>Champion For Christ</div>	<div>16</div> <div>Lay Staff Meeting</div>	<div>17</div>	<div>18</div> <div>High School</div>	<div>19</div> <div>Prayer and Breakfast</div>	 <div>20</div> <div>Leadership Team Retreat</div>	<div>21</div>
<div>22</div> <div>Champion For Christ</div>	<div>23</div> <div>Prayer for the City</div>	<div>24</div> <div>College & Career</div>	<div>25</div> <div>High School</div>	<div>26</div>	<div>27</div> <div>JuNurz</div>	<div>28</div>
<div>29</div> <div>Champion For Christ</div>	<div>30</div>	<div>31</div> <div>College & Career</div>	<p>AEC Student Ministries exists to REACH non-believing students, to connect them with other Christians, to help them grow in their faith, and to challenge the growing to discover their ministry and honor God with their life.</p>			

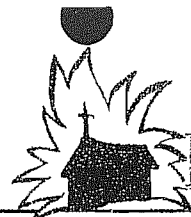
August 2001



Reckless Passion Student Ministry

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<p>AEC Student Ministries exists to REACH non-believing students, to connect them with other Christians, to help them grow in their faith, and to challenge the growing to discover their ministry and honor God with their life.</p>			1 High School Cell Group	2	3	4
5 Champion For Christ	6 Lay Staff Meeting	7	8 High School	9	10 JuNurz	11 Community Service
12 Go for the Gold	13 Go for the Gold	14 Go for the Gold	15 Go for the Gold	16 Go for the Gold	17 	18 
19 Champion For Christ	20	21 College & Career Cell Group	22	23	24 JuNurz	25
26 	27	28 College & Career	29 High School	30	31 JuNurz	

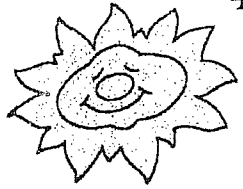



SEPTEMBER



Reckless Passion Student Ministry

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
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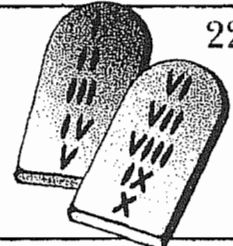


AEC Student Ministries exists to **REACH** non-believing students, to **connect** them with other Christians, to help them grow in their faith, and to **challenge** the growing to discover their ministry and **honor** God with their life.

					JuNurz	
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Walk to the Cross			High School	Lay Staff Meeting	JuNurz	 Iamboree
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
Walk to the Cross		College & Career Cell Group	High School Cell Group			
17	18	19	20	1	22	23
Walk to the Cross	Lay Staff Meeting	College & Career	High School		JuNurz Cell Group	 Community Service
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
Walk to the Cross		College & Career	Lay Staff Meeting		JuNurz	

October 2000



Reckless Passion Student Ministry

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 Walk to the Cross	2	3	4 High School Cell Group	5 Lay Staff Meeting	6 JuNurz	7
8 Walk to the Cross	9  Columbus Day	10 College & Career Cell Group	11 High School	12	13 JuNurz	14  Community Service Day
15 Cornerstones of Righteousness	16 Lay Staff Meeting	17 College & Career	18 High School	19	20 JuNurz Cell Group	21
22 	23	24 College & Career	25 Lay Staff Meeting	26	27  Leadership Team Retreat	28
29 Cornerstones of Righteousness	30	31  Prayer Vigil	AEC Student Ministries exists to REACH non-believing students, to connect them with other Christians, to help them grow in their faith, and to challenge the growing to discover their ministry and honor God with their life.			



November



Reckless Passion Student Ministry

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
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AEC Student Ministries exists to **REACH** non-believing students, to **connect** them with other Christians, to help them grow in their faith, and to **challenge** the growing to discover their ministry and **honor** God with their life.

			1 High School Outreach Project	2	3	4
5 Cornerstones of Righteousness	6 Lay Staff Meeting	7 Election Day	8 High School	9 	10 JuNurz Cell Group	11 Veterans Day Parade
12 Cornerstones of Righteousness		14 College & Career	15 High School	16 Lay Staff Meeting	17 JuNurz Outreach Project at School	18
19 Cornerstones of Righteousness	20	21 College & Career Cell Group	22 High School Cell Group	23 Let us give thanks. Thanksgiving Day	24 JuNurz	25 City Wide Outreach
26 Shad, Mach and Me	27	28 College & Career Campus Ministry	30 			



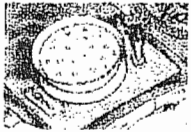



December 2000



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
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Reckless Passion Student Ministry

					1	2
3 Shad, Meshac, and Abednego	4	5 College & Career Cell Group	6 High School	7 Lay Staff Meeting	8 JuNurz Cell Group	9  Soup Kitchen
10 Shad, Meshac, and Abednego	11 Food & Toy Drive Week	12 College & Career	13 High School Cell Group	14	15 JuNurz	16
17 Shad, Meshac, and Abednego	18 Lay Staff Meeting	19 College & Career Campus Ministry	20 High School	21 Distribution of Food and Toys, Saturday Night	22 JuNurz	23 
24 	25 	26	27	28	29	30
31 Shad, Meshac, and Abednego	<p>AEC Student Ministries exists to REACH non-believing students, to connect them with other Christians, to help them grow in their faith, and to challenge the growing to discover their ministry and honor God with their life.</p>					

APPENDIX E

Sample Survey Questions

The questions involved in the survey were designed to give a general overview of the youth minister's philosophy, along with some specifics to aid in comprehending his philosophy. The questions were:

- *What is your age?*

- *Marital status:* _____ single _____ married

- *What is your total annual salary?*

_____ Under 10,000

_____ 10,000-15,000

_____ 16,000-18,000

_____ 19,000-21,000

_____ Above 21,000

- *Educational degrees achieved:*

_____ High school diploma

_____ Bachelor's

_____ Master's

_____ Other

- *Are you ordained?*

- *How many church youth ministries have you been involved in and what was your length of ministry at each? What were your reasons for leaving?*

- *What is your average church attendance (past twelve months)?*
- *What is your average Sunday school attendance (past twelve months) in Junior High, Senior High, and College/ Career?*
- *What emphasis is placed on the following; number one being top priority?*
 - _____ Sunday school
 - _____ Church Services
 - _____ Sunday Evening Program
 - _____ Wednesday Night Bible Study
 - _____ Scheduled Activities
 - _____ Music Groups; Choir
 - _____ Other
- *What is your Sunday school format?*
- *What teaching materials get more favorable responses from your young people?*
- *What is your definition of success in youth ministry?*
- *What was your most successful activity (past twelve months) in Junior High, Senior High, and College/Career?*
- *Are you involved/cooperate with para-church organizations? Why?*
- *Where is the youth minister's position in regard to the church's organizational flow-chart?*
- *What are contributing factors to success in youth ministry?*
- *What are factors that hinder spiritual and numerical growth?*
- *What has been the greatest hindrance/obstacle in your ministry?*
- *What changes do you foresee in youth ministry during the next five years?*

APPENDIX F

Youth Pastor Job Descriptions

Job Description for

Youth Pastor position at Calvary Baptist Church

Mission Statement:

“To know Christ and make him known through discipleship, evangelism, fellowship, ministry and worship.”

- **Salary - \$40,000**
- **Insurance – Kaiser Family Plan**
- **Youth Ministry (Junior and Senior High):**
 - 1) Personal Growth:**
 - Walking in the Spirit/Continuing your spiritual growth.
 - Having a good marriage and being a good father. **I Timothy 3:1-16**
 - Being a role model.
 - The driving force behind all youth ministry must be the Great Commission/Great Commandment. **Matthew 28:18-20; Matthew 22:37-39**
 - Fulfill the five purposes the church is striving to fulfill. **Acts 2:42-47**
 - 2) Programs:**
 - One monthly major activity

- One monthly minor activity (Sunday night after church, etc.)
- Summer/Winter Camps, Baja

3) Discipleship:

- Large group (Church, Sunday night, Tuesday night's, or whatever you choose to do)
- Small group (Home studies, one on one)

4) Relationship Building

- Counselors
 - Directing, overseeing
 - Coordinating their gifts to build up the teens
 - Building relationships (students & families): this is vital to your ministry as a youth pastor. Students spell love, "Time!" Students don't care how much you know until they know how much they care! Enjoy spending time and building relationships with the students. Do it regularly (take them with you places, give them a call, go to their games, and have them in your home). At least one in home visit per week. Remember, the students and their families will know that you love them by you being involved in their lives.

5) Parental Involvement: It is crucial that you have a relationship with the parents of the students. Communication is the key here and the more you communicate, the stronger the support will be from these parents. Remember, poor planning results in poor performance so make sure you prioritize your schedule to include open communication with the parents as well as making yourself available to them.

6) Wife's Responsibilities: Involvement with her husband in services and activities, reaching out to the girls (going out with them, Bible studies, discipleship, calling, having them over), a passion for the ministry and love for youth as well, working side by side with her husband, as well as personal growth mentioned above. Be involved with the ministries of the church (ladies prayer chain, baby showers, ladies' Bible study) when it is possible to have in your schedule.

- **Pastoral Help**

1) Be available to help the other ministries of our church and care for the church as a whole. Be involved where there's a need whenever possible.

- to be involved (side by side) in all church-wide meetings or ministry events.

(Building churches in Mexico, Missions Conference or Revivals, etc.)

2) To help me plan/prepare (Casting the vision for the future)

3) To preach on occasions

YOUTH PASTOR JOB DESCRIPTION

Objective:

To develop and facilitate spiritual growth and maturity in the lives of middle school, high school and college age youth at Feather Sound Community Church, equipping them for Christian service.

Overall Supervision and Evaluation by:

Senior Pastor with input from the Board of Deacons.

Supervises:

Volunteer and lay staff serving the youth ministry.

Responsibilities:

- Develop and implement a program to meet the needs of middle and high school students and college age youth, including Sunday School programs, Bible study programs, service activities and fellowship opportunities.
- Develop annual agenda and action plan for youth program, together with budget proposal.
- Develop a volunteer and lay staff to assist in putting on youth related programs, including recruiting, training, and ministering to each staff member's needs. Obtain parent involvement in youth programs.
- Propose and plan student mission trips, outreach programs and other youth functions. Plan and direct fund raising for youth activities.

- Provide counsel to the youth and their families as needed. When appropriate, involve parents and Senior pastor
- Meet regularly with the middle and high school parents.
- Attend student functions.
- Assume other pastoral duties and responsibilities at the direction of the Senior Pastor.
- Attend monthly Board of Deacon's meetings, with a prepared report.
- Participate in and contribute to Children's Church and Vacation Bible School, as required.

Temple Baptist Church

745 N. Perris Blvd.

Perris, CA 92571

TITLE OF POSITION

Pastor of Student Ministries

PURPOSE OF THE POSITION

To provide a student ministry program from grade 7 (possible 6) through College Career. To enlist and train both student and adult for outreach, discipleship, social events, camping and other related activities. To build bridges between the various student programs and integrating staff (lay and paid) for the various student ministries and assisting parents of students at Temple Baptist Church.

WHO DOES THE POSITION REPORT TO?

Senior Pastor

Deacon Monthly Report

Semi-annual Performance Evaluation

Yearly Annual Report

WHO DOES THIS POSITION WORK CLOSELY WITH?

Directors of Children's Ministries

Small Group Pastor or Director

AWANA Commander and related directors

College/Career Associate

Jr. and Sr. High Associates

Key Youth Leaders

RESPONSIBLE FOR:

All student ministries, including Jr. High, Sr. High and College/Career

CONTINUING RESPONSIBILITIES

Provide direction, supervision and oversight of all the student ministries.

Regularly meet with individuals and ministry team, including student leaders for training and evaluation.

Identify, enlist, and train teen leaders for outreach, music, small groups.

Develop and then identify and train parents of teens for helping small group classes in homes, schools, etc.

Be proactive in initiating a variety of programs, events, and approaches for helping parents of students and enhancing relationships between parents and students.

Be responsible to design, develop and implement a minimum of 4 events:
Camping, Friend Day, Teen Praise events, Mission trip.

Enlist Teen support for “door hangar” days for advertising special events of church.

Attend designed training event(s) for Youth pastors such as Youth Specialties, Saddleback, Growth, etc.

Develop an intern program designed to assist the youth ministry and train youth pastors.

Teach a minimum of 12 times a year, including contact with 5th and 6th graders, Jr. High and College and Careers.

Be part of the teaching/preaching team at Temple Baptist Church

PRIMARY STRENGTHS/GIFTS/TALENTS REQUIRED

Strong people skills

Leadership skills

A big picture person

A person who can relate well to all ages, especially parents

A team builder

A person who can help people reach their full potential

MINISTRY GOALS (3-6 Months) [to be determined for 2000-01]

To define, design, and develop a dynamic youth ministry using our church ministry goals and including any new, fresh ideas that enhance the total ministry of Temple Baptist Church.

BENEFITS OF THE POSITION

To lead a team of people who are really making a difference in student's lives, through evangelism, discipleship, and ministry train person who can help parents of teens and who can help build a student ministry that can be a role model for other churches in our valley and churches across the country.

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VITA

Steve R. Vandegriff

PERSONAL

Born: September 3, 1953.
 Married: Pamela Jo Miller, April 9, 1977.
 Children: Joshua Stephen, born December 15, 1978.
 Vanessa Rachel, born November 2, 1980.
 Jonathan Daniel, born November 16, 1985.

EDUCATIONAL

E.M.T. Central Virginia Community College, 1974.
 B.S. Liberty University, 1975.
 M.A. Liberty Baptist Theological Seminary, 1977.
 California Graduate School of Theology, 1980.

MINISTERIAL

License: December 9, 1976, Thomas Rd. Baptist Church,
 Lynchburg, Virginia.

Clergyman's Registration:
 November 1, 1981, Provincial Government of Alberta,
 Canada

PROFESSIONAL

Youth Pastor, First Christian Church, Holtville, California, 1977-1978.
 Youth Pastor, First Baptist Church, Van Nuys, California, 1978-1979.
 Youth Pastor, First Baptist Church, Alcoa, Tennessee, 1979-1981.
 Youth Pastor, Calvary Community Church, Edmonton, Alberta,
 CANADA, 1981-1986.
 Executive Director, Youth for Christ/Edmonton, Edmonton, Alberta,
 CANADA, 1986-1999.
 Professor of Youth Ministries, Liberty University, Lynchburg, Virginia,
 2000 till present.